

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

**ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 27 February 2017**

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

**(AE17/080) - Australian Coastal Shipping, Canada Steamship Lines Australia - allegations of rorting the 457 visa program - Programme 2.3: Visas**

Senator Pratt, Louise (L&CA 125) asked:

Senator PRATT: In relation to Australian Coastal Shipping, Canada Steamship Lines Australia, there is an allegation that they are rorting the 457 visa program via deceptive conduct—that is, involving a process of sponsoring foreign labour under non-seafaring occupations that appear in the CSOL that do not match the licensed seafaring occupations that can be employed in Australia that are regulated by marine orders issued under the Navigation Act 2012. Are you aware of any allegations regarding those companies?

Mr Manthorpe: Senator, I am not aware and I do not think anyone at the table will be aware of the detail of those allegations. I just think we should take all that on notice.

Senator PRATT: If you can take that on notice, and I would ask: what action has the department taken or will it take to eliminate that particular practice that I described, and are you aware of other allegations where companies are substituting—

CHAIR: Assuming that it is true.

Senator PRATT: I characterised it as an allegation.

Mr Manthorpe: Yes, I know that, Senator, and it was about a specific company and a set of specific things. It does not do anyone any good if we get into speculating about what we might or might not do in those circumstances. We need to engage with our ABF colleagues who do the compliance part of this and the investigations part of this where that is necessary, and we will work across the portfolio and come back with an appropriate response.

*Answer:*

The department is aware of allegations in relation to Australian Coastal Shipping, Canada Steamship Lines Australia. However, it is not appropriate to comment on ongoing matters.

Businesses which sponsor subclass 457 visa holders are required by law to comply with their obligations, including the obligation to ensure that a sponsored person works in their nominated position. The department's Sponsor Monitoring Unit audits compliance with this obligation and is able to apply administrative sanctions where breaches are found. Serious breaches of sponsor obligations and migration fraud are referred to the Investigations Division for potential criminal investigation.