

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 23 May 2017

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(BE17/130) - Pay of Foreign Workers - Show stands - Programme 2.3: Visas

Senator Roberts, Malcolm (L&CA 85 and 86) asked:

Senator ROBERTS: I appreciate that these are probably difficult to answer. Is it true that foreign workers get paid back in their own country, thereby being paid lower wages than Australians and not contributing to our tax system whilst also undercutting Australian companies who are tendering for the same show stand contracts?

Ms Dacey: One of the conditions or factors that we look at when we issue these visas is: are there local skills? Are there locally trained people who could do this? The nature, in particular, of some of the stands and things that they are building is they are quite proprietary, so there is quite a bit of intellectual property and ownership in that. That can sometimes factor into why local workers are not necessarily able to be skilled up quickly. There is a timing issue and these things come in and out.

Mr Pezzullo: And the wages.

Ms Dacey: And the wages would be—I would have to take it on notice—I imagine no worse than Australian workers.

Answer:

The application process for the Temporary Work (Short Stay Specialist) visa (subclass 400) requires the applicant or the Australian proposer to demonstrate that, in respect of the work to be undertaken, the applicant will be paid in accordance with the relevant Australian award. It is acceptable for the visa holder to be paid either by their overseas employer and/or by the Australian proposer.