

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0213) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

How does the Expression of Interest stage work with regards to the Skills Select model? How many EOI's does the Department anticipate it will receive from prospective migrants on a monthly basis?

Answer:

SkillSelect will be an electronic system based upon a two-stage process whereby prospective applicants will first submit claims for an Independent, Family Sponsored and Business Skills visa via an online Expression of Interest (EOI). Each month SkillSelect will automatically select the highest scoring Independent, Family Sponsored Business visa EOIs and invite them to apply for a visa.

In addition to this, potential migrants can also make an EOI if they are interested in being sponsored by an employer or State. By using the register employers and State Governments will be able to search for prospective skilled migrants by various characteristics, including occupation, level of work experience, English language ability and other characteristics.

There are a number of variables which may influence the rate of EOI submissions including economic conditions in migrant source countries, changes in skilled migration policy settings and seasonal variables such as academic semesters, rising wages or demand in the labour market.

However, the Department does not expect any significant deviation in the rate of submission of EOIs from the current rate of visa applications. There may be a slightly increased rate of submission based on the fact that an EOI does not attract a fee. This will allow those people who are interested in migrating to Australia with either a state or employer sponsor to indicate their interest without having secured sponsorship first.