

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 23 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0086) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash (L&CA 32) asked:

What is the cost of doubling the number of non-contributory parent visas in the current program estimates for 2011-12? It has increased from 1000 to 2000.

Answer:

The increase in non-contributory Parent visa places in 2011-12 is linked to a commensurate decrease in the number of Contributory Parent visas. The notional impact to previously estimated DIAC revenue of the decrease of 1000 Contributory Parent places is -\$142.791 million over four years. The reduction in Contributory Parent places reflects a trend toward higher rates of withdrawal of applications in this category. However, this has been compensated by the increase in skilled migration. The expected net impact on the fiscal balance of the migration program is expected to be an increase of \$160.9 million over four years.

The increase in Contributory Parent visa application withdrawals has contributed to the reduction in the typical processing times for a Contributory Parent visa from two years to one year. The transfer of 1000 additional places to non-contributory Parent visas is expected to reduce the waiting time for this category to 15 years. If the previous planning level of 1000 places had been maintained, the Department estimates that the number of unfinalised non-contributory Parent visa applications would have exceeded 30 000; resulting in a nominal wait for this visa of 30 years.