

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 11 February 2013

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE13/0446) PROGRAM – 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Boyce (Written) asked:

At the end of October 2012, then Minister Bowen announced that DIAC would apply a 'net benefit' test to immigrants with a disability or with a health issue. He undertook to conduct consultations on detailed implementation of the reforms with key stakeholders. Have those consultations begun and, if not, why not? If the consultations are underway, please advise where, when, by whom and with whom? If the consultations have not begun, please advise when they will be undertaken and details as above? Are NEDA, the National Ethnic Disability Alliance, and AMPARO among the stakeholders who have been or will be consulted?

Answer:

Consultations on the proposed net benefit approach have begun.

Consultations between stakeholder government departments, including inter-departmental committees, are continuing. State governments have received some initial information about the proposed Net Benefit Approach. Initial consultations with key external stakeholders and lobby groups have been undertaken.

Representatives of the department met with key stakeholders in February to March 2013. The department identified a limited number of key stakeholders who had been involved in the JSCM inquiry. Key stakeholders include:

- Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations Inc
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
- Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability
- HIV/AIDS Legal Centre
- Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
- National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA)
- Vision Australia

All stakeholders engaged indicated a willingness to continue to be involved. As advised through these stakeholder consultations, the department is currently preparing a public discussion paper for release later this year. The public discussion paper will call for submissions from other organisations or individuals interested in helping to shape the direction of the Net Benefit Approach.