

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 OCTOBER 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(18) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Fierravanti-Wells (L&CA 54 and Written) asked:

1. How many spouse visas have been issued in 06/07, 07/08, 08/09?
2. What countries are they from?
3. How old were they on average?
4. How many overseas spouse visas have been cancelled?
5. What countries were the cancelled visa recipients from?
6. How many spouses brought accompanying family members to Australia?
7. How many were given protective permanent residency?

Answers:

1.

2006/07 - 40 435

2007/08 - 39 931

2008/09 - 42 098

2. More than one hundred countries are represented in the statistics. The top ten countries in order of the number of partner visas granted in 2008/09 are as follows with combined primary and secondary applicant numbers shown in brackets:

United Kingdom (5000); People's Republic of China (4650); India (4041); Philippines (2520); Vietnam (2048); Thailand (1985); U.S.A (1770); Japan (979); Indonesia (942); Lebanon (922)

3.

Program Year	Primary/Secondary Applicant	Average age (years) at time of visa grant
2006/07	Primary	33.94
2006/07	Secondary	11.05
2007/08	Primary	33.24
2007/08	Secondary	11.45
2008/09	Primary	34.28
2008/09	Secondary	11.40

4.

2006 - 127

2007 - 122

2008 - 164

2009 - 153 (YTD)

Note: Figures are for calendar years

5. For the calendar years 2006 – 2009 (YTD) the top five countries in terms of cancellations are as follows with numbers shown in brackets:

India (75); People's Republic of China (57); Philippines (25); United Kingdom (23); Lebanon (22)

6.

2006/07 – 3280

2007/08 – 3078

2008/09 – 3321

7. There is no visa category referred to as “protective permanent residency”. However, in the context of questions regarding Partner visas, the question has been interpreted as enquiring about the number of Partner visa applicants who have been granted visas on the basis of having been determined to be victims of family violence.

Australia’s Migration Program enables people (generally those who are in Australia on a Provisional Partner visa) to apply and remain in Australia if a partner relationship breaks down because of family violence. The family violence provisions were introduced in response to community concerns that some partners might feel compelled to remain in abusive relationships rather than end the relationship and be required to leave Australia.

Claims of family violence are initially considered by departmental officers. Where the case officer determines that the claim is doubtful, the case is referred to an independent expert for an opinion. The independent expert is currently a professional Social Worker within Centrelink who has specialist experience in family violence matters. The opinion of the independent expert is binding on the decision maker.

The following table sets out the number of family violence claims over the last three program years, the number of referrals to Centrelink and the outcome of referrals.

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Family Violence Claims	565	502	708
Referrals to Centrelink	127	74	98
Finalised Centrelink determinations that Family Violence occurred	58	40	45
Finalised Centrelink determinations that Family Violence did not occur	49	21	37