



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

Submission

For decision
PDMS Ref. Number MS18-000448

To Minister for Home Affairs
Minister for Immigration and Border Protection

Subject Mid-Year Review of the 2017-18 Humanitarian Programme

Timing 6 April 2018 – To allow two months to deliver adjusted programme

Recommendations

That you:

1. agree that around 675 places be distributed from the offshore component to the onshore component; and noted/please discuss
2. note that the additional places for the onshore component will be drawn from the contingency reserve, 200 places from Asia and 200 places from the Middle East region; and noted/please discuss
3. note that as a result of this adjustment the revised composition of the programme will comprise around 1425 onshore protection visas and around 14,825 offshore visas (Attachment C). noted/please discuss

Minister for Home Affairs
Minister for Immigration and Border Protection

Signature Peter Soutar

Date: 13/04/2018

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Minister's Comments				
<p><i>Please ensure all visas applications from SA. land owners are referred to me (not delegated) for decision. Thank</i></p>				
ejected Yes/No	Timely Yes/No	Relevance <input type="checkbox"/> Highly relevant <input type="checkbox"/> Significantly relevant <input type="checkbox"/> Not relevant	Length <input type="checkbox"/> Too long <input type="checkbox"/> Right length <input type="checkbox"/> Too brief	Quality Poor 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 Excellent Comments:

Key Issues

1. You asked that the Department advise you of necessary adjustments to the 2017-18 Humanitarian Programme (Submission MS17-001684, *2017-18 Humanitarian Programme Composition* at Attachment A refers). The mid-year review of the programme has been conducted in close consultation with the offshore network. It is expected that with the proposed adjustments, the increased Humanitarian Programme will be delivered in line with the regional proportions and other program parameters for vulnerable women and children, persecuted minorities and prioritisation of regional settlement you previously agreed. Attachment C contains details of the proposed re-allocations.

2017-18 Programme Planning Levels

2. The 2017-18 Humanitarian Programme was increased to 16,250 places. You agreed that 15,500 of these places be notionally allocated to the offshore component and the remaining 750 places retained for the onshore protection component. Of the 15,500 offshore places, 8140 were Refugee category places and 7360 were Special Humanitarian Programme places which included up to 1000 places for the Community Support Programme.
3. You agreed that the offshore component comprise:
 - 8250 places for the Middle East region (53 per cent);
 - 4110 places for the Asia region (27 per cent);
 - 2800 places for the Africa region (18 per cent); and
 - 340 places held as a contingency reserve (2 per cent).
4. You also agreed that a minimum of 1550 places in the offshore component be available for vulnerable women, children and dependents and unaccompanied minors.

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2017-18 Humanitarian Program Delivery

5. At 31 December 2017, a total of 7816 visas have been granted comprising:
 - 6900 offshore visas and 916 onshore visas (see [Attachment B](#) for further details);
 - 821 visas have been granted to vulnerable women, children and dependents;
 - 261 visas have been granted to applicants under the Community Proposal Pilot which will be counted against the Community Support Programme (CSP), see paragraph 11.
6. Based on the analysis of the onshore (non-IMA) permanent protection visa applications in the pipeline, we estimate that around an additional 675 places will be needed to accommodate applications that are assessed as engaging Australia's protection obligations. These places will be drawn predominantly from the unused contingency reserve and from minor adjustments to some regional allocations under the offshore component of the program. This will bring the onshore protection component to around 1425 places and reduce the offshore component to around 14,825 places.

Delivery of the program against key priorities

Vulnerable women and children – 1550 places

7. We anticipate that the 1550 target for vulnerable women and children will be met and possibly exceeded with 821 visas already granted in the first six months of the year. The top five countries of grants for this cohort are Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Syria and Eritrea.

Priority for SHP applicants with proposers in regional areas

8. Posts have been informed that highest processing priority be accorded to SHP applicants who are proposed by family who are settled in regional areas of Australia. We have also used the Community Liaison Officers (previously Ethnic Liaison Officers) network to disseminate information about priorities for regional proposers.
9. Departmental systems changes were implemented in November 2017 to enable monitoring and reporting of this group. Reporting indicates that between 1 November 2017 and 31 December 2018, around 5 per cent of new SHP applicants were supported by a proposer in a regional area. We expect that the proportion of applicants with regional proposers will increase as the community's awareness of this policy increases. The Department will continue to monitor and report on this priority group.

Grants under the Community Support Program (CSP)

10. The legislative framework for the CSP was introduced on 1 July 2017. CSP applications must be lodged by an Approved Proposing Organisations (APOs). APOs agreed by you (MS17-003656 refers) were appointed on 16 March 2018 and are now in the process of gathering information from applicants and employers ahead of visa lodgements. APOs have indicated there has been significant interest from individuals about the CSP, with a few hundred enquiries received. However it remains to be seen whether this level of interest translates to lodgements. Given the delayed commencement of the CSP associated with setting the assurance of support mechanism, it is likely that only small numbers of applications (around 100) will be lodged and finalised in 2017-18. The department will provide separate briefing on the delivery of the CSP once the first applications are received.

s. 47C(1)

Middle East region – amended allocation - s. 47C(1)

12. We propose to

s. 47C(1)

s. 47C(1)


s. 34(3)

- Grants to Yazidis are expected to s. 47C(1). We continue to work with Yazda to ensure that applicants proposed by Yazidi humanitarian entrants to Australia are processed expeditiously.
- As previously advised, as a number of these applicants are Iraqi Yazidis, successful applicants will be granted in-country visas.
- In line with your request, a greater number of Syrians will be granted visas in 2017-18 compared to 2016-17.

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Asia Region – amended allocation – 3930 places (26.5 per cent of offshore program)

14. As advised in MS17-001684, resettlement need among the Bhutanese in Nepal and Myanmar in Thailand has reduced significantly given large-scale resettlement over the past decade by a number of resettlement countries and UNHCR efforts to facilitate returns to Myanmar. This has resulted in a decrease in applicants with compelling claims. As a result, we propose to re-allocate 200 places (100 from Bangkok and 100 from New Delhi post) which will result in around 26.5 per cent of grants to the Asia region, which is in line with the previously agreed allocation for Asia.

15. s. 47C(1)
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Africa region – no change to the original allocation – 2800 places (18.8 per cent of offshore program)

16. Posts in the Africa region are on track to deliver their allocation. In line with your preferences and the Government's multi-year commitment to protracted refugee situations announced at the New York *Leaders' Summit* on Refugees in September 2016, the priority groups for resettlement will continue to be Congolese from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopians, Eritreans and small numbers of refugees from the Central African Republic in Chad.

Consultation – internal/external

17. Humanitarian, Family and Citizenship Policy Branch; Humanitarian Programme processing posts.

Consultation – Secretary

18. The Secretary/Commissioner were not consulted on the approach in the submission.

Client service implications

19. Nil.

Sensitivities

20. N/A.

Financial/systems/legislation/deregulation/media implications

21. Nil.