

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 26 May 2015

#### IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

#### (BE15/098) - SVP Process - Programme 2.3: Visas

Senator Carr, Kim (L&CA 84) asked:

Senator KIM CARR: Could I return to questions on SVP. How many of the new providers are TAFE institutes?

Mr Williams: I think I would have to take that on notice. I do not have a breakdown of the 74 non-university providers.

Senator KIM CARR: Thank you. Is TasTAFE an SVP provider?

Mr Williams: I will take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: How many Victorian TAFEs?

Mr Williams: Again, on notice, Senator.

Senator KIM CARR: I am told it is four: Bendigo Kangan, William Angliss, Sunraysia and Holmesglen.

Mr Williams: I will take that on notice and confirm for you.

Senator KIM CARR: How many were asked to participate?

Mr Wilden: We will have to take that on notice.

Senator KIM CARR: Can you provide me with advice as to why so few actually met the criteria? I presume that is the reason they were not asked.

Mr Wilden: If they applied and were not accepted, they would not have met criteria, clearly—

Senator KIM CARR: Does a provider actually apply, or do you approach them?

Mr Wilden: I think we have already said we will take that on notice and come back to you with comprehensive detail on the process and the steps required, both from the department and the provider.

Senator KIM CARR: I am just surprised how many TAFE providers in Victoria are not on the list. Is it the case that Victorian TAFE providers are treated as individual providers, whereas in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia the entire system is treated as a provider?

Mr Wilden: I will get an answer to you on those.

Senator KIM CARR: Could you indicate to me why that difference occurs? Could you provide me with advice as to why the larger Victorian TAFE providers do not qualify for SVP?

Mr Wilden: Certainly.

Senator KIM CARR: I am particularly concerned because I am led to believe that many overseas students and many education agents are in fact suggesting SVP now is becoming a proxy for education quality. If that is the case, do you have any advice to that effect? If that is the case, is it one of the unintended consequences of the program that a new market distortion is being created?

Mr Wilden: The Productivity Commission did raise this issue of market distortion and the impact SVP is having. As I stated earlier, we will come back on notice with what I can provide you with, based on the fact that our information is currently with the government.

*Answer:*

*How many of the new providers are TAFE institutes?*

Two.

*Is TasTAFE an SVP provider?*

No.

*How many Victorian TAFEs? I am told its four: Bendigo Kangan, William Angliss, Sunraysia and Holmesglen.*

Of the ten TAFEs currently participating in the streamlined visa processing arrangements, four are registered in Victoria: the Bendigo Kangan Institute, William Angliss Institute of TAFE, Sunraysia Institute of TAFE and Holmesglen Institute.

*How many were asked to participate?*

In March 2015, 43 eligible education providers, including two TAFEs were invited to submit an opt-in application to participate in streamlined visa processing.

*Can you provide me with advice as to why so few actually met the criteria. I presume that is the reason they were not asked.*

To be invited to submit an opt-in application for the streamlined visa processing arrangements, an education provider must:

- be registered to deliver a streamlined visa processing eligible course (advanced diploma, bachelor, masters, doctoral degree, or eligible non-award course) to international students
- achieve an immigration risk rating equivalent to Assessment Level (AL) 1 or 2 (that is, below 2.70)
- be associated with at least 100 active student visas in order to provide confidence regarding the statistical significance of their immigration risk rating.

Once an education provider has submitted an opt-in application, the Department will then assess the application against the criteria set out in the streamlined visa processing guidelines.

*Does a provider actually apply, or do you approach them?*

Education providers that met the initial streamlined visa processing eligibility criteria were invited by the Department to submit an opt-in application for the arrangements.

For further information on the streamlined visa processing invitation process please see <http://www.border.gov.au/Busi/Educ/Stre>

*Is it the case that Victorian TAFE providers are treated as individual providers whereas in New South Wales Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia the entire system is treated as a provider? Could you indicate to me why the difference occurs.*

For the purposes of streamlined visa processing, an education provider must be registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) to deliver an eligible course.

Each CRICOS provider code is considered to be a separate education provider for the purposes of determining eligibility for participation in the streamlined visa processing arrangements.

*Could you provide me with advice as to why the larger Victorian TAFE providers do not qualify for SVP.*

One Victorian TAFE was found to meet the requirements, with other Victorian TAFEs found not eligible based on data for the period 1 January to 31 December 2014 as at 1 January 2015.

*I am particularly concerned because I am led to believe that many overseas students and many education agents are in fact suggesting SVP now is becoming a proxy for education quality. If that is the case, do you have any advice to that effect? If this is the case, is it one of the unintended consequences of the program that a new market distortion is being created?*

The Department considers all feedback in relation to the SVP program.