

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 May 2007

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(41) Output 1.1: Migration and Temporary Entry

Senator Crossin (L&CA 48-49) asked:

In relation to question no. 37 asked by Senator Ludwig at the May 2005 Estimates hearing concerning processing times for skilled migrants, are the three major visa categories the subject of electronic applications and has that brought about efficiencies in processing times.

Answer:

Of the skilled categories referred to which comprises Employer nominated (including Labour Agreement), Regional Sponsored and General Skilled Migration, only onshore categories of GSM, and the Skilled Independent Regional (SIR, subclass 495) visa (both onshore and offshore) can be e-lodged.

The 2006 Evaluation of GSM categories highlighted a range of efficiency benefits relating to e-lodgement of visa applications, including the potential for applications to be lodged at any time, reduced need for data entry, automatic generation of a document checklist and the capacity to track the progress of the application online.

While it is clear that the efficiency benefits set out in paragraph 2 would reduce the time taken to process individual cases, it is not possible to quantify the efficiency gain through e-lodgement in respect of overall processing times because too many other variables have affected the caseload over the period since limited e-lodgement was introduced; most notably the substantial increase in the migration programme and in the size of the GSM on-hand caseload.

