

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ17-004057

Senator Cameron asked on 29 May 2017 on proof Hansard page 115-116.

Question

457 Visa program – advice provided regarding the abolition

Senator CAMERON: But you were involved in providing advice on the list of removed occupations.

Ms Leon: Yes, that is right. We had started working on that in September last year.

Senator CAMERON: Was that for Minister Cash or from the immigration minister, who asked you to do this?

Ms Leon: It was a government response to that 457 integrity review. I have not got the exact text with me but I can get it for you on notice. The government response was that the Department of Employment would review the occupation list. So it was a decision of the government.

Senator CAMERON: That integrity review was in 2014?

Ms Leon: Yes, that is right—Mr Azarius.

Senator CAMERON: Was anything done between 2014 and September 2016?

Ms Leon: I think the response was in 2016. The review was in 2014. I might just have to get officers to see if—

Ms Parker: We will take that on notice.

Answer

Following the release of the Government Response to the 2014 Integrity Review of the Subclass 457 Programme on 18 March 2015, the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection tasked the Ministerial Advisory Council on Skilled Migration with “reviewing the list of occupations available for sponsorship under the subclass 457 programme to ensure it is responsive to the genuine skill needs of employers, the labour market and the economy”. The Department of Employment is a member of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Skilled Migration.

Subsequently, the Minister for Employment and the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection agreed that the Department of Employment would provide labour market advice to inform the review of the Consolidated Sponsored Occupations List.

The Department consulted with other departments and the Ministerial Advisory Council on Skilled Migration as it developed the new methodology to review the occupation list. Following agreement on the methodology, the Department commenced its analysis of a number of labour market datasets in September 2016 and provided advice to Government in April 2017.