

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 17 OCTOBER 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(SE11/0173) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash (L&CA) asked:

Labour Agreements: The Budget Papers state that the Department “*aims to improve visa processing times from ‘around 4 weeks to around 2 weeks’ by opening a new processing site in Brisbane and increasing the number of processing staff.*” Please provide an update as to the status of this aim.

Answer:

This aim is specific to the processing of decision ready applications relating to 457 applications under the program generally, rather than those relating specifically to Labour Agreements.

The median time to finalise primary visa applications has decreased from 25 days in July 2011 to 19 days in October 2011. The proportion of cases finalised within two weeks has increased from 31.5% in July 2011 to 39.5% in October 2011.

Additionally, the 75th percentile finalisation timeframe figure for primary visa applications has decreased from 41 days in July 2011 to 39 days in October 2011.

On average, 87% of applications are finalised within published service standards for 2011/2012 year to date.