

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/384) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash asked:

MARIBYRNONG I refer to the article in the online Herald Sun of 18 January 2012 entitled "Detention Staff detail Drug Use and Assaults" - Has the Department responded to the concerns that have been raised in relation to the allegations? If yes, what has been done? If not, why not? Is a workplace safety review going to be undertaken? If yes, when?

Answer:

Yes, since the allegations in this article, the number of targeted room searches by the Department's service provider at Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre (MIDC) has increased. These targeted searches are in addition to the regular daily searches undertaken.

In relation to a workplace safety review, the Department is not aware of any immediate requirement to conduct a workplace safety review at the MIDC.

The Department takes workplace health and safety seriously and has been working in consultation with its Work Health and Safety Regulator, Comcare, since March 2011 to enhance workplace health and safety throughout all Immigration Detention Facilities (IDFs).

On 31 March 2011, MIDC was inspected by Comcare and WorkSafe Victoria during an investigation into seven IDFs. Comcare has also conducted three follow up inspections of the MIDC on 28 October 2011, 21 November 2011 and 8 February 2012. Throughout all inspections/investigations, Comcare has not raised any of the alleged concerns from the media article (Herald Sun - 18 Jan 2012) with the Department. Further, the Department is not aware of any WorkSafe Victoria investigation into workplace safety at the MIDC.