

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 15 OCTOBER 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(SE12/0209) PROGRAM – 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Hanson-Young (L&CA 48) asked:

In relation to the Department's Policy Advice Manual (PAM) that covers the visitor visa and genuine visitor assessment, provide the thrust of the criterion on the genuine visitor and how the Department implements it.

Answer:

When deciding whether an applicant for a Visitor visa intends to make a genuine visit to Australia, visa processing officers take into account relevant considerations such as:

- the personal circumstances of the applicant that would encourage them to return to their home country at the end of the proposed visit;
- the applicant's immigration history (for example, previous travel, compliance with immigration laws of Australia or other countries, and previous visa applications/compliance action);
- the personal circumstances of the applicant in their home country that might encourage them to remain in Australia (for example, military service commitments, economic situation, and civil disruption);
- conditions that might encourage the applicant to remain in Australia;
- the applicant's credibility in terms of character and conduct (for example, false and misleading information provided with visa application);
- whether the purpose and proposed duration of the applicant's visit and their proposed activities in Australia are reasonable and consistent (for example, is the period of stay consistent with "tourism"); and
- information in statistical, intelligence and analysis reports on migration fraud and immigration compliance compiled by the Department about nationals from the applicant's home country. The Modified Non-Return Rate (MNRR) is the primary statistical measure of Visitor visa compliance and is published on the Department's website.