

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE13/0069) PROGRAMME – Internal Product

Senator Singh (L&CA 124) asked:

Senator SINGH: What English-language training, if any, is provided to asylum seekers who arrive?

Dr Southern: For asylum seekers on bridging visas and in community detention there is access to an allocation of hours of English-language training, which is delivered I think by AMEP contractors, but it is a different part of the contract.

CHAIR: Who pays for that?

Dr Southern: Our department does.

Senator SINGH: Is it a compulsory or an elective thing?

Dr Southern: It is elective. It is a limited amount, available to adults in community detention and also on bridging visas.

CHAIR: Can you tell me, on notice, how much that is, the total amount?

Dr Southern: Yes. I may be able to find it for you right now, but I can certainly take it on notice.

Answer:

Asylum seekers on bridging visas and in community detention are able to access 45 and 90 hours of English language training, respectively, if needed. These classes are delivered by AMEP contractors under separate arrangements from the AMEP programme. The Department pays for the classes and participation is on a voluntary basis.