

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 30 October 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(140) Output 1.1: Migration and Temporary Entry

Senator Carr asked:

1. Can you explain why, in the table provided with the answer to QON 114 from the last round, the numbers of visa-holders categorised as “Other” from the point of view of country of origin is so high in so many instances?
2. Why is this information not available? Can the “Other” category be broken down to any extent? If not, why not?
3. Does the data provided in this table support the view that, in the ICT industry, the recent trend has been to bring to Australia entry-level or other junior professionals, as opposed to high-level experts? Are you aware of any such trend? How would you become aware of such a trend? Have you sought to ascertain if such a trend is occurring? If not, why not?

Answer:

- 1 The list provides visas granted for the top 20 source countries over a 5 year period. These 20 source countries make up 85% of the overall programmes in 2005-06. As Australia’s immigration arrangements regularly draw on around 170 source countries every year, it is inevitable that a sizeable number will be in the ‘other’ category in a few occupations.
- 2 Yes it can but this would represent an unreasonable diversion of resources for what would be very small numbers of visa grants for a very large number of countries.
- 3 The table referred to provides data on visa grants for various ICT occupations by source country. To establish whether the positions being filled were entry-level positions would require, inter alia, an examination of salary levels. The sub-class 457 Minimum Salary Level for ICT occupations is currently over \$57,000. This is well above the salary for entry-level positions. The average salary for sub-class 457 workers visaed in 2005-06 in ICT occupations was over \$70, 000 and over \$73,000 in the first quarter of 2006-07.