

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3

Output Group: 3.3 – Support for the Australian education and training export industry and international relationships.

DEST Question No. E803_05

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

- a) Has the department held discussions with DIMIA aimed at coordinating the Government's approach to (1) attracting skilled and professional migrants and (2) attracting international students?
- b) Is the Skilled Independent Regional Visas (SIRV) program an example of the outcomes of such policy coordination?
- c) Is the Government considering further measures to coordinate the achievement of goals (1) and (2) described above? What measures?
- d) Does DEST have information from DIMIA on the numbers of international student graduates who would qualify under the SIRV criterion have successfully applied for permanent residency, since the introduction of the new measure? Can this be provided?

Answer:

Skilled and professional migrants

- a) DEST and DIMIA work cooperatively through a number of formal and informal fora to balance migration integrity with the promotion of a healthy international education export sector, and to develop measure to attract international students to Australia.

DIMIA consults widely about the Migration program, including measures to attract skilled and professional migrants, and DEST is included in the consultation process.
- b) The Skilled Independent Regional (SIR) Visa Programme was developed by DIMIA.

The Programme was the subject of extensive consultation between DEST, DIMIA, and other agencies with an interest in this issue.
- c) DEST and DIMIA, hold regular dialogue on policy matters, and this issue will be considered further through such dialogue.
- d) 1, 960 applications for SIR visas were received by DIMIA in the period 1 July 2004 to 31 January 2005. Of the decisions made so far, around 299 were successful in receiving SIR visa grants. Approximately 30% of these grants were made onshore to overseas students.