

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0399) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash asked:

In the Melbourne hearing of the detention Inquiry on 18 November, p.21, the Asylum Seeker Resource centre expressed their concern about people being released from detention on bridging visas without adequate support: What additional resources are in place to assist under the government's new policy?

Answer:

The access to financial and other support IMA BVE holders have will be in line with arrangements for other people in the community on BVEs.

Upon release into the community on BVEs, clients will be assessed to determine their individual circumstances and existing support networks to identify what, if any, transitional support they may require. These assessments are made by departmental case managers. However, those who are unable to support themselves or require some support may be eligible for assistance through existing DIAC-funded programs such as the Community Assistance Support (CAS) program and the Asylum Seekers Assistance Scheme (ASAS), which are administered by the Australian Red Cross.

If clients are assessed to have a genuine need for support, they may receive some of the following services:

- income support and rental assistance at 89 per cent of the equivalent Special Benefit
- being met at their arrival destination by a Red Cross case worker
- being provided with emergency short-term accommodation while the client finds a place of their own
- assistance to source appropriate and sustainable accommodation
- access to basic and essential medical services
- assistance to orientate themselves into the community.

BVE holders will also have access to interpreting services through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

BVE holders who do not meet CAS or ASAS eligibility criteria will generally have access to family or community support. They will continue to be actively managed by the department, but self agency will be encouraged.