



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Main Committee

APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2010-2011

Consideration in Detail

SPEECH

Wednesday, 16 June 2010

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Wednesday, 16 June 2010
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Questioner
Speaker Keenan, Michael, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Mr KEENAN (Stirling) (6.58 pm)—It seems that, when time is limited, running through all the questions I want to ask is a process that works. After I have done that, perhaps the Attorney-General and the minister could respond to questions. If they would nod and accept that, it would be great, and we could then proceed on that basis.

Question 1: in the 2009-10 budget, it was stated that funding arrangements for the Air Security Officer Program, otherwise known as the air marshal program, would be reviewed in the 2010-11 budget. Can you confirm whether the government has scrapped this program; and, if so, when will it end? If there are plans to continue it, will the Attorney-General or the minister—whichever they prefer—detail the amount of funding?

Question 2: as part of the government's announcement to spend \$69 million over the next four years to introduce biometric data checks for Australian visa applications, does the government have any plans to initiate biometric data sharing arrangements with Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Indonesia?

Question 3: will the Attorney-General—or, probably more appropriately, the minister—give a breakdown of the government's 2007 election promise of 500 extra sworn AFP officers? How many have actually been recruited and sworn in; and, since December 2007, how many staff have been made redundant?

Question four: will the minister identify what allocations have been made for the purchase of the new Bay class vessels for Customs? We understand an allocation was made in the budget, as it was announced, but we understand that due to ongoing negotiations with the possible tenderers the final costings of the vessels cannot be revealed. However, given the Prime Minister's intention of bringing the budget back into surplus in 2014, and therefore that no new major budgetary measures could be announced, can the minister identify exactly where in this budget funds have been allocated to cover the cost of these vessels?

Question five: with reference to the R18+ classification for computer games public consultation, given that submissions have now closed and the government has received approximately 60,000 submissions, will the Attorney now confirm whether the government will be supporting an R18+ classification for computer games?

Question six: with reference to a report in the *Australian* on 15 June this year, despite only one per cent of border detections occurring at our ports yet resulting in 80 per cent of the cocaine, MDMA and amphetamine-type stimulants coming into Australia, can you explain what is being done to combat the flood of illicit drugs coming through our ports?

The final question: with reference to the Western Australian government's recent moratorium on people smugglers being processed in Western Australia, will the Attorney confirm whether the government will stop using Western Australia as a dumping ground for people smugglers and distribute the burden of detaining these criminals across all states?