

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(279) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

- (1) In what ways will the proposed regional processing centre on East Timor differ from the centre that previously operated on Manus Island?
- (2) Will people be free to come and go from the centre as they pleased?
- (3) Will they be able to work in the local community?

Answer:

(1) One element of a Regional Protection Framework is the development of a regional processing centre, which would contribute to providing a fair and orderly process for assessing refugee claims and resettlement of those in need of protection, in a manner consistent with the Refugees Convention.

The framework involves the development of a comprehensive approach to the management of irregular migration through cooperation with countries of transit, destination and origin as well as relevant UN agencies and international organisations.

(2) and (3) Discussions with regional partners, including East Timor, regarding the Regional Protection Framework and the development of a regional processing centre are ongoing. As such, operational arrangements for the proposed centre are yet to be finalised. Any such arrangements will ultimately be determined in conjunction with the host nation.