

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(85) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

Given that Net Overseas Migration (NOM) includes temporary and permanent migration and that temporary migration accounts for between 40% and 60% of NOM. Is it true that permanent migration level targeting is becoming less effective?

Answer:

Provided adequate migration policy settings are in place, the permanent migration program is effective in significantly influencing the level of net overseas migration (NOM) over the medium to long term.

While temporary migrants will be counted in NOM if they stay long enough in Australia, it is also true that most temporary migrants leave Australia (unless they obtain a permanent visa) and get counted out of NOM. Over the medium term to long term, the impact of temporary migrants on NOM is broadly neutral.

In addition, the Australian Bureau of Statistics disaggregates NOM data by visa component according to a person's *'initial category of travel'* where an individual must be assigned to one and only one movement. For example, if an international student entered Australia on a temporary student visa and then transitioned to a permanent skilled stream visa, they would still be counted as an international student for the purposes of NOM. This has the effect of overstating the temporary migration contribution to NOM.

More information can be found on the ABS website at:
<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3412.02008-09?OpenDocument>.