

## **Opening statement to Senate Estimates**

**Parliament House, Canberra**

**21 May 2007**

**Andrew Metcalfe**

**Secretary, Department of Immigration and Citizenship**

Mr Chairman, members of the committee.

Mr Chairman, can I congratulate you on your recent appointment and thank you for the opportunity to deliver an opening statement. I have provided an opening statement at Estimates hearings since my appointment as secretary in July 2005 because of the strong interest in the issues that initiated the business and cultural transformation underway in the department.

For this reason, I am pleased to provide an updated document for members of the committee, setting out our progress in this transformation since the release of the Palmer and Comrie reports, which respectively inquired into the cases of Cornelia Rau and Vivian Alvarez.

This document outlines significant achievements that have been made since I last appeared before the committee in February. These have occurred at the same time we have been tasked to implement substantial new programmes related to our skilled (permanent and temporary) migration programmes, and to implement the citizenship test, as announced in the Budget on 8 May. And of course, each and every day we provide services to clients all around the world.

One of the areas in which we have made significant progress is our business transformation incorporating IT improvements through the *Systems for People* programme.

When complete, *Systems for People* will provide a single view of the client, as well as improved record-keeping, better quality data and improved access to policy, legislation and on-line training. It is a five-year, \$495 million programme, and a key part of the government's response to the Palmer and Comrie reports. I am pleased to report it is delivering results on time and on budget.

In April, we released major portals for case management, compliance and border operations. This release has also prepared much of the ground work for future releases, with a number of technical and services projects also delivered.

These improvements will change the way we do our business. There will be benefits for staff in ease of working and productivity, while clients should have a simpler and more positive interaction with the department.

Since the last hearing, the Commonwealth Ombudsman has reported further on the cases referred to him in 2005. Once again, the government is responding to these reports and the department is working with the Ombudsman to ensure mistakes cannot recur. As I have said previously, each of these cases is a reminder of the importance of having fair and reasonable dealings with all our clients, and I stress this to my staff frequently.

As I stated earlier, this progress on our business and cultural transformation projects has occurred while having to plan for the implementation of significant new Budget initiatives.

Could I also take this opportunity to advise that the minister approved changes to our outcomes and outputs structure in March. These have been amended to reflect changed

government priorities and improve the transparency and alignment of our reporting to the programmes being delivered.

The performance information outlined in our portfolio budget statements supports the revised structure and, in line with Department of Finance and Administration guidance, has been simplified to ensure that the information is meaningful and accessible to readers.

Finally, I would like to advise the committee of some key staffing changes.

Deputy Secretary Abul Rizvi PSM recently transferred to the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.

Abul had been with the department since 1992, and in that time made a major contribution to the development of the migration policies and programmes for which Australia is internationally recognised. I wish to record my thanks for his support over the past two years in my role as secretary and wish him well with his new challenges.

Similarly, Dr Wendy Southern PSM, the First Assistant Secretary of the Compliance Policy and Case Coordination Division, has transferred to head the Cabinet Secretariat in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Wendy played a significant role in the establishment of the business and cultural transformation which is now underway in the department and I record my appreciation for her work.

She has been replaced by Lyn O'Connell, who since September 2005 has headed our Detention and Offshore Services Division. Lyn, in turn, has been replaced by Mr Jeff Lamond, previously the Merit Protection Commissioner in the Australian Public Service Commission. I am very pleased with these appointments.

I would like to record my appreciation to Deputy Secretary Bob Correll for his continuing leadership of the *Systems for People* programme, and also thank the many staff and contractors who have contributed to its success so far.

I also record my appreciation for the efforts of the other deputy secretaries and all departmental staff in continuing to effectively and positively respond to the many challenges and opportunities we have.

Thank you.

## **DIAC Outcomes and Outputs Structure**

### **Outcome 1:**

Contributing to Australia's society and its economic advancement through the lawful and orderly entry and stay of people.

