

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(128) Program 4.1: Visa Compliance and Status Resolution

Senator Abetz asked:

1. How many persons found by the minister's delegate or on appeal not to be asylum seekers have been sent off-shore in 2008, 2009 and 2010?
2. How many have been returned to their original country of domicile?
3. How many of these were "boat people" and how many others?

Answer:

1. There are a range of outcomes for people who are found not to be owed protection by Australia, including the grant of a different type of substantive visa or lawful departure. The Department only keeps figures on those clients who are found not to be owed protection who are not granted another substantive visa, or who do not depart voluntarily. The departure of these clients is referred to as a 'compliance related departure' - those who were removed from immigration detention or who departed Australia from the community while holding a Bridging E visa. They do not include people who remained lawful while pursuing their claims for protection and departed Australia without any compliance action being taken by the Department.

The number of people subject to a compliance related departure who were previously found not to be owed protection by Australia either by the minister's delegate or on appeal was:

- 881 in 2008-09;
- 1113 in 2009-10; and
- 288 from 1 July 2010 to 8 November 2010.

The decision that the person was not owed protection may have occurred in a previous financial year to that in which the person left Australia.

The figures above include people who arrived in Australia both lawfully and irregularly. They are therefore higher than the answers provided for Question on Notice 247, which relate to people who arrived lawfully.

2. People subject to a compliance related departure generally return to their country of citizenship or to a place where they have right of long term residence. The Department maintains records of the country of return for people who are removed from immigration detention however, 'country of domicile' is not an item that the Department records. The Department is not able to record country of return for people who depart Australia from the community while holding a Bridging Visa E.
3. The number of irregular maritime arrivals as a proportion of overall compliance related departure was:
 - none of 881 in 2008-09;
 - 76 of 1113 in 2009-10; and
 - four of 288 from 1 July 2010 to 8 November 2010.

The decision that the person was not owed protection may have occurred in a previous financial year to that in which the person left Australia.