

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 22 May 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(119) Output 1.1: Non-Humanitarian Entry and Stay

Senator Carr asked:

You indicate at p.83 of the Hansard of the hearing on 22 May 2006 that DIMA has placed various officers with employer associations as part of an outreach programme. What is the purpose of this? What are the desired policy outcomes? Does DIMA believe it has a role in promoting these 456 and 457 visa arrangements amongst employers?

Answer:

The Industry Outreach Officer network was set up to support one of the major objectives of the 2005-06 Migration Programme which was to maximise the extent to which migrants selected under the Skill Stream of the Migration Programme are targeted to skill shortages and industry needs. Under this targeting strategy, employer sponsored migration was the highest priority as this form of migration brings migrants straight into a skilled employment situation and hence brings immediate benefits to the employer, to the migrant and to the community.

The Industry Outreach Officer Programme placed DIMA officers in a range of peak industry organisations. Their task is to act as a conduit between DIMA and industry bodies, to demystify and promote employer sponsorship options (both permanent and temporary) and to educate employers in terms of both the advantages and the obligations implicit in employer sponsored visas.