

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 15 October 2012**

#### **IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO**

#### **(SE12/0219) PROGRAM – 1.1: Visa and Migration**

Senator Cash (written) asked:

What is the turnaround time for tourist visa applications by post for (a) individuals and (b) groups? How does this turnaround time compare internationally with, for example, countries such as the USA, Singapore and the UK?

*Answer:*

It is difficult to compare visa processing times against other countries as this information is not available to the Department. Additionally, different countries will have different visa products that will not necessarily align with Australia's.

Visa processing times vary by visa product, processing location, and citizenship of the visa applicant. Statistics on Australia's Visitor visa processing times are published quarterly on the Department's website. In 2011-12, over 70 per cent of Australian tourism Visitor visas were granted almost instantaneously to applicants who applied online, and the average processing time for Tourist (Subclass 676) visa paper applications was five days. It is not possible to provide turnaround times for groups as each visa is processed on an individual basis.