

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(168) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

(1) In 2009-10 how many employers sought the approval of a labour agreement?

(2) In 2009-10 how many of those requests for a labour agreement were approved?

(3) For each agreement, what was the time taken from the date of submission to the date of approval?

Answer:

(1) Fifty nine (59) employers sought the approval of a labour agreement in the 2009-10 program year.

(2) Eight requests for a labour agreement were approved.

(3) In the 2009-10 program year, the time taken from submission of a request to approval of a labour agreement was between 19 business days and 161 business days. The average time for approval of these agreements was 74 business days. It is important to note that Labour Agreements provide an option for employers to negotiate concessions to standard visa arrangements where these are not appropriate for their needs. Negotiations to finalise an agreement can be protracted as the Department seeks to ensure that any concessions granted do not undermine the protection of overseas workers and opportunities for Australians. The assessment of submissions has also been delayed in some cases because the initial information provided was incomplete.