

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

### **BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012**

#### **IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO**

#### **BE12/0195 Program 1.1: Visa and Migration**

Senator Cash asked:

I refer to the answer given to AE12/0179 which states “The Department has received representations from the Australian tourism sector regarding increasing the length of stay for visa holders. This is being considered” – The tourism sector also suggested expanding the second Working Holiday (Subclass 417) eligibility framework to include tourism work, thereby potentially increasing the pool of second Working Holiday visa holders in Australia; and allowing eligible nationals to acquire one Working Holiday (subclass 417) visa when aged 18-25, and then allowing acquisition of a second such visa when aged 26-35. What is the status of these considerations, when do you expect to be in a position to advise the outcome?

*Answer:*

The Australian tourism sector has suggested changes to the Working Holiday Maker visa program which would allow visa holders to stay in Australia for longer than 12 months. These suggestions include:

- a) expanding the second Working Holiday (Subclass 417) eligibility framework to include tourism work, thereby potentially increasing the pool of second Working Holiday visa holders in Australia; and
- b) allowing eligible nationals to acquire one Working Holiday (Subclass 417) visa when aged 18-25, and then allowing acquisition of a second such visa when aged 26-35.

The Department has consulted with stakeholder agencies on changes to the Working Holiday Maker program to support tourism and other industries and further work is ongoing. Any outcomes will be announced once any changes are agreed by Government.