

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 25 May 2015

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(BE15/180) - Processing delays - Programme 2.2: Migration

Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah (L&CA) written:

On 13 April 2015 Minister Dutton said it will take until 2018 for his department to process everyone because it is under strain and blames the delays on both stricter security requirements and a lack of resources, namely interpreters: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-13/peter-dutton-defends-work-rights-process-for-asylum-seekers/6389996>

- How much money was set aside in the budget to hire more interpreters?
 - How many interpreters will this enable DIBP to recruit?
 - Can the DIBP now do better than 3 years to process everyone with the additional resources?
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Answer:

The 2015-16 budget allocation for interpreters for the processing of Temporary Protection visa applications is \$2,498,950.

The department's interpreting service (TIS National) are unable to provide the exact number of interpreters it needs to recruit as it engages interpreters on a contracted basis for specified fixed terms based on language demand.

The three year processing timeframe for the finalisation of the 30,000 IMA legacy caseload is dependent upon a number of factors, one of which includes the availability of interpreters.

A key consideration is ensuring case officers have the time to comprehensively assess an IMA's claims in order to ensure integrity in decision making.

Other factors include: application lodgement rates, interview attendance rates, location of IMAs within the community (particularly applicants located in rural and remote areas), and interview facilities including interview rooms.

The assessment process for protection is complex with the need to ensure integrity in decision making.

The department remains committed to finalising the 30,000 IMA legacy caseload within the stated three year period.