

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 9 FEBRUARY 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(137) Program: Internal Product

Senator Eggleston asked:

- (1) What is the status of each election commitment within the portfolio?
- (2) Which election commitments are experiencing slippages? Why? Where relevant, what are the revised implementation dates? What are the implications of this slippage?

Answer:

The following table reports the status of pre-election commitments on specific immigration and citizenship issues, including those that were referred to the (then) Department of Finance and Administration for costings under the *Charter of Budget Honesty Act 1997*.

Changes from that reported in response to a similar Question on Notice from the October 2009 hearing of the Legislation and Constitution Affairs Committee are reported in italics.

Election commitment	Status	Is there slippage? Why	Revised implementation date. Implications of slippage.
Closure of the offshore processing centres in Nauru and Manus province (PNG)	The centres were closed from the end of March 2008.	The commitment was to close the centres from January 2008. However this proved impractical as the last asylum seeker in Nauru was not resettled until 8 February 2008 and notice had to be given to terminate contractual and other agreements with the centre managers and service providers.	Savings were some \$3 million less than stated in the election costings due to the additional 3 months of operations.
Create a new Visa option for crews of superyachts	Implemented 1 May 2008	No	Not applicable
Contribute to the construction of a multicultural centre in Mirrabooka (WA)	Initially scheduled for completion by June 2010.	Yes The Commonwealth has been undertaking community consultation and negotiating with the City of Stirling for a suitable location for the centre.	<i>The centre is scheduled to be completed by early 2011.</i>

Entertainment visa - introduce migration framework to make local artists part of touring productions	Not yet implemented	<i>Yes. A proposed framework has been developed by Commonwealth agencies responsible for the arts and immigration functions. On 22 December 2009 the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts called for public submissions on the proposed framework by 12 February 2010. Submissions will be taken into account in developing the final framework to implement this commitment.</i>	Late 2010
Strengthen the Adult Migrant English Program, to incorporate traineeships and pathways to employment	Implemented with effect from October 2008	No	Not applicable
Revision to measure: Australia-China Free Trade Agreement continuation of negotiations – efficiencies	The efficiencies (savings) in program costs were implemented with effect from January 2008	No	Not applicable
Abolishing Temporary Protection Visas	Implemented with effect from <i>August 2009</i>	No	Not applicable
Removal of differential treatment of same sex couples and their children	Implemented with effect from 1 July 2009	No	Not applicable