

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(156) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

What internal mechanisms are in place to ensure consistency of decision making by Delegates?

Answer:

The recently established Global Management model ensures that work in all Centres of Excellence (CoEs) is overseen by a single Program Delivery Director under the leadership and guidance of the Global Manager, Skilled and Family. This has provided a clear framework for the development of consistency across all CoEs with regard to processing timeliness, implementation of legislation and policy, and a key focus on client service and integrity across the network. Regular weekly teleconferences of the Director with CoE managers and assistant managers provide an opportunity for discussion and resolution of issues in a consistent way. Appropriate and agreed best practice is developed and implemented together with input from the key policy branch (457 and Labour Agreements) and then implemented across the network.

In early 2010, the 457 Business Operating Model was developed and signed off by policy and program delivery areas providing a 'blueprint' for service delivery.

Statistical data, both weekly and monthly, is used to measure performance against benchmarks of service standards and flow rates, as well as outcomes. These are compared across and within CoEs to assess consistency across these measures. Any differences are examined and discussed.

There is an outposted Subject Matter Expert from National Office placed in each CoE. These staff have a high level of expertise in policy and legislation. They perform a training and consultancy role, delivering regular training update sessions to staff. These sessions are shared across the CoEs to enhance consistent practice. Staff regularly have the opportunity for further training, and through regular team meetings, for policy updates and case and issue discussion.

Feedback from various sources, including the DIAC Global Feedback Unit, the Ombudsman and the external review body – the Migration Review Tribunal (MRT), as well as less formal feedback, is shared and analysed for the development of best practice. The MRT outcomes also provide a measure of Quality Assurance. Managers analyse all remitted decisions from the MRT and identify refusal trends as well as any training needs for staff.