#### Output 1.1 - Migration and Temporary Entry

1.1.1 Economic migration

1.1.2 Family migration

1.1.3 Special eligibility

1.1.4 Visitors and Working Holiday Makers

1.1.5 Students

1.1.6 Temporary residents (economic)

1.1.7 Temporary residents (non-economic)

1.1.8 Resident Return Visas, Australian Declaratory Visas and Certificates of Evidence of Resident Status

#### Output 1.2 - Refugee and humanitarian entry and stay

1.2.1 Offshore humanitarian program

1.2.2 Protection visas (onshore)

#### Output 1.3 - Border Security

1.3.1 Borders

1.3.2 Identity

#### Output 1.4 - Compliance

1.4.1 Detection onshore

1.4.2 Status resolution

1.4.3 Removals

#### Output 1.5 - Detention

#### Output 1.6 - Offshore asylum seeker management

#### Output 1.7 - Safe Haven

#### Output 1.8 - Systems for People

### **Outcome 2:**

A society which values Australian citizenship, appreciates cultural diversity and enables migrants to participate equitably.

#### Output 2.1 - Settlement Services

2.1.1 Settlement Planning and Information Delivery

2.1.2 Humanitarian Settlement Services

2.1.3 Support for community services

- 2.1.4 AMEP administration
- 2.1.5 Fee-free Translating and interpreting services

Output 2.2 - Translating and interpreting services

- 2.2.1 Document translating
- 2.2.2 Telephone interpreting
- 2.2.3 On-site interpreting

Output 2.3 - Australian citizenship

- 2.3.1 Decisions on citizenship status
- 2.3.2 Promotion of the value of Australian citizenship

Output 2.4 - Promoting the benefits of a united and diverse society.

Output 2.5 - Systems for People

**Internal Products:**

**Enabling divisions that provide services and support to the delivery of all outputs.**

Client Services Division

Financial Strategy & Reporting Division

Legal Division

Litigation

**People Services, Values and Training Division**

Strategic Policy Group

IT Services & Security Division

Systems Delivery Division

National Communications Branch

**Ministerial and Parliamentary Services Branch**

**Governance and Assurance Branch**

**\*Denotes changes to the previous Outcomes and Outputs structure, or new inclusions**

**OPENING STATEMENT  
ESTIMATES, MAY 2007**

**ANDREW METCALFE  
SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

**ATTACHMENT: PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE PALMER PROGRAMME**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Status</b>
<i>Being more open and accountable</i>	
Governance and assurance	<p>We continue to invest in improving governance in the department. The department has commissioned an independent review of its governance arrangements. The review found that "substantial improvements have been made since July 2005 to the department's governance systems, processes and structures". I am reassured that the importance placed on cultural reform, behaviours and standards, accountability and stakeholder engagement is paying off. Further improvement in our governance arrangements will occur in 2007-08 as recommendations from the review are progressively implemented, including better education of staff on governance, clearer lines of accountability and a more strategic focus on departmental priorities. There is continued focus on promoting better practice in quality assurance and the benefits of systematically applying risk management principles as well as implementing a comprehensive internal audit programme.</p>
Re-tendering for the department's detention services contract	<p>The department is in the process of re-tendering for detention services and health care services. Three requests for tender will be released on 24 May. This is a key element in the department's change programme in the way we manage detention services.</p> <p>I would like to make clear that we are not simply re-tendering for the same services. An immense amount of work within the department, informed by significant consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, has resulted in the development of a new service delivery model. It is this model the tender process seeks to operationalise. In preparation for the tenders, the department asked the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) to undertake a performance audit of the governance arrangements for the re-tendering process. The ANAO released its report on 2 May 2007. The report provides the department with assurance that the framework for this strategic procurement activity is sound. We have agreed with the two recommendations made in the report and have taken steps to ensure that these recommendations associated with project management, budget processing and records management are addressed.</p>

