

**OPENING STATEMENT
ESTIMATES, FEBRUARY 2007**

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ATTACHMENT: PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE PALMER PROGRAMME

Initiative	Status
<i>Being more open and accountable</i>	
Governance and Assurance	A key emphasis over the last six months has been the importance of good governance through the Department. We now have a Governance and Leadership programme targeting the department's SES officers. The Department has promulgated three new Chief Executive Instructions: two on governance issues (Governance Principles and Governance Committees), and one on risk management. There has been a continued focus on promoting better practice in quality assurance and the benefits of systematically applying risk management principles as well as implementing a comprehensive internal audit programme. The Department has also instigated a review of the department's governance arrangements that will provide a timely assessment of how the existing governance structures are serving the organisational changes and directions.
Re-tendering for the Department's Detention Services Contract	The Department is in the process of re-tendering for Detention Services and Health Care Services. In preparation for the tenders the Department has developed a new service delivery model to ensure people are treated with dignity and respect and receive appropriate amenities. Significant stakeholder and industry consultations have been undertaken over the past few months with positive feedback on reforms to detention arrangements. The Department has determined that three tenders will be released for the provision of the next generation of services to these detention centres. An exposure draft for Immigration Detention Centres and Health Care tenders will be released on 28 February 2007.
Stakeholder Relationships	The Secretary and other executives continue high level engagement with organisations that have an interest in DIAC operations. The Secretary regularly writes to external stakeholders to keep them informed of issues in which they may have an interest and inviting feedback. A systematic approach to mapping the Department's stakeholders and identifying key issues is ensuring that the Department remains engaged with all relevant parties. The Secretary has appointed a principal adviser on community and stakeholder engagement. A new segment on stakeholder engagement will be posted to our Website in February 2007.

Fairer and more reasonable dealings with clients

Client service improvement programme	<p>The Client Service Charter was developed after extensive consultation with stakeholders and launched by the Minister in June 2006. The Department has sought to increase its understanding of client needs, preferences and expectations and build the capacity to measure the Department's performance against them, through conducting a series of surveys with clients. Improvements to the London and Ottawa contact centres have streamlined client service overseas. The DIAC web site has been improved to make access easier, with further improvements planned through better content management. A number of measures are underway to embed a client service culture, including Awards for Client Service excellence, and executive monitoring of the service delivery network.</p>
Client satisfaction surveys	<p>A client satisfaction survey has been conducted and the results are being collated. Consideration is being given to conducting further surveys.</p>
Centralised client feedback mechanisms	<p>Client compliments, suggestions and complaints are vital to improving the quality of our information, products and services. The Department has centralised the processing of these through the Global Feedback Unit (GFU) in Melbourne. The GFU collects, analyses and reports on all forms of feedback, including phone calls, web based and mail.</p> <p>The GFU is now further supported by the implementation of an electronic feedback handling and case management system, "RESOLVE". This facility was brought on line in December 2006. The system improves the ability to capture and manage feedback from multiple sources and delivers improved tracking and reporting functions. The facility offers improved support to the GFU, reducing manual workflows allowing staff more capacity to service client's requests.</p> <p>Enhancements to the "RESOLVE" system that will provide access to the Department's HREOC and Ombudsman's Sections, Privacy, FOI and Detention and Offshore Services Division are scheduled for implementation by May 2007.</p>
Community Care Pilot	<p>The Community Care Pilot initiative is a twelve month pilot that commenced on the 15 May 2006 in Sydney and Melbourne. The pilot involves providing services to DIAC clients who have complex needs and/or are considered to be vulnerable DIAC clients in the community. The pilot has key service provision components: community assistance, an immigration information service, and a limited legal advice service for a small target client group. It is contingent on referrals being made to the pilot service providers by DIAC case managers who provide overall service coordination and management of the pilot's highly vulnerable and complex cases.</p> <p>The Community Care Pilot has been developed in consultation with the community and other key stakeholders, and consultation is ongoing. All service providers are now operational and</p>

