

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 17 OCTOBER 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(SE11/0150) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

eVisa: With reference to the new Deed of Arrangement for eVisa agents that was introduced in 2010, what steps has the Department taken to implement, manage and resource a regular program of audits and evaluation of eVisa agent compliance with the terms of the new Deed of Arrangement (ANAO report: page 23; paragraph 37).

Answer:

The Department completed a re-registration audit process in August 2010 for all existing eVisa agents when the new Deed of Agreement was introduced. This also coincided with a registration process for new offshore agents.

More than 950 agents were considered as part of these two processes. Of these, about 460 agents were refused access to eVisa.

In late 2010, a registration process was commenced for new onshore agents only, and was completed in 2011. As a result of this process, the Department refused access to a further 63 agents.

This audit and registration activity focused on whether agents were meeting the performance criteria specified in the Deed of Agreement, including:

- achievement of a visa application approval rate of 90 per cent or more in any six (6) month period;
- for visa applications submitted: not exceed a figure of five (5) per cent in any six (6) month reporting period of visa applications in which documentation is determined to be non-genuine; and
- lodgement of a minimum of 30 successful visa applications per financial year.