

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 OCTOBER 2008

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(29) Output 1.1: Migration and Temporary Entry

Senator Fierravanti-Wells (L&CA 65) asked:

This is really important as you can appreciate, particularly in some countries. Could you please think about the monitoring of the performance and in particular the responsibilities for monitoring? In particular, I would like to know their roles and responsibilities and who is going to be responsible for monitoring each aspect of that. Please do take it on notice because I think it probably requires that.

Answer:

Under the terms of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) being negotiated with sending countries, the Australian Government would expect sending country Governments to take the lead in monitoring the operation of Approved Recruitment Agents and the selection of workers under the scheme. In particular, this would include:

- ensuring that agents appointed under the terms of the MOU are not adversely known or under investigation by either government;
- investigating any allegations of exploitation of participating workers or applicants or breaches of mutually decided recruitment policies;
- taking any appropriate action following this investigation; and
- notifying Australia of any evidence of local non-compliance with the scheme and/or fraud or corrupt recruitment practices.

The Australian Government will support the monitoring of recruitment practices in participating countries by:

- maintaining regular contact with participating government agencies and approved recruitment agents to ensure that agreed policies and procedures are being followed;
- routine monitoring of participant government views and media reporting of public and stakeholder informal appraisals of the scheme;
- engaging in capacity-building for partner government agencies;
- referring any concerns identified in visa applications or following arrival in Australia for investigation by the relevant Government;
- providing training to approved recruitment agents on their obligations and Australia's expectations in terms of recruitment policies, recording keeping and visa applications.

Each of the four countries selected to take part in the pilot scheme has indicated they are keen to ensure that the scheme succeeds and that they willing to work with the Australian Government to that end.