Stakeholder relationships	<p>The secretary and other executives continue high level engagement with organisations that have an interest in DIAC operations. The secretary regularly writes to external stakeholders to keep them informed of issues in which they may have an interest and inviting feedback. Stakeholder engagement now features on the DIAC website which outlines our approach to stakeholders and the many different fora people can use to engage with the department.</p> <p><a href="http://www.immi.gov.au/about/stakeholder-engagement/index.htm">http://www.immi.gov.au/about/stakeholder-engagement/index.htm</a></p>
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<i>Fairer and more reasonable dealings with clients</i>	
Client service improvement programme	<p>The Client Service Charter was developed after extensive consultation with stakeholders and launched by the minister in June 2006 as part of a comprehensive Client Service Improvement Programme. The department has made good progress in better understanding our client's needs and expectations and has made positive changes across our service delivery network. This year will see the next series of client service action plans developed as part of our planning framework to ensure we maintain a focus on our clients. Further improvements to the London and Ottawa contact centres have streamlined client service overseas, particularly focussing on faster responses to enquiries, be it by phone or email. A new reporting framework will give us better data on our service delivery performance and changes to our internal governance has created forums where the performance of the organisation from both a client service and programme outcome perspective can be discussed.</p>
Client satisfaction surveys	<p>The inaugural client satisfaction survey was conducted by Roy Morgan Research earlier this year. The survey was conducted across a range of client groups in order to collect baseline information on the level of satisfaction with the department's service delivery and to inform planning for service improvement. Overall, 80 per cent of clients surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided by DIAC. Key results have been made available internally and work is underway to define key activities to further improve client satisfaction. Once the key initiatives have been identified and incorporated into our client service action plans, the survey and response will be released to all staff and key stakeholders.</p>
Centralised client feedback mechanisms	<p>Client compliments, suggestions and complaints are vital to improving the quality of our information, products and services. The department has centralised the processing of these through the Global Feedback Unit (GFU) in Melbourne. The GFU collects, analyses and reports on all forms of feedback, including phone calls, web based and mail.</p> <p>The past year has seen significant progress in improving our complaints resolution processes and we are receiving</p>

	<p>substantial feedback on these improvements from both clients and stakeholders.</p> <p>The coming months will see additional areas of the department being brought into the single centralised IT support system, including HREOC, Ombudsman, Privacy, FOI, detention and offshore services.</p> <p>With that system in place there will be a heightened focus on increasing visibility and understanding of the service needs of clients and stakeholders.</p>
Community Care Pilot	<p>The Community Care Pilot involves providing services to DIAC clients who have complex needs and/or are considered to be vulnerable DIAC clients in the community. The pilot achieved the client referral target set at a minimum of 200 clients in early February and it is expected that around 400 clients will be included in the pilot by the end of the financial year. Following an interim evaluation in December 2006, the pilot has been extended to Queensland and by another 12 months.</p> <p>An evaluation of the pilot will be conducted in October 2007 to inform future consideration of the need for such services.</p>
Detention strategy	<p>The onshore detention strategy will provide a sound base for onshore detention for the foreseeable future, providing flexible arrangements, including accommodation and services, to meet the forecast demand for the next 10 years.</p> <p>Upgrades to existing facilities continue and further construction tenders have been released to industry to continue the implementation of the strategy. Brisbane and Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation are expected to be completed by the end of 2007. Planning and design for the Adelaide Immigration Transit Accommodation is underway and expected to be completed by June 2008. Upgrades to Baxter, Darwin, Maribyrnong (Melbourne) and Perth are expected to be completed by the end of 2007.</p> <p>Perth residential housing centre is operational. Maribyrnong expansion works approved in the 2004-05 Budget have been completed. The Port Hedland centre is to be leased out from mid 2007 to assist with local accommodation shortages. The scope of the Villawood redevelopment approved in the 2004-05 Budget is being examined to ensure it meets post Palmer expectations and the results will be considered in the scheduled review of the <i>Onshore Detention Strategy</i> in the 2008-09 Budget context. The Christmas Island IDC will be operational later this year.</p>
24/7 hotline for police and consular inquiries	<p>The 24/7 hotline facility known as the Immigration Status Service (ISS) commenced operation in February 2006 and was fully operational in August 2006. The ISS provides a central contact point for police making immigration status enquiries, and consular officials making enquires about their nationals that may be in detention. As at 30 April 2007, the service had</p>

