



16 January 2017

GIPAboy

Email: foi+request-2753-57bf5a49@righttoknow.org.au

In reply please quote:

FOI Request: FA 16/11/01500

File Number: ADF2016/71711

Dear GIPAboy

Access Decision - Freedom of Information (FOI) request – Release of documents

This letter refers to an access request received under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act) on 17 November 2016, seeking access to:

- 1. Request for number of Syrian applicants that have applied for visitor visas to Australia from July 2015 to September 2016.*
- 2. How many applications (from Syrian applicants) for the visitor visa have been successful?*
- 3. Request for number of Syrian applicants that have applied for the different types of refugee and humanitarian visas from July 2015 to September 2016. Please provide total number of applicants, and then total number of applicants by visa type.*
- 4. How many applications (from Syrian applicants) for the refugee and humanitarian visas have been successful? Please provide total number of successful applications, and then total number of successful applications by visa type.*

Timeframe for processing your request

The FOI Act provides a statutory period for processing your request of 30 calendar days, unless an extension of time is agreed to, or provided for under a provision of the FOI Act.

On 23 November 2016, the Department wrote to you acknowledging your request and requesting a further 30 days within which to make a decision on your request. You agreed in writing to this extension of time.

Pursuant to section 15AA of the FOI Act, the Department has also notified the Information Commissioner in writing of this extension of time, of which the due date for a decision on your request was extended to Monday, 16 January 2017.

Authority to make decision

I am an officer authorised under section 23 of the FOI Act to make decisions in respect of requests to access documents or to amend or annotate Departmental records.

Documents in scope

Documents in scope of the request are:

- Syrian Offshore Humanitarian Lodgements and Grants, by Stream (01 July 2015 to 30 September 2016) – containing 1 folio
- Subclass 600 Visitor visas lodged and granted in 2015-16 and 2016-17 to 30 September 2016 where the citizenship country is Syrian Arab Republic – containing 1 folio.

Information considered

In reaching my decision, I have considered the following:

- the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*;
- Departmental documents, (identified above);
- consultation with relevant business areas; and
- the Australian Information Commissioner's FOI guidelines relating to access to documents held by government.

Decision

I am satisfied that I have been provided with all the relevant documents to consider in my decision. I have considered the documents and am satisfied that no exemptions apply. Therefore, I am releasing the relevant documents in full.

Review rights

Internal review

If you disagree with my decision, you have the right to apply for an internal review by the Department of my decision. Any request for internal review must be provided to the Department within 30 days of you being notified of the decision. Where possible please attach reasons why you believe review of the decision is necessary. The internal review will be carried out by an officer other than the original decision-maker and the Department must make a review decision within 30 days.

Applications for review should be sent to:

Freedom of Information
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
PO Box 25 BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Or by email to: foi@border.gov.au

Review by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

You may apply directly to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) for a review of my decision. You must apply in writing within 60 days of this notice. For further information about review rights and how to submit a review request to the OAIC, please see FOI fact sheet 12 '*Freedom of information – Your review rights*', available online at www.oaic.gov.au .

How to make a complaint about the handling of this FOI request

You may complain to the Australian Information Commissioner about action taken by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection in relation to your request.

Your enquiries to the Australian Information Commissioner can be directed to:

Phone 1300 363 992 (local call charge)
Website www.oaic.gov.au

Contacting the FOI Section

If you wish to discuss this matter, I can be contacted using the details provided below.

Yours sincerely

FOI Officer
Freedom of Information Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
Email FOI@border.gov.au

Attachments

- Documents released to you under the FOI Act



Every year many more people apply to be resettled under the offshore Humanitarian Programme than Australia can accept. In 2015 – 16, over 40,000 people applied and nearly 7000 people were granted visas overseas. Even with the additional 12,000 places, the limited number of visas available and the high demand for these places means that not everyone can be accepted. Priority is given to those people outside their home country, assessed as refugees by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and formally referred to Australia for resettlement, and applicants proposed by a close family member in Australia. To manage the demand for places in the Humanitarian Programme fairly, priority in processing is given to people who have fled their country of origin and been formally referred for resettlement by UNHCR, and people in humanitarian situations outside their home country who are proposed by close relatives in Australia through the Special Humanitarian Programme (SHP).

Syrian Offshore Humanitarian Lodgements and Grants, by Stream (01 July 2015 to 30 September 2016)

Stream	Lodged	Granted
Refugee	28,345	2,581
SHP	11,990	4,324
Total	40,335	6,905

Data Notes:

1. As information has been drawn from dynamic system environments the information provided may differ from previous or future reporting.
2. This table includes visas granted towards the annual offshore resettlement component of the Humanitarian Programme, and the additional 12,000 places for people displaced by conflict in Syria and Iraq.
3. Refugee visas include subclass 200 (Refugee) and 204 (Woman at Risk). SHP visas include subclass 202 (Global Special Humanitarian Programme).
4. Data was extracted from Departmental systems on 28 November 2016.
5. The country of birth of principal visa applicants is applied to secondary visa applicants.

Subclass 600 Visitor visas lodged in 2015-16 and 2016-17 to 30 September 2016 where the citizenship country is Syrian Arab Republic

Source: Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2016 (BE10453.01)

Note 1: Includes primary and secondary applicants

Activity	2015-16	2016-17 to 30/09/16
Lodged	640	178

Subclass 600 Visitor visas granted in 2015-16 and 2016-17 to 30 September 2016 where the citizenship country is Syrian Arab Republic

Source: Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2016 (BE10453.02)

Note 1: Includes primary and secondary applicants

Activity	2015-16	2016-17 to 30/09/16
Granted	127	46