

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 OCTOBER 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(2) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration – Office of the MARA

Senator Fierravanti-Wells (L&C 20) asked:

Since July 2009, how many agents were struck off as part of the takeover?

Answer:

The short answer is no agents have been struck off since 1 July 2009.

To clarify, the term 'struck off' relates to the sanction of legal practitioners who are removed from the roll. The sanctions which apply to registered migration agents are:

- Caution;
- Suspension;
- Cancellation; and
- Barring.

The equivalent to a registered migration agent being 'stuck off' is a cancellation and the maximum period is for five years.

Since the transition on 1 July 2009 no agents have been cancelled. One agent has been suspended and one former agent has been barred.

The Office of the MARA has continued to progress complaints against registered migration agents in accordance with Part 3 of the Migration Act (1958). All complaints are investigated in a transparent and impartial manner and the Office of the MARA provides detailed reasons for any decision of a sanction.