

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 26-27 MAY 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(118) Program: Internal Product

Senator Barnett asked:

- (1) Has the Department/agency received any advice from the Government or any other source on how to respond to FOI requests?
- (2) How many FOI requests has the Department received?
- (3) How many have been granted or denied?
- (4) How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests?

Answer:

- (1) All FOI requests received by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) are processed in accordance with the FOI Act, noting Senator Faulkner's 30 April 2009 letter to departmental secretaries and agency heads seeking to enhance a culture of disclosure.
- (2) From 1 July 2009 to 31 May 2010 DIAC received 10 663 FOI requests (6 399 for access and 4 264 for amendments).
- (3) Of the 10 619 requests finalised by DIAC between 1 July 2009 and 31 May 2010, 6 464 (60.9%) were granted in full, 2 404 (22.6%) were granted in part, 1 257 (11.8%) were refused in full, and 494 (4.7%) were otherwise finalised (invalid, withdrawn or transferred).
- (4) Based on current records, DIAC has not issued any conclusive certificates under sections 33, 33A and 36 of the FOI Act. The *Freedom of Information (Removal of Conclusive Certificates and Other Measures) Act 2009* commenced on 7 October 2009. The Act repealed the power to issue conclusive certificates in the FOI Act and the *Archives Act 1983*.