

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 21 February 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(328) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Hanson-Young asked:

How many detainee days at Christmas Island were there in either the whole 2009-2010 period, or for the first half of the 2010-11 period (with the cost, this will enable us to work out a per-detainee per-day cost.)

Answer:

In the financial Year 2009-10, the total number of person-days spent in all forms of immigration detention on Christmas Island was 493,048.

The department advises that any arithmetic average derived from this data (in conjunction with total cost) will be highly misleading, as there are multiple factors causing the relationship between the quantity and total cost of immigration detention services to be highly non-linear. These include (but are not limited to):

- Contractual pricing models that vary with numbers of people in immigration detention;
- The necessity to ensure appropriateness of detention placement based on individual detainee needs;
- Variations in the quantity and type of services required by individual detainees (eg. torture-and-trauma counselling, treatment for other medical conditions).

Consequently such an average cannot validly imply either the cost of detaining any one person, or the marginal costs of immigration detention.

