

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 23 - 24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0075) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash (L&CA 37-38) asked:

In relation to the enterprise migration agreements and the government's decision to set the cap at \$2 billion and a peak workforce of 1,500 workers for major resource projects, what is the rationale behind that following on from consultations?

Answer:

Enterprise Migration Agreements (EMAs) were introduced following the Government's acceptance of all 31 recommendations of the National Resources Sector Employment Taskforce (the Taskforce). The Taskforce recommended that EMAs be established for 'mega' resource projects, without actually defining the term. Following extensive consultation with relevant stakeholders, the government set the final eligibility criteria at \$2 billion capital expenditure and 1500 peak workforce.

These settings are appropriate and focus the EMA program on those resources projects that have the most significant labour force needs and impact. The EMA program provides benefits to very large resource projects that have complex workforce needs. Smaller resource projects will be able to access all of the currently available migration programs and to priority processing for subclass 457 visa holders.