

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

**SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 30 October 2006**

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

### **(110) Output 1.1: Migration and Temporary Entry**

Senator Carr asked:

#### Payment of upfront fees by workers from China, QON 57

1. Can you confirm that you have knowledge that 457 visa-holders from China are being asked to pay between \$A500 and \$A27 000 in upfront fees to agents or other persons in China before coming to Australia?

2. How widespread is this practice? How many workers, from China and elsewhere, have been obliged to pay such fees? Please provide details, including the amounts paid, and the persons, organisations and/or companies to whom the money has been paid.

*Answer:*

1. Yes.

2. The Department comes across individuals and companies that work as employment agents in China. In the course of its regular enquiries, applicants reveal the fees they have paid. In the cases seen to date, applicants have been aware of the details of contracts they have signed with these employment agencies. These Chinese agencies are registered by the Chinese Government and operate under the sovereign law of the PRC.