

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(342) Program 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Cash asked:

I refer to the Answer to QON 46 in which it was stated that to 31 May 2010 of the 4286 visas granted under the onshore component of the 2009-2010 Humanitarian Program, 14 visas had been granted under Ministerial Intervention Powers.

- (a) In each of the 14 cases please outline why the Ministerial Intervention Power was exercised.
- (b) Please update the Answer to QON 46 to 22 October 2010.

Answer:

- (a) Given privacy considerations, the specific details of each individual case cannot be disclosed. The former Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans, chose to exercise his public interest powers under section 417 of the *Migration Act 1958* for each of the fourteen people (which included dependant family members) to grant a visa on the grounds of either serious mental health concerns or a serious medical condition. In each case the former Minister chose to intervene and grant a subclass 202 Global Humanitarian visa which provided certain and immediate access to Medicare, welfare support and trauma counselling.
- (b) During 2009–10, 4534 visas were counted against the onshore component of the Humanitarian Program. These included:
 - 2148 Protection visas granted to Irregular Maritime Arrivals (IMAs)
 - 2367 Protection visas granted to non-IMAs
 - 11 program-countable¹ visas granted under Ministerial Intervention powers
 - 8 program-countable Resolution of Status visas.

¹ Only visas granted to persons who have not previously held a Humanitarian Program visa are counted against the Program. As such, children born to Temporary Protection visa holders who are later included in their Resolution of Status visa application are not counted.

To 30 September 2010, 920 visas had been granted under the onshore component of the 2010–11 Humanitarian Program. These included:

- 460 Protection visas granted to Irregular Maritime Arrivals (IMAs)
- 460 Protection visas granted to non-IMAs.