

**Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES QUESTION**

(Question No. 161)

Mr L D T Ferguson asked the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, upon notice, on 20 February 2002:

- (1) Since September 1994, how many (a) adults and (b) children are estimated to have lost their Australian citizenship due to the operation of section 17 of the Citizenship Act.
- (2) What were the new countries of nationality or citizenship that triggered the loss of Australian citizenship.
- (3) How many of the people referred to in part (1) have to date (a) applied for and (b) obtained a resumption of their Australian citizenship under section 23 of the Act.

Mr Hardgrave – The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

- (1) Since September 1994, 2549 adults have been recorded as having lost their Australian citizenship due to the operation of section 17 of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*. In the same period, 363 children are recorded as having lost their Australian citizenship under section 23 of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* as a result of their parents having lost under section 17.
- (2) The loss of Australian citizenship is triggered by section 17 of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*. Section 17 provides that an adult Australian will lose their Australian citizenship if they do "any act or thing" which results in the acquisition of the citizenship of another country. By acquiring the citizenship of any country, a citizen will automatically lose their Australian citizenship. The Department does not collect statistics on which countries Australian citizens apply to for citizenship.
- (3) Figures for financial years 1994/95 and 1995/96 are recorded only as the total number of people who have resumed. That is, there is no data break up for adults and children and no data on the number of applications lodged for resumption of Australian citizenship. In 1994/95 the total number of people who resumed their Australian citizenship was 292 and 424 in 1995/96.

Since financial year 1996/97, 2753 adults and 177 children have applied to resume their Australian citizenship. Of these, 2382 adults and 159 children have obtained a resumption of their Australian citizenship under sections 23A, 23AA and 23B of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*.

Departmental data on resumption does not record the means by which the applicant lost Australian citizenship. The adults and children referred to above as having resumed citizenship may have lost their citizenship either by renunciation (section 18 of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*) or through the operation of sections 17 and 23 of the Act.