

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE MIGRATION AMENDMENT (DESIGNATED UNAUTHORISED ARRIVALS) BILL 2006 PUBLIC HEARING: 26 MAY 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

p. 5 Proof Hansard

Senator MASON—Mr Wright, could you help me with a bit of background information. I am trying to take up where Senator Bartlett left off. What percentage of people who arrive by boat in this country are ultimately classified as refugees? Do you know?

Mr Wright—No, I do not know off the top of my head. We do get statistics from the government of Australia that are regularly published by UNHCR in its annual statistics.

Senator MASON—Can you take that on notice.

Mr Wright—I can take that on notice.

Senator MASON—Can you also take on notice what the percentage is of people who arrive by air and claim refugee status and are finally determined to be refugees. I think it might be interesting for the committee as a bit of background.

Answer

For the six year period between July 1999 and June 2005, the Department approved, in the first instance, some 79% of initial protection visa applications lodged by unauthorised boat arrivals.

In 2004-05 there were some 1600 unauthorised air arrivals (persons refused immigration clearance at the airports). In the same period, as at 26 May 2006, there were 43 initial protection visa applications lodged by such arrivals of which 28 resulted in a protection visa grant at either primary stage or after merits review. On that basis less than 2% of unauthorised air arrivals resulted in a PV grant.