

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 11 February 2013

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE13/0291) PROGRAM – 4.1: Visa Compliance and Status Resolution

Senator Cash (Written) asked:

How many IMAs have been released on bridging visas since November 2011? How many have been released on bridging visas with work rights? How many without? Of those with work rights, how many are employed? How many are receiving special benefit payments, and what is the total weekly cost of these payments? What has been the average period of time taken for an IMA on a bridging visas who has found employment to get a job?

Answer:

It would require an unreasonable diversion of departmental resources to answer all aspects of this question, although the following relevant information can be provided.

As at 11 February 2013, since November 2011, 11 760 people who arrived as Offshore Entry Persons have been granted a Bridging visa E (BVE) out of which 8 793 have work rights. Of the 11 760 people, 8 287 are currently receiving income support either under the Asylum Seeker Assistance Scheme (ASAS) or the Community Assistance Support (CAS) program.

Payments for income support under ASAS and CAS are capped at a maximum of 89 per cent of the equivalent Centrelink Special Benefit.

The Department does not collect information on the employability and/or employment status of asylum seekers released into the community.