

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 13/14 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0373) Program 4.2: Immigration Detention Statistics and Services

Senator Cash asked:

How many of the alleged under 18-year-old transfers to Leonora have had their ages confirmed as over 18? Where have they been sent? What was the reason given for lying about their age? How many failed asylum seekers in Leonora have been returned to their country of origin?

Answer:

As at 28 February 2012, there has been one client who has been determined to be over 18 at Leonora Alternate Place of Detention (APOD) following an Age Determination assessment. The client in question has been transferred to Curtin Immigration Detention Centre. He maintained that he was under 18.

There are currently four clients at Leonora APOD who are over the age of 18. Of those four clients, three clients turned 18 years of age whilst in detention. These three clients have met departmental guidelines for Community Detention and are currently being considered for placement. They remain detained at Leonora APOD pending placement into accommodation suitable for young adults. These clients have behaved appropriately during their time in immigration detention. Should their behaviour change, their placement will be reviewed and consideration will be given to transfer to an Immigration Detention Centre.

The fourth client underwent an Age Determination assessment on Christmas Island and was found to be over the age of 18 through that process. Soon after the interview he was transferred to Leonora APOD. Following the assessment outcome, he continued to claim to be under the age of 18 and has since provided original ID documents which are currently with the department's Document Examination Unit for further investigation. His detention placement will be determined pending the result of that investigation.

No clients have been returned to their home country from Leonora. Leonora predominantly accommodates clients who are on an imminent visa grant pathway or are being transitioned into Community Detention. Clients generally remain detained at Leonora for relatively short periods of time. Of all clients at Leonora APOD, the longest cumulative time any clients have spent in detention is 128 days (as at 28 February 2012).