

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE12/0231) 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: (Document Reference). Is DIAC now complying with the provision of items (ii) to (IV)? If the answer is yes, when did they start complying in full with what they were supposed to do? Given that DOHA claimed it needed this information to determine the 'communicable disease health threat' to Australia would its non-delivery by DIAC mean a possible health threats to the Australian population could not be properly managed?

Answer:

DIAC and DoHA work collaboratively to appropriately manage possible health threats to the Australian population. Data are provided between the two agencies upon request, under MOU processes directed by the new MOU in place since January 2011. The identification and management of communicable diseases in migrants after arrival in Australia is the responsibility of state and territory health authorities. Clusters of cases of particular concern are discussed at regular meetings of the Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA). Recognising the importance of migration policy on the burden of tuberculosis in Australia, the National Tuberculosis Advisory Committee, a sub-committee CDNA, expanded its membership in 2012 to include representation from DIAC. DoHA were fully briefed and satisfied with the information communicated and as such the paper was no longer required.