

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING : 17 October 2016

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE16/171) - Existing wait times - Programme 2.3: Visas

Senator Fawcett, David (L&CA 98) asked:

Senator FAWCETT: What are the current wait times on the existing program? Are you anticipating under this new program, with the five-year or up-to-five-year visa, that it will be a normal turnaround time, as per most other visas for visitors?

Mr Wilden: Ms Dacey is coming to the table. She runs the program management side and can answer the question on current wait times for those visas. With the new visa, that would be processed in a similar way to existing visas of its kind. There is a sponsorship element proposed at the moment. There will be a range of checks. If they are coming for a longer period, they will have to demonstrate health insurance—et cetera. Those all have to be factored in. Whereas a standard tourist visa, for example, can be processed very quickly, these additional checks mean that there are slight delays. Ms Dacey can talk through the different programs and the current processing times.

Ms Dacey: As Mr Wilden said, there were two pathways, effectively, in the permanent scheme. If you are coming on a visitor visa, just for a visit, there is no wait; that would just get processed. But there are quite long delays, particularly for the non-contributory parent. The waits can be up to 30 years, because fundamentally a number of places get released each year, the demand exceeds the supply of places, and so that pipeline continues to grow. It is much shorter for the contributory parent. I just need to check, but I think it is about 30 months. I will just check that for you.

Answer:

The average processing time for Contributory Parent (temporary) visa applications finalised to date in 2016–17 (to 31 October 2016) is 786.61 days (26.22 months).

The average processing time for Contributory Parent (permanent) visa applications finalised to date in 2016–17 (to 31 October 2016) is 697.07 days (23.24 months).

Average processing time for Contributory Parent visas continues to increase as demand exceeds the number of places available in this category of the migration programme.