

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### BUDGET ESTIMATES – 26 – 27 MAY 2014

#### IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

#### **(BE14/257) PROGRAMME – 3.3 and 3.4: Illegal Maritime Arrival (IMA) Onshore Management**

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

How many people are currently on bridging visas?

a. How many of these people do you expect will apply for a secondary bridging visa?

How many people in total are currently on bridging visas?

b. Can you provide separate figures for asylum seekers on bridging visas, breaking down the figures based on those with work rights and those without?

c. How many people on bridging visas have not had their visas renewed on expiry? Why have their visas not been renewed?

d. How long was the period between expiry and renewal? Please detail the time periods and average time without a visa renewal.

e. Why has the department not been able to renew these visas on expiry?

f. How will they be dealt with upon the expiry of the bridging visa?

*Answer:*

As at 31 May 2014, there were 24 486 illegal maritime arrivals (IMAs) in the community who had been granted a Bridging E visa. Of these, 13 532 had visas which were in effect and 10 954 had visas which had ceased.

Of these, 5 470 had been granted Bridging E visas without restrictions on employment (so called ‘work rights’) and 19 016 had been granted Bridging E visas that included a condition that they must not engage in work in Australia.

Of the 5 470 granted Bridging E visas with no restriction on work, 4 057 had visas that were in effect with continuing work rights and 1 413 had visas that had ceased and therefore no longer had work rights.

Consideration of the grant of further Bridging E visas was suspended pending finalisation of legislative and administrative arrangements for the implementation of a Code of Behaviour for IMA Bridging E visa holders. Since April 2014, the process of granting further Bridging E visas to IMAs in the community whose previous Bridging E visa had ceased has recommenced, subject to each individual aged 18 years and older signing the Code of Behaviour.

IMAs affected by delays in granting further Bridging E visas who become unlawful as a result, but who meet all other eligibility requirements, continue to be eligible for the asylum seeker support programmes and associated financial and health support

services through the Community Assistance Support and Asylum Seeker Assistance Scheme.

As at 31 May 2014, operational information indicates that the average time for which IMAs who are awaiting the grant of a further Bridging E visa have been unlawful is 238 days.