

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0205) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

With reference to the answer given to SE11/0161 which states that “the Department received 64 requests for labour agreements which included semi-skilled occupations. Of these, 24 labour agreements have been approved, three have been declined and 30 are yet to be decided”.

- a. What were the reasons for declining the three labour agreements?
- b. What is the status of those that are undecided?
- c. How long is it anticipated it will be before they are decided?

Answer:

With reference to the SE11/0161 response:

- a. the reasons for the three declined labour agreements requests were the employer; failed to demonstrate a labour market need for overseas workers; or sought to fill unskilled occupations which are not eligible for the labour agreement program.
- b. of the thirty undecided labour agreements, 12 have been finalised and eighteen are yet to be decided.
- c. while the majority of labour agreement negotiations progress in a timely manner, cases which have been on hand for a long time are usually the result of the employer not providing information requested by the Department. Additional information is requested to ensure that an informed assessment of the employer’s business case is conducted. A sound business case confirms that there is a genuine need for overseas workers and that a labour agreement would not undermine employment and training opportunities for Australians.