

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27 - 28 MAY 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(93) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

- (1) How many guest worker visas have been issued? To how many individuals and from which countries?
- (2) How many have already arrived and when are the balance due to arrive?
- (3) Will all 2500 places be filled and by when?
- (4) Has the government reviewed the scheme and will they continue with it?

Answer:

(1) Fifty-six Special Program (Subclass 416) visas have been granted under the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme:

- 50 visas for workers from Tonga; and
- 6 visas for workers from Vanuatu.

(2) Fifty-six Pacific seasonal workers have already arrived. Further recruitment of additional Pacific seasonal workers is expected in coming months.

(3) The pilot will allow up to 2500 visas to be granted over the pilot period of three years.

The program is a small, demand driven pilot. If there is no demand for further visas because of local labour market conditions, no visas will be granted.

(4) The pilot will be reviewed 18 months after commencement and its future direction determined by Australian Government at that time.