

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27 MAY 2009

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### **(18) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration**

Senator Barnett (L&C 94) asked:

In relation to the Australia Needs Skills expo in the UK, outline the key performance indicators and what the inputs and the outputs are and whether we are getting a return on funds invested.

#### *Answer*

- The Australia Needs Skills expo program aims to promote targeted skilled migration by proactively bringing together employers, State and Territory governments and prospective skilled migrants.
- A range of qualitative and quantitative measures are used to evaluate the success of the program. These measures include post expo evaluation of exhibitor and participant satisfaction rates plus monitoring/analysis of trends in skilled visa application rates.
- Post expo feedback from both exhibitors and expo attendees is consistently positive, as is evidenced by repeat exhibitor participation. For example, 95 per cent of 2008 London exhibitors agreed that they met quality skilled workers at the expo and 83 per cent agreed that the expo was cost effective. 90 per cent of expo attendees agreed they would recommend that people attend future expos. Connecting employers and potential skilled migrants facilitates the visa application process for both parties.
- Since the expo program was initiated in 2005, the rates of employer and regional sponsored migration have significantly increased. For example, the employer sponsored visa categories have increased (as a proportion of the Total Skill Stream) from 16.7 per cent in 2004-05 to 21.9 per cent in 2007-08. While not wholly attributable to the expo program, this data indicates that these promotional activities help meet migration program objectives.
- Preliminary analysis of visa outcomes was conducted following the 2008 London expo. One of the key findings was that four months after the expo 14.5 per cent of expo attendees had applied for a visa with work rights, of this total 37 per cent had applied for a skilled sponsored visa.
  - It is known that there can be a considerable lag time between expo attendance and visa application/grant. To help capture this data, the department is in the process of developing improved reporting mechanisms to analyse visa outcomes post expo.