

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 27-28 May 2013

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE13/0487) PROGRAM – 5.1: Settlement Services for Migrants and Refugees

Senator Cash (Written) asked:

How does DIAC explain the fall in the AMEP registration rate from 73% in 2006-07 to 59% in 2011-12? (Sources: DIAC website <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/help-with-english/amep/facts-figures/program-statistics.htm>) and 2011-12 DIAC Annual Report pg 249)

Answer:

The AMEP registration rate, for the purposes of Annual Report reporting, is measured by the number of new arrivals who enrol in the AMEP, as a proportion of the number of clients who may be eligible for the AMEP, based on their visa subclass, and a self-assessment of their English language proficiency, as stated in their visa application.

The reported fall in client registrations from 73 per cent of potentially eligible AMEP clients in 2006-07 to 59 per cent in 2011-12 is directly related to a change in client disclosure of prior English language proficiency. Since 2006 there has been a notable increase in the number of clients who have chosen to not disclose their prior English proficiency as part of their visa application process (disclosure is voluntary), up from 36 per cent of arrivals in 2006 to 58 per cent in 2012. The reason for this trend is unknown. If a client does not declare their English language proficiency, they can be incorrectly deemed to be eligible for AMEP for the purposes of the registration rate.