

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 15 October 2012**

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

**(SE12/0660) PROGRAM – 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management**

Senator Hanson-Young (written) asked:

Offshore processing - Nauru: How is the department planning to deal with water supply issues? What will the cost of providing extra fresh water be and will those costs be covered by Australia's foreign aid budget?

*Answer:*

As at 15 October 2012, the Government of Nauru advised that there are 3 desalination units in various states of repair. A new unit will be installed soon to supplement the existing units.

In the initial set up of the temporary facility the Department of Defence installed a unit on a short term basis to provide water without imposing on the Nauru water supply. This unit was returned to Australia as it was required for possible humanitarian and disaster relief capabilities.

The Department replaced this unit with a leased unit until such time as all the Government of Nauru units are operating to capacity. The leased unit provides enough potable water to supply the centre.

The leased unit costs \$148,000 per month, which includes the reverse osmosis water unit, power generator, land lease, security and maintenance personnel.

None of the reverse osmosis water units employed at the Nauru Regional Processing Centre utilised foreign aid. Any additional units, if required, would not be eligible for AusAid funding as they could not be directly attributed to assisting the local community.