

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

**ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 27 February 2017**

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

**(AE17/036) - Assessment of the quality of support provided by BMA - Programme 2.3: Visas**

Senator McKim, Nick (L&CA 68) asked:

Senator McKIM: Thanks for the provision of that. Should the committee take from that that there was no quality assurance in terms of the quality of services provided by BMA and that in fact the verification progress process just ensured validity? There had been a valid visa application lodged, the invoice was correctly rendered and there were some services provided—there is nothing in there that would suggest to me that there was any quality assurance work was done by the department. Would that be a fair outtake from that answer?

Mr Manthorpe: I would not necessarily conclude we did not look at the quality of the service. The IAAAS contract is all about helping certain categories of people to make a visa application. If the visa applications had been made then, ipso facto, the service had been provided. I do not have any information as to whether there was a qualitative assessment of those visa applications. It may or may not have said something about what BMA did.

Senator McKIM: Could I ask you to take that on notice, please—

Mr Manthorpe: I am happy to do that.

Senator McKIM: specifically in relation to whether there was any assessment of the quality of support provided by BMA, as opposed to the validity of visa applications made.

Mr Manthorpe: I note that the answer also indicated that other providers exist, so if the individuals required some further service it was possible for them to avail themselves of that, notwithstanding that BMA Lawyers went broke.

*Answer:*

IAAAS providers were contracted by the Department to deliver applications assistance services through a tender process that assessed the capability of each potential provider to deliver the service. BMA Lawyers was one of the organisations selected through this process.

The Department did not undertake a specific assessment of the quality of support provided by BMA beyond confirming application validity at the time that IAAAS invoices were paid. Confirmation of application validity requires an assessment of substantial compliance with the completion of the application form, amongst other requirements.

It is also noted that the Department has no record of any complaints concerning the quality of services provided by BMA Lawyers under the IAAAS. There are no published disciplinary decisions by the Office of Migration Agents Registration Authority concerning Mr Burhala.