

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(57) Program 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Cash (L&CA 58 and written) asked:

(1) How much funding was provided to the IOM for activities in the region during the 2009-10 financial year?

(2) What activities did Australia fund and what was the outcome of those activities? Eg how many asylum seekers did IOM look after?

Answer:

(1) During 2009-10, an amount of \$26.5 million was provided to the IOM by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) in the Asia-Pacific region. This figure does not include IOM activities undertaken in Australia.

(2) Activities that were funded by DIAC and their outcomes are provided below:

- IOM provided care and maintenance to an average of 1,179 intercepted irregular migrants per month in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor;
- IOM provided assistance to Indonesian authorities to manage migration, including monitoring and managing irregular migration flows and people smuggling activities;
- IOM secured community accommodation for intercepted irregular migrants in Indonesia;
- IOM provided assistance to support Indonesia to undertake minor refurbishments, address overcrowding and improve conditions in immigration detention facilities across Indonesia;
- IOM performed an enhanced migration management project in East Timor that has enabled the transition of the Department of Immigration being a unit within the national police to being an autonomous migration agency, drafted the Organic Law and Personnel Statutes which has been accepted by the Secretary of State for Security for submission to the Council of Ministers, and also the introduction of risk-based processing at the borders, most notably by assisting the Government to reach a decision to restrict access to visas on arrivals to nationals of low risk countries;
- Australia has a contract with IOM which funds refugee travel and related services for Refugee entrants and medical screening costs for all humanitarian applicants;

- Australia has a contract with IOM for the Australian Cultural Orientation Program (AUSCO) – a program for refugee and humanitarian visa holders preparing to be resettled in Australia;
- DIAC has recently entered into arrangements with IOM to reduce the vulnerabilities of Rohingyas through community outreach and increase their access to social and health services in Thailand. Outcomes in relation to these activities will become evident in 2010-11;
- IOM provided a needs assessment report into biometric capabilities for the Sri Lankan Department of Immigration and Emigration;
- DIAC has recently entered into arrangements with IOM to provide post arrival and reintegration support to returnees to Sri Lanka from Australia. Outcomes in relation to these activities will become evident in 2010-11;
- IOM provided logistical and administrative support to the Bali Process, including assistance with organisation of DIAC-led meetings and workshops;
- IOM provided assistance for a border management capacity building project to enhance the capacity of the Solomon Islands government to control its borders through drafting legislation and new visa types;
- IOM provided a program to assist Pacific Island countries effect the voluntary return home of irregular migrants; and
- IOM continues to provide advisory and technical support services to the Papua New Guinea Immigration Service.