

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 17 OCTOBER 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(SE11/0337) Program 4.2: Onshore Detention Network

Senator Cash asked:

Christmas Island: The Public Works Committee raised some concerns about the way in which sludge from the sewerage treatment plant was affecting the groundwater on the Island? Is the Department also concerned about that? Has any work been done to ascertain the extent of the contamination possible? What is the anticipated cost of that going to be? Who is paying for that?

Answer:

The Department has raised concerns with Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government (DRARDLG) in relation to the disposal of the by-product waste from the wastewater treatment plant, known as sludge.

As DRARDLG is the lead agency on Christmas Island it has responsibility for any assessment of possible contaminants including the water supply.