

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 OCTOBER 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(79) Program 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

In relation to the number of places allocated to UNHCR-registered asylum seekers referred to Australia by UNHCR for resettlement, please advise:

- a. the average or approximate time that these UNHCR-registered asylum seekers had been waiting for resettlement;
- b. their original country of origin of these UNHCR-registered asylum seekers;
- c. where they had been waiting for resettlement.

Answer:

In the 2008–09 Humanitarian Program there were 6499 visas granted under the Refugee visa category. The majority of these visas were granted to refugees referred by UNHCR for resettlement and their dependent family members.

The Department does not have data on the average time these clients had been waiting for UNHCR to refer them to a resettlement country.

The following table shows the top ten countries of birth for Refugee visa grants in 2009 and the key locations for these caseloads:

Country of birth (country of origin)	Persons	Key locations (where refugee applicants have been waiting)
Burma	2218	Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia
Iraq	1364	Syria, Jordan
Bhutan	616	Nepal
Democratic Republic of Congo	364	Great Lakes, Eastern and Southern Africa
Somalia	330	Kenya
Afghanistan	303	Pakistan, Iran
Burundi	238	Great Lakes
Ethiopia	234	Kenya, Sudan
Liberia	136	Ivory Coast, Guinea
Iran	124	Syria, Turkey