

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 17 OCTOBER 2011

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### **(SE11/0181) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration**

Senator Cash asked:

Employer Nominated Skilled visa: I refer to the answer given to EQON BE11/0122 which states that 98% of the \$10million budgeted over four years to enhance the 457 visa program will be spent on salaries. How much of that figure has been expended to date? How many staff have been hired? What has been the effect of the establishment of the Brisbane team on reducing the processing time of 457 visa applications?

*Answer:*

\$650,000 has been spent on staffing and training costs for the Brisbane Centre of Excellence to end September 2011. Additionally, approximately \$33,000 has been expended on the stakeholder engagement staff to end October 2011.

22 staff have been engaged to establish the new processing centre in Brisbane. An additional seven staff have been engaged in Perth to ensure staffing levels are commensurate with the increase in lodgements at that centre.

The median time to finalise has decreased from 23 days (2010-2011) to 21 days (2011-2012 year to date). The proportion of cases finalised within two weeks has increased from 31% in June 2011 to 40% in October 2011. This reflects the effectiveness of the additional fully trained staff.