

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 FEBRUARY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(79) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

How many applications are subject to the Minister's Priority Processing determination?

Answer:

Section 51 of the *Migration Act 1958* gives the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship powers to consider and finalise visa applications in an order of priority that the Minister considers appropriate. The Minister gave Direction Number 48 under section 499 of the *Migration Act 1958* on 14 July 2010 which set the order of consideration for the following visas:

1. Applications from people who are employer sponsored under the Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS) and the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS).
2. Applications from people who are nominated by a state or territory government agency with a nominated occupation that is specified on that state or territory's state migration plan.
3. Applications from people who have nominated an occupation on the new Skilled Occupation List (SOL) – Schedule 3 in effect from 1 July 2010.
4. All other applications are to be processed in the order in which they are received.

As at 28 February 2011, the numbers of primary applications that are subject to the Minister's Priority Processing Direction were:

- 6,154 applications for the Employer Nomination Scheme.
- 3,060 applications for the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme.
- 73,093 applications for the General Skilled Migration program.