

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 24 March 2017

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE17/252) - Productivity Commission - Fraud or money laundering - Programme 2.3: Visas

Senator Pratt, Louise (L&CA 40) asked:

Senator PRATT: Yes. My remaining questions are about outcome 2. As we know, the Productivity Commission raised concerns about the possibility and propensity for fraud and money laundering through the significant investor visa and the premium investor visa. What incidents of fraud or money laundering have been uncovered related to those visa holders and applicants, and what did those incidents include?

Mr Manthorpe: Unless my colleagues have got detail on that, I think we will have to take that on notice. I do not have any material on that with me today.

Senator PRATT: So, you cannot advise us on whether there have been applicants or holders of the visa who have been found to be involved in fraud or money laundering here or overseas?

Mr Manthorpe: We do not have the briefing on that with us. I can tell you that it is a visa product that undergoes a lot of careful scrutiny by our expert staff, who are looking for those sorts of matters constantly. I cannot give you a more precise answer.

Answer:

The Department is aware of the potential for serious economic fraud in the Business Innovation and Investment Programme. The Department does not investigate criminal matters but refers allegations and any relevant information to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) for investigation.

The Department is working closely with the AFP on fewer than five applications where there are allegations of money laundering.

These investigations are on-going and the Department will not finalise the applications until such time that the AFP advises outcomes of their investigations.