

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(43) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

Is the Department aware of concerns regarding the current IELTS testing system? If yes, what are they?

Answer:

The Department is aware of concerns regarding the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

There have been media reports over the past few years concerning alleged fraudulent activities relating to English language testing involving Student visa applicants. An example includes a report of a 'cheating industry' in China where certain persons sit exams for a fee. The Department has identified a number of cases of Student visa applicants using fraudulent documents.

In addition, the Department is aware of allegations that a staff member at Curtin University falsified IELTS test scores. This was reported by the media on 17 March 2011, and the Department is working with the Corruption and Crime Commission of Western Australia regarding its investigation of these matters.