

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 OCTOBER 2010

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(186) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

What steps has DIAC taken to continue to expand the eVisa system as an effective tool to encourage professional conduct of overseas agents.

Answer:

The only eVisa applications that require lodgement by a known user are student visa applications from India, China, Indonesia and Thailand. Other eVisa applications can be lodged by unknown users, including overseas agents, and there are currently no plans to alter this approach.

The conditions by which agents are allowed access to lodge these student visa applications through eVisa have been strengthened recently by advocating the facility and the benefits of using the facility when lodging applications. The eVisa function allows agents to lodge applications with ease whilst being able to keep track of applications. Some methods implemented include:

- all relevant DIAC offices regulate and carry out audits on businesses regarding eVisa access to maintain a high standard of professional conduct;
- agents that do not adhere to the agreement and standards can have their eVisa access removed; and
- to apply for student access, education agents must be approved by the DIAC post.