

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 20 OCTOBER 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

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

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

In relation to the fees, please outline the difference in fees and requirements for commercial and non-commercial agents.

Answer:

Fees

Initial registration: \$1760 (commercial) \$160 (non-commercial)

Repeat registration: \$1595 (commercial) \$105 (non-commercial)

Requirements for registration

The entry requirements for initial registration for commercial and non-commercial agents are:

- Knowledge requirement: successful completion of the prescribed qualification and examination or the holder of a current legal practising certificate;
- Age requirement: must be over 18 years of age;
- Residency status: an Australian citizen or a New Zealand citizen holding a special category visa or the holder of an Australian permanent visa;
- Character requirement: must submit an Australian Federal Police criminal name check. This is to ensure that the applicant is a fit and proper person to give immigration assistance and is a person of integrity;
- English language requirement: from 1 January 2010 must meet IELTS 7 (academic);
- Professional Indemnity: individual or business must have professional indemnity insurance of \$250,000; and
- Professional library: must have a current subscription or access to Legend.com or LexisNexis online.

Additionally, non-commercial agents must provide a letter from the not-for-profit organisation with whom they are employed outlining their role and responsibilities.

Commercial migration agents applying for repeat registration, are required to show evidence of a clients' account (copies of a bank statement), unless they do not collect money in advance. Non-commercial agents are not required to provide evidence of a clients' account.