

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 30 October 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(169) Output 1.1 Migration and Temporary Entry

Senator Evans asked:

The employment of a number of workers at the ABC Tissues site in Sydney (questions relate to 457 visa holders employed by both Hunan Industrial and ABC Tissues).

1. When was the Department first made aware of allegations over potential breaches of the 457 visa conditions in relation to these cases?
2. How was the Department made aware of these allegations, e.g. individual came forward, third party notified the Department, other agency notified the Department?
3. When was the Minister first briefed about the potential breaches in these cases?
4. On what date did the Department first interview the 457 holders concerned in these cases? Were those interviews carried out at the employers address?
5. Has the Department conducted any interviews of the 457 holders concerned away from the employer's address?
6. When did the Department first conduct a site visit to investigate these cases?
7. Did the employer concerned at any time refuse permission for the Department to enter the premises?
8. When did the Department issue a notice of intention to sanction the employer (if they did)?
9. When did the employer respond to the notice of intention to sanction?
10. When did the Department make a decision on whether to apply a sanction to the employer?
11. What sanction (if any) was applied to the employer? Are they still subject to that sanction?
12. Is the employer currently still employing people on 457 visas?
13. When did the employer last receive approval from the Department to employ someone on a 457 visa? i.e. when were they approved to sponsor the last 457 visa holder?

Answer:

1. 8 June 2006
2. Allegations raised on the ABC's Lateline program.
3. 9 June 2006.
4. 20 June 2006. Yes.
5. No interviews have been conducted away from the employees address.
6. 20 June 2006.
7. No.
8. ABC Tissue, 16 August 2006.
Hunan Industrial Equipment Installation Company, 28 July 2006.
9. ABC Tissue, 1 September 2006.
Hunan Industrial Equipment Installation Company, 4 September 2006
10. 1 November 2006 DIMA made a decision not to sanction ABC Tissue.
5 October 2006 DIMA issued a Notice of Sanction to Hunan Industrial Equipment Installation Company.
11. ABC Tissue has not been sanctioned but has been warned of its obligations to comply with its sponsorship undertakings. The only identified breaches related to workplace safety breaches (NSW Workcover infringements) which were remedied. Following a site visit on 4 September 2006 NSW Workcover advised work at the site to be in compliance with its requirements.

Hunan Industrial Equipment Installation Company has been barred from making further applications for approval as a sponsor of Subclass 457 Temporary Business (Long Stay) visas. This bar remains in effect for two years from 5 October 2006.
12. ABC Tissue, yes.
Hunan Industrial Equipment Installation Company, yes.
13. ABC Tissue had a sponsorship approved on 28 October 2006.
Hunan Industrial Equipment Installation Company's last sponsorship was approved on 27 January 2006.