

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 27 February 2017

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE17/073) - Number of Muslims have come into the country / Quality of integration and assimilation - Programme 2.3: Visas

Senator Roberts, Malcolm (L&CA 123) asked:

Senator ROBERTS: This is my last question, Senator Macdonald. So you assess the applicants individually before they come in. Do you assess the data on crime, welfare and social cohesion for the product you allow through your process, the outcome of your process? If possible—I will put this on notice—could you get back to me with your assessment of how many Muslims have come into the country since you stopped the boats in 2013 and whether or not you do check on their ability and willingness, once they have settled in Australia, to assimilate and integrate?

Mr Pezzullo: To the extent that the ABS relevant data set can help us in that regard, I am happy to take that on notice. Given what I said earlier, and I refer to my earlier evidence, I just do not know that we are going to be able to provide you with anything other than a statistically based answer, but I suspect that is what you are looking for anyway, so we will look at the data.

Senator ROBERTS: I would like some assessment of the quality of integration and assimilation of people who you authorised to come into this country as permanent residents.

Mr Pezzullo: That is a different question. I might need to take some advice on this. The settlement and integration question is one properly directed to our colleagues in the Department of Social Services, as they provide settlement services and language proficiency, employment and housing support. I think what we might best do is take both questions on notice. We will take on notice working with our colleagues in the Bureau of Statistics to provide you with a statistical answer to the first part of your question. The second part of your question as I heard it related to the quality of, I think you said, assimilation outcomes—

Senator ROBERTS: The quality of the outcome as defined by the willingness and ability to assimilate and integrate.

CHAIR: Senator Roberts, you said you had one more question and you have had about five others, and that was the answer which I thought you gave five minutes ago, Mr Pezzullo.

Mr Pezzullo: We will need to take it on notice.

Senator ROBERTS: Thank you.

Answer:

Australia's migration and humanitarian programme is non-discriminatory.

The Department does not require applicants to state their religion as part of the visa process, except where they choose to disclose this information as part of a protection claim. Requests for data relating to the religious denomination of Australian residents would be best directed to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Questions regarding settlement outcomes for people who come to Australia should be directed to the Department of Social Services.