	<p>receiving appropriate referrals from DIAC case managers. The pilot is expected to receive between 200 – 400 clients and is on track to process the target referral number. Presently at the end of January 2007 there are over 110 clients being serviced by the pilot.</p>
Onshore Detention Strategy	<p>The onshore detention strategy will provide a sound base for onshore detention for the foreseeable future, providing flexible arrangements, including accommodation and services, to meet the forecast demand for the next 10 years.</p> <p>Upgrades to existing facilities continue and further construction tenders have been released to industry to continue the implementation of the strategy. Planning and design for Adelaide, Brisbane and Melbourne Immigration Transit Centres has commenced and planning and tendering continues for Baxter, Darwin and Perth upgrades. Perth residential housing centre has been handed over to DIAC from the builder. Maribyrnong (Melbourne) expansion works approved in the 2004-05 budget have been completed. The Villawood Immigration Detention Centre redevelopment is proceeding. It will be scrutinised by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works</p>
24/7 hotline for police and consular inquiries	<p>The 24/7 hotline facility known as the Immigration Status Service commenced operation in February 2006 and has been progressively rolled out to police services, embassies and high commissions. Full operation of this service was achieved in August 2006. The Immigration Status Service is being promoted through the DIAC national police awareness training package.</p>
Identity verification	<p>The National Identity Verification and Advice (NIVA) Section was established in May 2005 and has been expanded to provide a greater capacity for analysis, reporting and quality assurance. NIVA provides assistance to State and Territory Offices and developed operating procedures. Achievements in NIVA to date include finalisation of the MSI 409 “Establishing identity in the field and in detention”. Cases are monitored to ensure that attempts to establish identity have not stalled, and monthly statistics are gathered to identify trends and any areas of concerns.</p>
<i>Well trained and supported staff</i>	
Key Migration Series Instructions (MSIs)	<p>A number of key instructions have now been reviewed, including several which guide compliance officers in establishing identity and visa status. The remainder are being reviewed in the context of a broader departmental instruction reform project, which will provide additional guidance to staff across the range of Departmental instructions including MSIs.</p>
<i>System for People</i>	<p>In January the programme delivered a second minor business release aimed at enabling the new system architecture. This included upgrades to <i>ebusiness</i>, web platforms and legacy platforms. The programme is currently operating at an intense pace in build and test phases for the April 2007 release and the design phase for the July release. The major release in April 2007 includes five portals for client self-service, case management, visa processing, compliance and border security. These portals will be</p>

	<p>the first time our staff will have a single view of a customer dealing with the department in the key areas of Visa, Compliance and Case Management; and deliver comprehensive client-centric processing for all DIAC staff based on the various business roles they perform addressing one of the major findings of the Palmer Report.</p>
College of Immigration	<p>The College of Immigration has been established to provide training for individuals in key roles including compliance and detention officers. The College curriculum is being developed with careful attention to the recommendations of the Palmer and Comrie inquiries. Mr Mick Palmer AO APM has accepted an appointment as Chair of the College Board.</p> <p>The first course offered through the College, the Compliance Officer Pilot Course is now complete and participants have moved on to the workplace component of their training. The first phase of the Detention Officer Pilot Course has concluded with the second phase due to commence 21 May 2007. Roll out of both the Compliance and Detention Courses to State Offices is underway. The first college pilot of the Investigations course is due to commence 30 April 2007.</p>
Records Management Improvement Programme	<p>An upgrade of the Department's records management system, TRIM, was implemented in July 2006. Use of the system continues to increase, reflected in the number of active users and the volume of stored content. TRIM will continue to be enhanced to improve performance and staff usability, including the integration with IT initiatives to automate recordkeeping within the business process. A document imaging service is being developed for case management delivery, which will enable real time sharing of client and corporate records to assist case managers in managing individual case management plans.</p> <p>Recordkeeping training has been incorporated into a number of training programmes within the Training College curriculum, such as the induction program, compliance training program, detention program and the overseas training course and further modules are being developed for graduate induction and third party providers. A record keeping framework, incorporating continuous improvement for the next few years, is under development.</p>