



Freedom of Information Request: FA 21/05/00283

1. *How many 489 Regional Visa Holders are in India?*

As at 01 May 2021 there were **2,050** Skilled – Regional (Provisional) subclass 489 Indian Citizen visa holders outside Australia.

Of these subclass 489 visa holders, **944** have not yet entered Australia on this visa.

2. *What plans or steps have been taken by the Government to allow 489 Visa holders to travel back to Australia?*

In response to COVID-19, the Government introduced temporary arrangements to assist subclass 489 visa holders in Australia applying for their permanent subclass 887 Skilled Regional visa – including the ability to apply for their permanent visa from outside of Australia.

Applicants who apply no later than three months after the end of the concession period can also access a three month employment allowance toward the 12 months full-time work requirement. This allowance is temporary to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and there are no plans to introduce further allowances at this point in time. Visa holders having trouble in attaining full-time employment may add together the hours worked in two part-time or casual positions to meet the 35 hours of work per week requirement.

The residence allowance is only available to visa holders outside Australia who are unable to return to Australia due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Visa holders in Australia must comply with the conditions of their visa including the condition of living, working and studying in a designated regional area of Australia.

More information on COVID-19 visa concessions and current travel restrictions can be found on the Department of Home Affairs' website at: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au>

3. *What concessions are being given to 489 Visa Holders for fulfilment of visa condition 8539 in lieu of COVID 19 travel restrictions imposed by the Government?*

Concessions on residence requirements are publically available.

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/skilled-regional-887#Eligibility>