

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0418) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Boyce asked:

In Estimates Mr Metcalfe stated “we have a choice of where we place people” and all of those, “with identified disabilities as of February 7 [were]...” in the more modern facilities with the exception of one... [who] is in the Perth IDC” How do you reconcile that statement with one made moments later by Mr Moorhouse when he said; “Not all of our facilities provide people with a high degree of personal privacy. For example, in Pontville, where a number of people with disabilities are located, there is not the same degree of privacy as in some other facilities. So there is a trade-off— ” Senator BOYCE: "In what sense is there not a degree of privacy?" Mr Moorhouse: "Facilities in Pontville have former army huts that have been divided into cubicles.” Is Mr Metcalfe or the Department saying that; “former army huts that have been divide into cubicles” at Pontville are the, “more modern facilities.” Or was he wrong when he stated; all but one person with an identifiable disability were house in the more modern facilities?

Answer:

The department seeks to place detainees in the most appropriate centres with regards to their needs – this includes privacy and disability considerations. A person with a disability will be placed in a centre that can cater to their specific condition regardless of the given centre’s age.

The Pontville facility was commissioned in September 2011 with part of the works program including the refurbishment of the army huts to meet operational requirements.

As at 7 February 2012, all but one individual with identified disabilities was housed in more modern facilities. Placement of detainees takes into consideration their individual needs, to ensure the accommodation provides appropriate amenities.