

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE12/0230) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Boyce asked:

As a result of a Freedom of Information application abridged copies of discussions between DOHA and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship have just been released. Further in this document the following undertakings were given by DIAC to DoHA: Why didn't DIAC comply with sections (ii) to (iv) of the MOU? Did it comply at some other time and if so when and how? How do these failures, information gaps affect the nations knowledge of and ability to deal with the introduction of infectious disease to Australia?

Answer:

In 2008 the sharing of information between DIAC and the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) was directed by guidelines provided by an earlier MOU. DIAC practice is now guided by the MOU in place since January 2011.

The matter was verbally discussed with DoHA and the paper was no longer required.

The identification and management of communicable diseases in refugees and humanitarian entrants and the follow-up of migrants on health undertakings is the responsibility of state and territory health authorities. DIAC's Health Undertaking Service reports regularly to relevant jurisdictional health authorities on migrants on health undertakings.

DIAC provides aggregated data to DoHA upon request under normal MOU processes. This provision of data is on an as-needed basis. The current MOU has been revised to reflect this collaborative arrangement.