

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(46) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

Why is the Department rather than an independent expert, conducting the review into the success or otherwise of the 457 visas?

Answer:

The Subclass 457 program is not currently in a review process.

The program was extensively reviewed in 2008-9 by three external expert groups:

- the business-led External Reference Group led by Peter Coates, Chief Executive of Xstrata;
- the Subclass 457 Integrity Review conducted by Industrial Relations Commissioner Barbara Deegan; and
- advice from the Skilled Migration Consultative Panel, which comprises industry, union and state government representatives.

The result of this three-fold review process was the introduction in September 2009 of significant, comprehensive reforms designed to ensure that the program is responsive to market needs while protecting the employment and training opportunities of Australians and overseas workers from exploitation.

There is no current demonstrable need to review the program again.