

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(139) Program 3.1: Border Management

Senator Trood (L&CA 35) asked:

What were the circumstances surrounding the grant of a visa to Mr Burnham Hanif and Mr Salim Atchia for the purpose of participating in the Conference, 'The struggle of Islam in the West' in July 2010.

Answer:

All persons applying for and electronic travel authority (ETA) or visas to travel to Australia are checked against DIAC's electronic alert list, the Movement Alert List (MAL), prior to a visa being granted. MAL records details of persons of possible concern to Australia including for reasons related to national security. Where a visa application triggers an alert of possible national security interest, it is referred to ASIO for advice. A visa is only issued once a non-prejudicial response is received.

Mr Hanif and Mr Atchia applied for and were granted visas to travel to Australia in June and May 2010 respectively. As neither person matched any current MAL record they were not referred to ASIO for security checking.