

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/178) PROGRAMME – Internal Product

Senator Cameron (Written) asked:

With reference to the government's Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda statement in which the government said:

“The Government will reform the 457 visa programme in line with the (457s) review's key recommendations. In particular, we will reduce, where appropriate, burdens placed on business by unnecessary regulations, while enhancing the integrity of, and compliance within the programme to ensure that Australian workers have priority.”

- a. Is the Labour Market Testing (LMT) requirement, where an employer has to advertise the vacancy to Australian workers first before lodging an application for a 457 visa worker considered a “burden”?
- b. For those occupations where the employer is currently required to use LMT, how many Australian citizens or permanent residents initially applied for those jobs in the period from 1 September 2013 to 30 June 2014?
- c. On how many occasions has an employer been required to provide written evidence of job applications received or interviews conducted under labour market testing requirements? What proportion of all applications for 457 visas subject to LMT is this?

Answer:

- a. The integrity review into the 457 programme found that there is considerable scope for streamlining aspects of the programme. However, while the review recommended that LMT be abolished, the government has stated that it will remain in place at this time.
- b. 457 sponsors are required to provide evidence of their attempts to recruit Australian citizens or permanent residents to satisfy the decision maker that there were no suitably qualified and experienced Australian citizens or permanent residents readily available.

The department is unable to advise how many Australian citizens or permanent residents applied for positions subject to LMT as this information is not always provided by sponsors and when it is provided, this information is not recorded in the department's systems for reporting purposes.

- c. 457 sponsors are not required to provide this level of detail when lodging a nomination. While this information may be provided, the department is unable to report on this information as it is not recorded in the department's systems for reporting purposes.