

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 23 May 2017

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(BE17/137) - Impact of visa charges on 2017-18 budget - Programme 2.3: Visas

Senator Pratt, Louise (L&CA 95) asked:

Senator PRATT: According to the portfolio budget statements 2017-18, paper 1.11, Immigration and Border Protection portfolio, the department is currently achieving the criterion that 'Australia's visa programs are responsive to the needs of the economy,' including the target number of visas granted under the visitor visa program that supports global tourism and business travel to Australia. Are you confident that these visa changes will not affect that?

Mr Groves: I think that particular measure is going to our ability to process the visa applications. As I previously stated in my evidence, our modelling was that the indexation of visa charges would only have a negligible impact on demand.

Senator PRATT: When it comes to the same outcome—that is, outcome 2.3—the performance criteria for 2017-18 and beyond remain similar to 2016-17. I need to ask: if you are changing the landscape in which that outcome exists, which you are clearly doing, why are you not also adapting the performance criteria?

Mr Groves: I will have to check, but the measure, as I said, is going to our ability to process the visa applications. What we are stating in the portfolio budget statement is that the measure will (1) be fully outlined in our corporate plan, but (2) be at a similar construction around the measure, as what is currently in place for 2016-17.

Answer:

The performance measures in 2017-18 for Program 2.3 will be similar to the measures published in the Portfolio Budget Statements for the 2016-2017 year.