

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 24 March 2017**

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

**(AE17/287) - Fair Work Ombudsman and the Department - Programme 2.3: Visas**

Senator Pratt, Louise (L&CA) written:

How does the relationship between the Department and the Fair Work Ombudsman work when investigating visa issues?

Has the FWO conducted many investigations since the last estimates?

*Answer:*

### **Answer to part 1 of the question:**

Taskforce Cadena is a joint agency initiative established between the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, led by its operational arm, the Australian Border Force (ABF) and the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO).

Governed by a Joint Agency Agreement, the Taskforce coordinates at both an Executive and operational level to ensure relevant information is exchanged between the ABF and FWO to facilitate investigations into organised visa fraud and the exploitation of foreign workers.

While not all visa related allegations fall under the remit of Taskforce Cadena, its establishment has enabled the targeting of high-risk industries such as agriculture, hospitality, entertainment, poultry, security and beauty services. Referrals received by the Taskforce that do not involve organised visa fraud and exploitation of foreign workers may be referred to the FWO, or other appropriate government agency for independent action.

The Taskforce utilises the joint resources of the ABF and FWO to identify labour hire syndicates and employers involved in the exploitation of foreign workers. It also investigates the concealing or harbouring of non-citizens or providing false or misleading documents concerning non-citizens.

### **Answer to part 2 of the question:**

The FWO also undertakes investigations independently from the Department. Details should be sought from the FWO in relation to investigations conducted that do not involve the Department, the Australian Border Force, or Taskforce Cadena.