	<p>received around 8,000 enquiries, of which 90% related to people who were in Australia lawfully. These included Australian citizens, permanent residents and temporary visa holders. Information obtained from the ISS enabled police to make timely decisions regarding the status of these people. The ISS is being promoted through the DIAC national police awareness training package.</p>
Identity verification	<p>The National Identity Verification and Advice (NIVA) Section was established in May 2005. NIVA has established, and trained on, national guidelines for establishing identity in the field and in detention (MSI 409 and office-specific operational procedures). NIVA monitors identity issues managed in the state and territory offices and actively investigates the most complex identity issues encountered in DIAC. NIVA recently received its 500<sup>th</sup> referral and has an ongoing caseload of around 50 cases which it is actively investigating.</p>
<b><i>Well trained and supported staff</i></b>	
Instructions and procedures	<p>Instructions and procedures for staff are being revised and updated in the context of a broader department-wide instructions reform project which provides additional guidance to staff in line with business process changes. Several instructions on establishing identity and visa status have been reviewed. In addition, mandatory controls have been established and implemented as part of the quality assurance framework to ensure the integrity and quality of procedures including decision making on detention, ongoing detention management, approval and acquittal of warrants, and assessment for removals.</p>
<i>System for People</i>	<p>In April the programme successfully delivered the first major portals release. This included a Case Management Portal, a Compliance Portal and the Central Movement Alert List component of the Border Security Portal. Many of the major reforms recommended by the Palmer and Comrie reports are reflected in the business process changes and systems and services delivered in this release.</p> <p>The next release, in July, will include further enhancements to the first release portals and will include a visa portal, a general skilled migration portal and a detention services portal. For the next three years, new change releases will be implemented every three months, progressively improving our services to clients and the consistency in our business processes, record keeping, quality control and reporting.</p>
College of Immigration	<p>The College of Immigration has been established to provide training for individuals in key roles including compliance and detention officers. The college curriculum is being developed with careful attention to the recommendations of the Palmer and Comrie inquiries.</p> <p>The first course offered through the college, the Compliance Officer Pilot Course was completed in September 2006 and a</p>

	<p>further two programmes have been conducted. The department has instigated an assessment of all existing officer to ensure the meet the same standards as the new training. The first phase of the detention officer plot course has also been conducted and this programme is now conducted on a regular basis. The first college pilot of the investigations course is due to commenced 30 April 2007.</p> <p>Design work has commenced on college programmes for airport staff, and a new comprehensive training programme will be implemented in the new financial year.</p> <p>A request for expression of interest has been conducted to find an educational institution to form an alliance with DIAC to deliver the full college curricula. A select tender will be conducted in the next quarter to establish this alliance.</p>
<p>Records Management Improvement Programme</p>	<p>An upgrade of the department's records management system, TRIM was implemented in July 2006. Use of the system continues to increase, reflected in the number of active users and the volume of stored content. TRIM will continue to be enhanced to improve performance and staff usability, including the integration with IT initiatives to automate recordkeeping with the business process.</p> <p>The first release of a document imaging service for case management has commenced as part of the roll out of <i>Systems for People 1</i>. Further improvements to this service are scheduled for <i>Systems for People 3</i>. This has enabled real time sharing of client and corporate records to assist case managers in managing individual case management plans. Record keeping training has been incorporated into a number of training programs with the Training College curriculum, such as the induction and graduate programs, compliance training program, detention program and the overseas training course. Other modules are being developed including a module on record keeping for third party providers. A record keeping framework, incorporating continuous improvement for the next few years, is under development.</p>