

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 May 2007

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(63) Output 1.2: Refugee and Humanitarian Entry and stay

Senator Nettle (L&CA 79) asked:

How many Afghan asylum seekers have gone back to Afghanistan from Australia?

Answer:

The Department's systems do not record final destinations for people departing Australia without government assistance.

Since 2002 Australia has offered a reintegration assistance package for Afghan asylum seekers in Australia who volunteer to return to Afghanistan. The package has been made available to all such asylum seekers found not to be refugees as well as those whose claims for protection were withdrawn. 106 Afghan citizens voluntarily returned to Afghanistan with reintegration assistance between 1 January 2002 and 31 December 2006. No Afghan citizens have returned to Afghanistan with reintegration assistance since this time, and no Afghans have been removed to Afghanistan involuntarily.