

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 17 October 2016

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE16/128) - Working Holiday Maker Visas - Programme 2.3: Visas

Senator Carr, Kim (L&CA) written:

In relation to WHM visas and the addition of postcodes 6076 and 6111:

Please provide the names of individuals or companies that made representation to the Minister or Department regarding the inclusion of postcodes 6076 and 6111 in the regional areas that backpackers can work.

What role did the Department have in the formation of the amendment to the definition of specified work?

Please outline the process.

Did the Department provide advice to the Minister on this amendment? What was that advice?

Did the Department conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact of this amendment on the statistical areas?

I refer to the addition of the postcodes in Western Australia, are you aware that these postcodes are classified as the greater Perth region?

According to ABS statistics, youth unemployment is persistently around 9 to 10 percent in the regions that will be impacted by this amendment. This is pretty close to the state rate. In neighbouring regions youth unemployment is higher than the state rate. Was this a consideration?

Answer:

The second Working Holiday (subclass 417) visa initiative is intended to support regional areas where there is a need for labour, particularly seasonal labour. The list of eligible areas takes a number of factors into account, and eligible postcodes are not determined by the boundaries of greater metropolitan areas.

On 31 May 2016 the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection met with representatives of the Hills Orchardist Improvement Group. The Minister publicly committed to review the status of the Perth Hills region for inclusion in the second Working Holiday visa initiative.

As part of the portfolio responsibilities, the Department regularly provides the Government with advice on a range of visa programmes, including the Working Holiday Maker programme.