

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES – 26 – 27 MAY 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(BE14/515) PROGRAMME – Internal Product

Senator Ludwig (Written) asked:

Please detail what structures, officials, offices, units, taskforce or other processes has the department dedicated to meeting the government's red tape reduction targets?

1. What is the progress of that red tape reduction target
2. How many officers have been placed in those units and at what level?
3. How have they been recruited?
4. What process was used for their appointment?
5. What is the total cost of this unit?
6. What is the estimated total salary cost of the officers assigned to the unit.
7. Do members of the unit have access to cabinet documents?
8. Please list the security classification and date the classification was issued for each officer, broken down by APS or SES level, in the red tape reduction unit or similar body.
9. What is the formal name given to this unit/taskforce/team/workgroup or agency within the department?

Answer:

As at 27 May 2014, the Immigration and Border Protection portfolio (the portfolio) has a dedicated deregulation unit, led by a designated SES officer. The portfolio has also established a deregulation working group to share information and discuss opportunities for red tape reduction.

1. As outlined on the government's cutting red tape website, the value of announced red tape reduction since September 2013 is \$700 million. The portfolio's contribution to this reduction includes:
 - making changes to improve access to the APEC Business Travel Card;
 - introducing a three year multiple entry visa for Chinese business visitors;
 - removing the English language proficiency requirement for re-registering migration agents;
 - no longer automatically precluding student visa holders who have unintentionally breached a condition of their Student visa from obtaining a subsequent Student visa onshore;
 - extending streamlined student visa processing to a number of low risk non-university higher education providers;
 - adjusting and streamlining the labour market testing requirements in the 457 programme to reduce costs and delays to business;
 - permanent expansion of SmartGate to eligible UK and US citizens;

- improved access to the Tourist Refund Scheme through an online application process allowing travellers to pre-enter information required for a refund, reducing overall queue time for claimants; and
 - introducing ongoing Defence Permits that allow for the issuing of annual import permits for defence industry members contracted by the Department of Defence, instead of multiple permit applications to import warfare items and associated goods.
2. As at 27 May 2014, the portfolio's deregulation unit includes two Executive Level 2 officers, three Executive Level 1 officers and two APS 5 officers. Two additional Executive Level 1 officers transferred to the unit in June 2014, one on part-time arrangements.
 3. The portfolio's deregulation unit staff were recruited internally through an Expression of Interest process or were appointed by internal reassignment of existing resources. One executive level officer is on a six month transfer from the Department of the Treasury.
 4. See response to Question 3.
 5. The approximate total cost of the portfolio's deregulation unit for the six months to 30 June 2014 is \$547,000.
 6. The anticipated total salary cost of the portfolio's deregulation unit for the six months to 30 June 2014 is around \$437,000.
 7. Yes, on a need to know basis.
 8. As at 27 May 2014, the security classification and date the classification issued for each officer in the portfolio's deregulation unit is as follows:
 - SES officer – Negative Vetting 2 granted 23/04/2010
 - EL2 officer – Negative Vetting 1 granted 19/05/2014
 - EL2 officer - Negative Vetting 1 granted 31/3/2008
 - EL1 officer - Baseline granted 5/12/2007
 - EL1 officer – Negative Vetting 1 granted 20/11/2007
 - EL1 officer – Negative Vetting 1 granted 03/07/2013
 - APS5 officer – Negative Vetting 1 granted 21/10/2013
 - APS5 officer – Baseline granted 14/05/2014
 9. The formal name given to the portfolio's deregulation unit is the Deregulation Section.