

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27 MAY 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(15) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Fifield (L&CA 87-88) asked:

Can you advise how many are refused permanent residency on the basis of failing to satisfy the health requirement?

Provide a breakdown into those who are refused on the basis of having a disability as opposed to an illness.

Answer:

A total of 1532 permanent and temporary visa applicants were refused a visa on "health grounds" in 2007-2008. This included:

- 1133 permanent visa applicants;
- 116 provisional visa applicants (provisional visas are temporary visas which lead to grant of a permanent visa); and
- 283 temporary visa applicants.

During this period, almost 600 000 temporary and permanent visa applicants including their family members were assessed against the health requirement by a Medical Officer of the Commonwealth.

Of the 1532 applicants referred to above:

- 2 failed to meet the health requirement on public health grounds (i.e. because they had active TB).
- 244 visa applicants had a health condition that led to their failure to meet the health requirement on health costs/prejudice to access grounds and were refused a visa.
- An additional 442 applicants were refused a visa on "health grounds" because they had a family member who was unable to meet the health requirement. This is because, under Australian migration law, all members of the family unit included on a permanent visa application must meet the health requirement in order for any applicant to be granted a visa.
- 844 were refused a visa because they failed to undergo required health assessments.

Of the 244 temporary and permanent visa applicants who failed to meet the health requirement, 71 failed to meet the health requirement on the grounds of some form of disability.

The above figures do not include people who did not meet the health requirement, but obtained a visa as a result of the visa decision-maker exercising a health waiver.