

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 26 May 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(34) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Humphries (L&C 68) asked:

Would you say that there had been any increase in non bona fide applications across any of these categories in the last year or so?

Answer:

Approval and refusal rates for family visas have remained relatively constant over recent program years. The Department has not detected an increase in the overall level of non bona fide applications.

There has been a significant increase in refusals in the Other Family visa categories. This class includes the Carer visa which is intended to allow an eligible family member to enter Australia and provide care for a relative in circumstances where the relative cannot access assistance from other family members or community services. Analysis of the Carer visa applications found that in many cases, the onshore relative had sufficient support available from other family members in Australia. As a result, the Department updated its policy and amended the wording of the legislation to clarify the intent of the legislation. This has led to a higher refusal rate for Carer visas.