

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/331) PROGRAMME – 3.1 and 3.2: Compliance Detention and Status Resolution

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

- How many people in total are currently on bridging visas?
- How many people on bridging visas have not had their visas renewed on expiry? Why have their visas not been renewed?
- How long was the period between expiry and renewal? Please detail the time periods and average time without a visa renewal.

Answer:

Assuming that the question relates to Illegal Maritime Arrivals (IMAs), as at 27 November 2014, there were 25 084 IMAs in the community on Bridging E visas (BVEs): 15 535 with BVEs in effect and 9 549 whose BVEs had ceased.

Consideration of the grant of further BVEs was suspended pending finalisation of legislative and administrative arrangements for the implementation of a Code of Behaviour for BVE holders. The process of assessing and granting further BVEs to IMAs in the community whose previous BVE has ceased recommenced in April 2014 and is subject to each individual aged 18 years and older signing the Code of Behaviour.

Numbers of IMAs in the community with ceased BVEs are trending down as groups of 1000 are being triaged for re-grant.

As at 27 November 2014, the average time for which IMAs who are awaiting the grant of a further BVE have been unlawful is 228 days.

IMAs affected by delays in granting further BVEs who become unlawful as a result, but who meet all other eligibility requirements, continue to be eligible for the asylum seeker support programmes and associated financial and health support services.