

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### (AE12/0204) Program 1.1 Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

With reference to recommendation 4.1 of the National Resources Sector Employment Taskforce which recommends that the Department finalise 457 applications from the resources sector within five working days of a completed application being lodged. The recommendations were accepted by the Government on 11th March 2011.

- a. Is the Department currently meeting the five day turnaround time for processing of 457 visas in the resources sector? If not, why not?
- b. What percentage of applications for 457 visas in the resources sector are being finalised within the five day period?
- c. How does this compare to statistics prior to the NRSET report?

*Answer:*

All e-Lodged subclass 457 applications are currently being allocated within five days. This means that all decision ready applications are being finalised within this timeframe. The Department is therefore meeting its commitment to five day processing for complete resource sector applications.

The NRSET report indicated that in 2009-10 to 30 April 2010 53.5 per cent of all subclass 457 visa applications were approved within four weeks of lodgement with the Department. The median processing time during the same period was 20 days for applications in the mining industry and 24 days for applications the construction industry.

It is important to note that the Department can only finalise cases within five days when they are decision ready, meaning all required supporting evidence is provided at the time of lodgement. Those applications finalised outside the five day period are incomplete on lodgement.

Over the past six months three staff from the 457 service delivery network have been actively engaged with migration agents and key clients promoting and explaining the requirements and advantages of submitting a complete or decision ready applications. Additionally the Department's Outreach Officers have run seminars for industry representatives for the same purpose.