

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 23 May 2017

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(BE17/114) - Change in legislation for lawyers becoming Migration Agents - Programme 2.2: Migration

Senator Macdonald, Ian (L&CA 66) asked:

CHAIR: Senator Ketter, your time has expired, so we might go to another senator. A lot of these issues were dealt with by other senators, I might say, including, I think, by some of your own. On the migration agents, to be helpful, I think last year we changed it to include an arrangement where all lawyers would become agents—is that right, Ms Dacey?

Ms Dacey: One of the recommendations for the most recent review of what was then the OMARA was that lawyers be taken out of the migration stream on the basis that they were already professionally accredited through the Law Council et cetera. There is some draft legislation out there at the moment, but it has not been enacted, so technically they still remain in the scheme.

CHAIR: Yes. That was something that we dealt with previously. A lot of lawyers say to me, 'Why do we have to sit for these exams when—' you know?

Ms Dacey: I think the draft legislation is out. I am not sure if it has been introduced.

Mr Pezzullo: We are not sure. We will just check. The exposure draft is out there. I am not sure that it has been introduced.

Answer:

The legislation to remove Australian legal practitioners from regulation under the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority was introduced in Parliament on 21 June 2017.