

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES - 25 FEBRUARY 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE14/599) PROGRAMME – 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Singh (Written) asked:

Can you advise if, and why, certain ethnic groups are being singled out with the retrospective application of this directive?
How many applicants does this directive affect?

Answer:

Australia operates a non-discriminatory migration programme and the rules governing the entry of people are applied equally to all applicants for visas. Direction 62, which adheres to this principle, does not single out applicants on the basis of ethnicity.

Direction 62 took effect on and after the date it was made by the Minister, and therefore is not retrospective. It directs delegates as to the order in which Family Stream visa applications will be processed. Direction 62 has not changed the criteria that applicants must satisfy in order to be granted a Family Stream visa.

It is not possible to report on the number of applicants currently affected by the Direction, because (a) the Family Stream of the Migration Programme is oversubscribed and there is a pipeline of on-hand applications that await processing; and (b) a sponsor's status (whether they are an Illegal Maritime Arrival or not) is assessed once processing of an application may be due to commence.