

**1. Can you explain each scheme – what an immigrant requires to be eligible, how those repatriated benefit, when the scheme was introduced?**

- The Home Office introduced AVR (Assisted Voluntary Return) programmes in 1999.
- The programme that facilitates the return of those who have made an asylum application is called VARRP (Voluntary Assisted and Return and Reintegration Programme). VARRP is available to all current and failed asylum seekers of all nationalities or those who have been granted time limited Exceptional Leave to Remain, Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave to Remain. The programme is co-funded by the European Refugee Fund (ERF) and the Home Office, and since it was introduced in 1999 it has been operated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on behalf of the Home Office.
- All of those who leave the UK under VARRP receive a package of help and assistance which includes advice and information for the returnee whilst they are still in the UK, help with obtaining travel documentation, an international flight, assistance and reception arrangements at the UK airport of departure and the destination airport and onward domestic transportation to the returnees final destination in the country of return. In addition returnees receive a package of 'in kind' reintegration assistance which helps to support the sustainability of the return. Depending on the facilities available in the country of return, and returnees personal preferences, IOM will provide the returnee with help in starting up a small business (supplies, equipment, payment of rent), vocational training courses, job placements or education.
- Reintegration assistance was first introduced in 2002 when it was valued at £500; in 2005 it was increased to £1000. In 2006 there was an enhanced package for those who had applied for asylum on or before 31 December 2005 which gave reintegration assistance to the value of £3000. Assistance is available to all returnees; in the case of a family it is available to each family member including children.
- AVRIM (Assisted Voluntary Return of Irregular Migrants) was introduced as five month pilot in November 2004. The programme was created in response to the inability of irregular migrants to leave the UK under the previous voluntary return programmes which were all targeted at current/failed asylum seekers. AVRIM is also operated on behalf of the Home Office by IOM.
- The target groups for AVRIM returns are irregular migrants who have been trafficked to the UK, those who have been smuggled or have otherwise entered the UK illegally, and those who have breached one or more conditions of their leave to enter/temporary leave to remain. Since its inception AVRIM provides returnees with counselling and information in the UK, transport to Heathrow airport, IOM representation and assistance at the airport up to the departure gate, an international flight, reception arrangements at the international airport of arrival and onward domestic transportation to the final destination (coach, train, taxi or a flight in large countries, e.g. Brazil). If a returnee requires a medical escort due to ill health this is provided at a UK doctor's request, typically these are provided for patients who have mental illnesses or severe disabilities. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 reintegration assistance worth up to £1000 of 'in kind' help has been provided to vulnerable individuals; generally this is aimed at victims of trafficking, unaccompanied minors and the disabled. The returnees are not provided with cash but are helped with education, training, small business start up, rent or counselling (for victims of sex trafficking) through IOMs international offices in the countries of return.
- If arrangements are already in place for an applicants enforced removal they are not Eligible for the programme. If an applicant is the subject of a signed Deportation Order (DO) they are also excluded from the AVR programmes. Any person who has received a custodial sentence in excess of 12 months will also be ineligible for an AVR programme.
- The Return to Afghanistan Programme (RAP) is a country specific programme to help support the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan. The programme is wholly funded by the Home Office. It commenced in August 2002 as a six month pilot and has received further extensions. In addition to assistance with flights and internal travel, advice on reintegration and the availability of services (as with VARRP), RAP also offers small resettlement grants as an incentive to return. The grants available are £600 per adult and up to £2,500 for a family.
- RAP is restricted to those who, as of 20 August 2002, were awaiting a decision on an asylum claim; appealing a refusal or have been granted exceptional leave to remain in the United Kingdom.

2. For each year since the schemes began, including this year (or the latest 12 month period for which you have figures), can you give figures for the following. For each can you give a breakdown according to nationality?

a) how many were sent home under the schemes.

- See Annex A. Only information for the first 9 months of the 2006 is available. Relevant information on Q4 2006 is not currently available but is due to be published in the near future.

b) How many returned or tried to return to UK after taking advantage of the schemes and how many of these allowed to stay.

- We only centrally record information on those that have attempted to return to the UK since March 2003 and this is detailed below. Information concerning those that have attempted to return to the UK before March 2003 is not held in the format you have requested. To provide you with this information we would need to run a report detailing all individuals that have left the UK under VARRP in this time period and then look at each case individually to determine whether there is any evidence of their return or attempted return to the UK. Under the FOIA we are not required to do this to respond to a request.

