

Question on notice no. 155

Portfolio question number: BE18/090

2018-19 Budget estimates

Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, Home Affairs Portfolio

Senator Rex Patrick: asked the Department of Home Affairs on 22 May 2018—

Mr Pezzullo: If you're asking me to take on notice coming back to the committee on data we have that's pertinent to the question of regional-locality-type visas, I'll see what's available and I'll take that on notice.

Senator PATRICK: And things like the constraints. I'll go back and have a look at the Hansard, as you suggested—and thank you for that suggestion—but I'd be interested in some of the other constraints: as you said, constitutional constraints and any other constraints that might bind you or inhibit any policy thinking.

Mr Pezzullo: Once we start to enumerate those factors, we might as well give you the policy paper. It's really a matter for the minister, so I'll refer your request to the minister. You're almost describing the policy.

Answer —

Data on regional and metropolitan primary visa grants:

- The Department of Home Affairs commissions the Continuous Survey of Australian Migrants (CSAM), which surveys recently arrived migrants granted skilled and partner visas.
- The CSAM shows that a small proportion of the migrants surveyed in the CSAM settled in regional areas (about 6 per cent). The rest settled in major cities. Approximately 10 per cent of skilled stream migrants surveyed who settled in a regional area moved to a major city between 6 and 18 months after settling.
- Data on the number of skilled migrants settling in regional and metropolitan areas of Australia are provided in Table 1:

Table 1: Regional versus metropolitan split of ENS, RSMS and Temporary skilled visa

Visa Program	Subclass	2015-16		2016-17	
		Regional	Metropolitan	Regional	Metropolitan
Employer nomination scheme (ENS)	186	1,678 (10%)	14,850 (90%)	1,965 (11%)	15,724 (89%)

Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)	187	3,070 (53%)	2,672 (47%)	2,526 (53%)	2,240 (47%)
Temporary Work (Skilled)	457	12,509 (28%)	32,886 (72%)	12,115 (26%)	34,365 (74%)

Source: *The Department of Home Affairs*

** Note: In November 2017, the Perth metropolitan area was removed from eligibility for the RSMS visa. Prior to this, the entire state of WA was considered 'regional' for the purpose of this visa. This table uses the most recent regional definition, which treats Perth as a metropolitan area. Using the geographic definition that existed at the time, the RSMS visa grants would be 100 per cent in regional areas.*