

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 23-24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11-0541) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash (L&CA 71) asked:

Confirm the peak detention capacity of the detention network under the Howard government, compared to the peak detention today.

Answer:

The capacity of the immigration detention network changes regularly, depending on: changes to the fit-out of buildings; the risks of individuals accommodated within a particular location and any separation detention that may be required to be implemented to support those clients; events that temporarily change the capacity, such as closure of a building to enable amenity improvement works or to repair damage resulting from a major disturbance; the construction, mothballing or closure of facilities; the use of temporary accommodation, such as tents; and the temporary use of some facilities to accommodate deployed staff or service providers.

Reporting on the historical peak capacity of the network of facilities would require the interrogation, analysis and validation of hundreds of records and is considered an unreasonable diversion of resources.