<b>2003</b>	118	5%
<b>2004</b>	104	4%
<b>2005</b>	83	3%
<b>2006 (January – August)</b>	16	½%

- Of those who have returned or attempted to return since March 2003, 42% were spouses of settled persons and were granted leave to remain or indefinite leave to remain, 13% were granted EEA residence cards as dependants of EU nationals, 10% had EEA Registration Certificates, 9% were illegal entrants or overstayers, 8% were refused leave to enter as visitors and 7% claimed asylum.
- Reintegration assistance under VARRP can only be accessed by returnees on return to their country of origin. Under the enhanced scheme returnees also receive a £500 resettlement grant which is usually payable at the airport.

c) How many have used or tried to use one of the schemes more than once. How many were actually allowed to make use of it again. If not were they allowed to stay in the UK?

- The number of people who have voluntarily returned to their country of origin under the programme and who have subsequently returned to the UK and again applied for voluntary return totals 9. Out of the 9 there was only one case where the applicant returned under VARRP on both occasions and benefited from reintegration assistance worth £797 for a business set up when the individual first returned under VARRP. At no point has anyone received reintegration assistance on more than one occasion.
- Since 1<sup>st</sup> August 2005, the eligibility criteria for VARRP exclude any applicant who has previously returned under VARRP and then reapplied for return under the programme on their return to the UK.

d) How much does it cost for the various schemes. Please can you break down, if possible, according to cost of air fares, cash gifts, benefits (i.e. education or training)

**Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme**

<b>PROGRAMME YEAR</b>	<b>AIRFARE</b>	<b>ASSISTANCE</b>	<b>CASH BENEFIT</b>
<b>2000</b>	£84,882	None	None
<b>2001</b>	£347,102	None	None
<b>2002</b>	£461,538	£21,171	None

<b>2003</b>	£614,181	£240,995	None
<b>2004</b>	£781,575	£958,850	None
<b>2005</b>	£1,1736,351	£2,196,617	£355,500

**Assisted Voluntary Returns for Irregular Migrants**

<b>CALENDAR YEAR</b>	<b>AIRFARE</b>	<b>ASSISTANCE</b>
<b>2004</b>	£2,933	None
<b>2005</b>	£187,249	None
<b>2006</b>	£78,993	£13,884

**Return to Afghanistan Programme**

<b>PROGRAMME YEAR</b>	<b>AIRFARE</b>
<b>2003</b>	£2,948
<b>2004</b>	£9,442
<b>2005</b>	£13,311
<b>2006</b>	Unavailable at present

**3. What is the average cost to the UK Government of each failed asylum seeker or illegal immigrant before they are deported – for example cost of tracking down, processing claim, keeping in detention centre etc.**

- The various elements of enforcement costs for removing failed asylum seekers was published and can be found in Appendix 2 of the NAO report “Returning Failed Asylum Applicants”. This can be accessed via the NAO website: [www.nao.org.uk](http://www.nao.org.uk)

## ANNEX A

	VARP 1999	VARP 2000	VARP 2001	VARRP 2002	VARRP 2003	VARRP 2004	AVRIM 2004	VARRP 2005	AVRIM 2005
<b>Afghanistan</b>				9	33	173		376	4
<b>Albania</b>	13	266	623	547	724	604	1	509	27
<b>Algeria</b>	2	1	6	4	36	36		39	4
<b>Angola</b>					13	25		41	2
<b>Argentina</b>						1			
<b>Armenia</b>		2	11	1	7	3		5	
<b>Australia</b>									1
<b>Azerbaijan</b>			1	1	10	2		7	3
<b>Bangladesh</b>			4		4	1		4	
<b>Barbados</b>									
<b>Belarus</b>		1	5		1	1		5	
<b>Belize</b>									1
<b>Benin</b>					1				
<b>Bhutan</b>									
<b>Bolivia</b>				3	8	16		12	31
<b>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</b>	3	4	2		2	3		6	
<b>Botswana</b>					4	2			2
<b>Brazil</b>			3	1	4	2		1	134
<b>Bulgaria</b>		1	4	1		1			
<b>Burkina Faso</b>								1	
<b>Burundi</b>						2		1	
<b>Cameroon</b>				2	2	8		8	
<b>Canada</b>									4
<b>Central African Republic</b>					1				
<b>Chad</b>					2			6	
<b>Chechnya</b>									
<b>Chile</b>					5	4		2	
<b>China</b>				1	3	2		33	10
<b>Colombia</b>	1		3	11	21	63		52	11
<b>Comoros Island</b>									
<b>Congo</b>			1	1					
<b>Congo (Zaire)</b>									
<b>Congo Brazzaville</b>						3		6	
<b>Congo DRC</b>					3	4		10	
<b>Costa Rica</b>									
<b>Croatia</b>	2	7	3	3	11	34		20	3
<b>Cuba</b>									
<b>Cyprus</b>			3		13	5			
<b>Czech Republic</b>			15	93	336	59			
<b>Djibouti</b>								1	
<b>Dominica</b>									1
<b>Dominican Republic</b>									
<b>Ecuador</b>			12	10	34	42		14	9
<b>Ecuatorial Guinea</b>									
<b>Egypt</b>			1		2	2			
<b>Eritrea</b>			5	1	2				

