

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 February 2006

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(91) Output 2.1: Settlement Services

Senator Hurley asked:

Were all service agreements and work programs completed by MRC/MSA during last financial year?

1. Were there any specific breaches?
2. If yes what causes breaches?
3. How has it been solved?

Answer:

All service agreements and work programs were completed by all Migrant Resource Centres/Migrant Service Agencies (MRCs/MSAs) except one during the last financial year (2004-05).

1. Westgate MRC (Melbourne) has been consistently late with reports in relation to 5 Community Settlement Services Scheme (CSSS) grants and 1 Core Funding grant, including End of Funded Term reports, Client Services Statistical reports and Audited Financial Statements (submitted but clarification and resubmission required).
2. Breaches are caused by:
 - lack of management commitment to submit reports on time,
 - lack of effective quality assurance of reports leading to requests to resubmit or clarify.
3. The Department is monitoring the performance of Westgate MRC regarding the late and unsatisfactory reports. The DIMA Victoria Settlement Manager addressed the Committee of Management of the MRC at its meeting on 2 March 2006. At that meeting he set a final deadline for all outstanding matters to be resolved by 31 March 2006.

In the meantime, the Department has commissioned an audit of the core funding provided to the Westgate MRC in 2004-05 and 2005-06 and the 5 CSSS grants which commenced on 1 July 2005 (one ceases on 30 June 2006 and the remaining four continue until 30 June 2007).