

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 08 February 2016

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE16/027) - MV Portland - contact with visa processing staff - Programme 1.1: Border Enforcement

Senator Carr, Kim (L&CA 58/59) asked:

Senator KIM CARR: Did any senior departmental officer have contact with the visa processing staff about the issuing of those visas? I want to know the process by which the visas were issued and if there was any contact with any minister's office.

Mr Quaedvlieg: I will take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: What was the nature of that ministerial involvement?

Mr Quaedvlieg: Yes.

Senator KIM CARR: With regard to the crew, is it fair to describe the work as being highly specialised?

Mr Quaedvlieg: I do not think I am in a position to give you a factual answer. I do not know what their work is.

Senator KIM CARR: Is the S400 visa the one that is referred to? Is that the same visa?

Mr Quaedvlieg: I am not sure. You are asking about the maritime crew visas—

Senator KIM CARR: Yes. In what country did they apply for those visas?

Mr Quaedvlieg: We will take that on as a subset.

Answer:

- (a) No departmental officers had contact with the visa processing staff about the issuing of these visas.
- (b) The visas were processed and granted individually to each applicant.
There was no contact with the Minister's Office.
- (c) There was no ministerial involvement.
- (d) The Maritime Crew visa (subclass 988) is a temporary visa for crew who are employed on non-military ships on international voyages to and from Australia. This visa allows a crew member to undertake work that meets the normal operational requirements of the ship while in Australia. There is no skills assessment undertaken for this visa.
- (e) No. The visa being referred to is the Maritime Crew Visa (subclass 988).
- (f) The Maritime Crew Visa (subclass 988) applications were lodged on behalf of the applicants by their shipping agent based in India.