

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0188) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

One of the issues raised in the Knight Review involved the risk management approach to the student visa program. The Government announced that it plans to “undertake and complete a fundamental review of the assessment level risk framework by mid-2012, with implementation as soon as possible thereafter”. Please update the Committee on this initiative.

Answer:

The department has commenced a fundamental review of the Student visa Assessment Level (AL) framework, which forms the risk management approach to the Student Visa Program. Consideration of a provider-based risk management model that recognises and rewards high-quality, lower-risk providers will be a focus of the review.

The review receives input from an External Reference Group (ERG), which includes experts in the field of international education and immigration risk who were invited to participate by the Minister.

The department expects to report the review’s findings to government in mid-2012, with implementation of agreed recommendations by 2013. On completion of the review, government will consider options for the interim implementation of its findings to apply to a small number of high quality training and education providers, ahead of full implementation of the review’s findings by 2013.

Two key milestones have occurred since the department commenced the review:

- the first meeting of the ERG to provide input to the review was held in November 2011; and
- on 31 January 2012 a Discussion Paper on the review was published on the department’s website. All stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on the paper until 16 March 2012.

The next meeting of the ERG was held on Monday 27 February 2012. Following this meeting, the department will commence consultations with key external stakeholders, including the international education sector.