

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(159) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

(1) What qualifications are required to become a Delegate and process 457 visa applications?

(2) What training is provided for this role?

Answer:

(1) What qualifications are required to become a Delegate and process 457 visa applications?

No formal qualifications are required to be a delegate, but extensive in-house training in such areas as good decision-making is undertaken. This is a prerequisite for a position in a 457 processing area.

Decision-makers in the 457 process must occupy a role that has formal decision-making delegations. Instruments of Delegation and Authorisation specify their powers under the *Migration Act 1958* and Regulations. In order to make a valid decision to grant or refuse a visa, a decision-maker must have delegations under sections 29 and 65 of the Migration Act.

(2) What training is provided for this role?

All staff in the Department participate in a corporate induction program which is a standardised training package delivered at the commencement of employment. Upon commencement in a visa processing area, an officer undertakes role-specific training that can include a combination of formal classroom-type training, e-learning modules and on-the-job training.

All processing officers working in a 457 Centre Of Excellence (COE) undertake specific role-based training. When 457 Centres of Excellence were established in WA, NSW and Victoria in 2008, an initial training module was delivered to all 457 processing staff. In October 2008, the Department appointed a team of policy and subject matter experts to implement a comprehensive 457 training program. The objective of this program was to train all 457 processing staff to a consistent level of knowledge of regulatory requirements and policy settings. A further two modules were delivered to staff in early 2009. A fourth training module was developed as a result of significant policy changes that commenced on 14 September 2009. This program of training was delivered by dedicated trainers/policy officers who were placed in each COE for this phase of training.

Once all 457 staff had undertaken the 457 training modules, training/policy officers were placed permanently within the COEs as outposted 457 Policy Subject Matter Experts. These subject matter experts provide training, including any individual remedial training, to ensure consistency of decision making between individual staff across all three COEs.

In 2010, the current role-specific subclass 457 training suite was extended to incorporate a new-starter program for any new staff joining a subclass 457 processing area. The subject matter experts also regularly run refresher training to update staff on processes and policy changes.