

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0736) Program 5.1: AMEP / Settlement Services for Migrants and Refugees

Senator Michaelia Cash (Written) asked:

What are the benefits of sending new entrants to regional and remote areas in Australia?

Answer:

The settlement of humanitarian entrants in regional areas has benefits for both refugees and receiving communities. Regional settlement can provide refugees with positive social and economic prospects, while at the same time reducing infrastructure and other pressures on cities, assisting in mitigating impacts of regional population decline and increasing community diversity in regional areas.

Many humanitarian entrants have successfully settled in regional locations or have subsequently moved to regional locations because of family connections, employment opportunities and/or local development initiatives.

Research released by the Department in 2011 indicates that regional settlement contributes to addressing labour force shortages in regional areas (*The Economic, Social and Civic Contribution of First and Second Generation Humanitarian Entrants*, Hugo) and appears to contribute positively to the settlement process, including socially, economically and in terms of well-being (*Settlement Outcomes of New Arrivals*, Australian Survey Research Group).