

Question on notice no. 465

Portfolio question number: AE21-465

2020-21 Additional estimates

Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, Home Affairs Portfolio

Senator Nick McKim: asked the Department of Home Affairs on 22 March 2021—

Are there people who arrived in Australia by boat eight or more years ago (the legacy caseload) who yet to be interviewed about their fears of persecution for a protection visa? If so:

- a. Given these people met the Government's 1 October 2017 deadline to "lodge [their claim for asylum] or leave", how/why is this so?
 - i. What steps are being taken to rectify this situation?
 - ii. What is the Department's plan for this cohort of people?
- b. How many people are there who are yet to be interviewed?

Answer —

Please see the attached answer.

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES
22 MARCH 2021**

**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs**

Program 2.4: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

AE21-465 - Legacy Caseload - Interviews

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Are there people who arrived in Australia by boat eight or more years ago (the legacy caseload) who yet to be interviewed about their fears of persecution for a protection visa? If so:

- a. Given these people met the Government's 1 October 2017 deadline to "lodge [their claim for asylum] or leave", how/why is this so?
 - i. What steps are being taken to rectify this situation?
 - ii. What is the Department's plan for this cohort of people?
- b. How many people are there who are yet to be interviewed?

Answer:

As at 31 January 2021, of the 32,518 Illegal Maritime Arrivals (IMAs) in the IMA legacy caseload, 28,597 persons have been decided or otherwise resolved (approximately 87.9 per cent of the caseload).

As at 31 January 2021, 2,285 persons from the IMA Legacy caseload have not yet had a protection interview conducted.

The Department of Home Affairs has continued to focus on resolving the remaining on-hand cases as efficiently as possible, without compromising on national security, community safety or program integrity.

Processing, including interviewing, is continuing for the Temporary Protection and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas.

The Department actively seeks to maintain accurate contact information for all IMA Legacy applicants so interviews can be facilitated as quickly as possible. Applicants are required to advise the Department of any change to contact details. The Department will seek to schedule an interview using all recorded contact information, if however the contact information is out of date and we are unable to contact the applicant an assessment will be made using the information within the application.

The Department has implemented changes to ensure COVID-safe protection interviewing can continue for the remaining cases in the IMA Legacy caseload, as COVID-19 restrictions have eased in local jurisdictions.