

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 1 November 2005

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

(228) Output 2.3: Australian Citizenship

Senator Hurley asked:

In relation to photocopying of applicants documents taking in to consideration the necessary checks required and the 2004-2005 Australian National Audit Office's report, p36, has DIMIA come up with a consistent method of processing applicants information?

- if yes, what is the new method
- how much does it cost to set up
- what's the new method level of accuracy
- if no, are you deciding on creating an alternative method
- when is it going to be functional

Answer:

The procedures for assessing applications for grant of Australian citizenship are set out in the Australian Citizenship Instructions (ACI). The ACI requires interviews to be conducted in accordance with the 'Standard Interview Framework for the Conduct of Citizenship Interviews' (SIF).

The SIF requires the following documents to be copied: birth certificates; travel documentation; adoption papers or custody papers of applicants under the age of 18; travel documentation containing the clients permanent residence status; and Centrelink certificates for New Zealand citizens stating that they had resided in Australia from a particular date. The SIF also requires that the application be annotated to indicate documents which have been sighted but not copied.

Some interviewers copy more documents than required by the SIF. The ANAO report reference to the differing practices across State and Territory Offices reflected this practice. The ANAO concluded that the department had robust support mechanisms in place for citizenship decision-making.