

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(167) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

(1) Is the Department / Government considering either including or removing any other skilled occupations from the list?

(2) If so, what action is proposed?

Answer:

(1)-(2) The new SOL was announced on 17 May 2010 and came into effect on 1 July 2010.

The list of occupations is based on advice provided by Skills Australia. Skills Australia is an independent body that was established by the government to provide expert independent advice on matters relating to Australia's current, emerging and future workforce skills and workforce development needs.

In providing advice on what occupations are likely to be in medium to long-term need, Skills Australia assessed occupations to determine whether:

- the occupation is a skilled occupation, based on the skill level and lead time necessary to develop the required skills
- the skills are deployed for the use intended, in other words there is a good occupational 'fit'
- the opportunity cost of the skills being in short supply is high, i.e. causing either bottlenecks or imposing significant economic or community costs.

Skills Australia used a combination of economic data, labour market data and detailed information to identify those occupations which will target Australia's skilled migration program towards skilled migrants who will deliver the high value skills Australia needs.

The list is intended to be reviewed annually. Skills Australia has already announced the commencement of their annual review of the list.