QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE13/0402) PROGRAMME – 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Moore (Written) asked:

Can you please provide details on the Departmental Guidelines for Citizenship Ceremonies for:
• The monitoring of the Guidelines for Citizenship Ceremonies across the Nation?
    o How are the guidelines monitored?
• Do the Guidelines provide instructions, or are there suggestions or requirements, for the inclusion of elected local representatives?
    o Are there different suggestions or requirements for the differing levels of elected representatives?
    o What are the instructions/suggestions for the inclusion of elected local representatives?
    o What is the process if these instructions are not adhered to?
    o Have there been instances of instructions being issued and not followed? If so, how was this resolved?

Answer:

The Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code (the Code) sets out the legal and other requirements for conducting citizenship ceremonies and provides guidance for hosting organisations.

Adherence to the Code is monitored through regular information and training sessions the Department holds with local government councils on the requirements of the Code and their obligations when conducting citizenship ceremonies, and as part of the management of the ceremonies administrative process.

Under the Code, ceremony organisers are required to invite:
- the Minister responsible for the citizenship portfolio;
- the local federal member/s of parliament;
- a senator from a different political party to that of the local federal member;
- the local member/s of the state or territory parliament; and
- representation from local government.

Managing non-compliance with the Code is typically handled through discussion and correspondence between the Department and relevant organisations.

There have been two instances where presiding officers have had their authorisation removed due to breaches of the Code.