

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(86) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

How effective is national level migration targeting in dealing with labour market requirements in each State and Territory?

Answer:

The permanent migration program consists of a demand driven employer sponsored pathway, a regional sponsored pathway where applicants are sponsored by state or territory governments to address skill shortages specific to their jurisdictions, and the independent pathway where the migrant is not sponsored but possesses a critical skill of long-term benefit to the nation.

Priority is now given to employer sponsored visa applications. Employer sponsorship means that business accesses the skills they need directly, allowing the labour market to allocate skills where they are most in need. This visa category has increased from 15 230 visas granted in 2005-06 to 44 150 planned for 2010-11.

In addition, from the 2010-2011 program year State Migration Plans were negotiated for each State and Territory government. The effect of these plans is to better target the migration program to the labour market needs of each jurisdiction. Each Plan is based on objective evidence compiled by jurisdictions on their individual areas of skills need.

The numbers of state and territory sponsored migrants have been growing over recent years, from 8000 in 2005-06 to 24 000 planned in 2010-11. This is consistent with specific needs identified by each state and territory. These data can be accessed on the Department's website at:

<http://www.immi.gov.au/media/statistics/statistical-info/visa-grants/migrant.htm>.