

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

**BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 22 May 2006**

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

### **(100) Output 1.1: Migration and Temporary Entry**

Senator Carr asked:

1. Are subclass 457 visas intended to be used in the construction industry in cities such as Sydney and Melbourne where substantial unemployment currently exists?
2. Is it DIMA policy that employers in the construction industry should be approved as sponsors for 457 visas in these circumstances?
3. Does it contravene departmental guidelines or the DIMA Procedures Advice Manual to approve an employer as a sponsor in these circumstances?

*Answer:*

1. Unemployment is under 5%. Jobs growth in recent years has been around 180,000 per annum. The Subclass 457 visa is crucial in this context.

The sub-class 457 visa is designed to assist employers including those in the construction industry to meet their skilled labour needs from overseas where they are unable to access appropriately qualified skilled labour from within Australia. The following occupations relevant to the construction industry are in national shortage:

- electrical engineers
- mechanical engineers
- civil engineers
- bricklayers
- carpenters
- joiners
- drainers
- electricians
- fibrous plasterers
- fitters
- floor furnishers
- gasfitters
- plumbers
- lift mechanics
- mechanical services plumbers
- air-conditioning plumbers
- roof plumbers
- roof slaters
- roof tilers

- solid plasterers
- stonemasons
- wall tilers
- floor tilers

2. Policy does not restrict use of the sub-class visa for any Australian industry.

3. Not applicable.