

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 17 OCTOBER 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(SE11/0156) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash (L&CA) asked:

Processing times – in all 457 visa processing locations: Why has the average time taken to process 457 visa application increased over the last 3 months in the Perth Office?

Answer:

The Perth office has experienced an increase in number of applications lodged which has coincided with staff movements.

In the three months from July-September 2011, a total of 13 new staff were engaged while 6 staff left the area. This is a net gain of 7 staff.

It takes time to recruit and train staff, which has a temporary impact on the timeframes taken to process. New staff are now working at, or near capacity and processing timeframes have decreased. In the interim, additional assistance has been provided by staff in the Parramatta Centre of Excellence.