

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0337) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash asked:

At page 265 in MYEFO there is provision for \$5.2 million over four years to establish a support office in a regional country. "This office will take a lead role in coordinating a common approach to tackling irregular migration in the region as well as providing ongoing assistance to regional countries".

- a. Where will this support office be established – in which city and country?
- b. What is the timeline until operational?
- c. What is its role?
- d. Is it operated and staffed by the department?
- e. Is it a joint venture? If so, with whom?
- f. Provide a breakdown of where this 5.2 million will be spent in terms of capital, operational and permanent staff costs?
- g. Was the Department consulted – and by whom – in relation to establishing the office?
- h. Have any other countries or organisations given any indication of monetary or material support for this centre?

Answer:

- a. The Regional Support Office (the Office) will be established in Bangkok, Thailand.
- b. The Office is expected to be operational by June 2012.
- c. The Office is an initiative under the auspices of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (Bali Process). The Office is being established to operationalise the Regional Cooperation Framework. It will act as a focal and coordination point for Bali Process members to combine their capability to target and address issues of irregular movement, including trafficking, through practical initiatives. It is envisaged that activities will include: exchange of best practices; pooling together of common technical resources; logistical, administrative and operational support for joint projects; building information sharing capacity; development of legislation, policies and procedures to harmonise regional approaches to irregular migration; and research projects. A Bali Process Working Group meeting is intended to be held in the coming months to prioritise a work plan for the Office.
- d. The Office will be co-managed by Indonesia and Australia under the oversight of the Bali Process Co-Chairs and will have staff from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and interested Bali Process member States.

- e. The Office is a regional initiative under the Bali Process involving international organisations and interested Bali Process member States that will be jointly managed by Australia and Indonesia as Co-Chairs of the Bali Process.
- f. Funding of AUD 5.2 million has been provided for operational expenses including office rent, utilities, office supplies, cleaning, office equipment, maintenance, security, regional workshops, scoping studies, and staff travel. Funding has been provided over four years as follows:

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Total
\$'million	\$'million	\$'million	\$'million	\$'million
0.716	1.478	1.504	1.530	5.228

- g. The Department has been closely involved in the establishment of the Office and has worked closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Indonesia, IOM, UNHCR and other Bali Process members, including host country Thailand.
- h. Yes.