<b>Estonia</b>		5	18	8	7				
<b>Ethiopia</b>	2		2	4	4	13		14	
<b>Fiji</b>									
<b>Gambia</b>						1		1	
<b>Georgia</b>		1	1	1	7	16	1	23	13
<b>Ghana</b>		1			1	1		3	1
<b>Guatemala</b>						5		1	
<b>Guinea</b>					1				
<b>Guinea Bissau</b>								1	
<b>Guinea Conakry</b>						4		2	
<b>Guyana</b>									
<b>Haiti</b>									
<b>Honduras</b>									1
<b>Hong Kong</b>					1				1
<b>Hungary</b>				1	3				
<b>India</b>		2	8	1	6	17		22	6
<b>Indonesia</b>				1	1	1		1	
<b>Iran</b>	2	31	179	112	176	175		224	
<b>Iraq</b>		2	3		91	433		768	
<b>Israel</b>		1	4	4	5	11		22	
<b>Ivory Coast</b>		1		1	3	4		5	
<b>Jamaica</b>			1		5	5	1	11	25
<b>Japan</b>						1			
<b>Jordan</b>				3	1	8		12	
<b>Kazakhstan</b>		1		2	3	4		6	
<b>Kenya</b>		2		3	11	15		6	2
<b>Kosova</b>		157	134	109	116	145		168	10
<b>Kuwait</b>									
<b>Kyrgistan</b>						2		3	
<b>Latvia</b>	3	3	5	16	44	27			
<b>Lebanon</b>		5	13	3	16	13			1
<b>Lesotho</b>								19	
<b>Liberia</b>						3		3	
<b>Libya</b>			1		1	1			
<b>Lithuania</b>			5	23	33	16			
<b>Macedonia</b>			4	13	8	5		5	1
<b>Malawi</b>						6		1	4
<b>Malaysia</b>				1		3	1	1	11
<b>Mali</b>									
<b>Mauritius</b>						1			1
<b>Mexico</b>					1				1
<b>Moldova</b>		1	14	7	13	10	1	6	4
<b>Mongolia</b>			1	2	6			20	3
<b>Montserrat</b>									
<b>Montenegro</b>									
<b>Morocco</b>						2			
<b>Mozambique</b>			2						
<b>Myanmar</b>					2			1	
<b>Namibia</b>									
<b>Nepal</b>						3		1	2
<b>New Zealand</b>									
<b>Niger</b>			1						
<b>Nigeria</b>	1			1	7	9		12	2
<b>Pakistan</b>		1	18	15	41	57		82	12
<b>Palestine</b>			1	4	1	5		6	
<b>Panama</b>									
<b>Paraguay</b>						1			
<b>Peru</b>				2					

<b>Philippines</b>								1	
<b>Poland</b>		2	6	11	108	45			
<b>Romania</b>	4	16	25	40	13	5		4	2
<b>Russia</b>		8	16	11	24	21		38	4
<b>Rwanda</b>	4					5		2	
<b>Samoa</b>									
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>					1				
<b>Senegal</b>					2			3	
<b>Serbia</b>				1	2	2		4	
<b>Seychelles</b>					2	8			
<b>Sierra Leone</b>		1		4	9	10		6	
<b>Slovak Republic</b>	8	3	3		13	2		17	
<b>Slovenia</b>									
<b>Somalia</b>		1	4		3	14			
<b>South Africa</b>				4	28	17		33	8
<b>South Korea</b>									
<b>Sri Lanka</b>		6	14	52	197	211	1	252	21
<b>St Kitts</b>									
<b>St Lucia</b>									1
<b>St Vincent</b>						1			1
<b>Sudan</b>		1		1		3		11	
<b>Swaziland</b>									
<b>Syria</b>			1		1	1		7	
<b>Tanzania</b>				1	1	12			1
<b>Thailand</b>							1		3
<b>Togo</b>			1			3		3	
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>						1		1	6
<b>Tunisia</b>									
<b>Turkey</b>		5	5	10	18	28		24	
<b>Uganda</b>		1	4	1	11	22		31	2
<b>Ukraine</b>	1	5	8	7	15	15	3	18	7
<b>Uruguay</b>									
<b>USA</b>		1			1	13		1	
<b>Uzbekistan</b>						2			1
<b>Venezuela</b>			1		1			1	3
<b>Vietnam</b>					3	7		10	5
<b>Yemen</b>	1				4	13		4	
<b>Yugoslavia</b>	1		1						
<b>Zambia</b>		1			2	1		1	1
<b>Zimbabwe</b>		1	1	6	36	61		103	11

#### Returns under RAP

<b>2002</b>	21
<b>2003</b>	69
<b>2004</b>	59
<b>2005</b>	48
<b>2006</b>	0