



**Regional
Development**
Australia

Fitzroy and Central West Inc.

Central Queensland
Migration and Settlement
Scoping Study Document
2011-2012



Preamble

Migration and the 'Growing Australia' policy of the Australian Government compliments the forecast population growth requirements of the Central Queensland region in terms of attracting necessary skills to the region to offset the resource sector proposed expansion - However with the welcoming of such programs to attract skilled migrants comes a level of caution that aims to ensure harmonious and effective assimilation with existing communities.

RDAFCW recognises the importance of pursuing a prudent cooperative arrangement between all participating sub-regions/local government divisions in an effort to maximise participation but more importantly to develop and establish a Regional (Central Queensland) Migration and Settlement Services Advisory framework that will enable RDAFCW to liaise with credibly relevant government departments and agencies.

Current individual arrangements developed in consultation with Australian Government departments and agencies, given the forecast of increased migration statistics, will rapidly expose the efficiencies and overall effectiveness of migration services and overtime may be deemed yet another social and financial cost that Local Government will need to address.

Prudent cooperation by way of a collaborative arrangement, rather than aggressive acquisition of available funds to go it alone will enable resource sharing and maximise effectiveness across the region.

The so-named scoping study will research all available avenues and existing effective models that are participatory to assist in pre-empting possible deficiencies. RDAFCW will work closely with relevant local government and other participating stakeholders in developing a framework that will contribute to harmonious assimilation and maximising Australian Government targets for Central Queensland.





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01 : Methodology

Regional Development Australia Fitzroy and Central West is to prepare a scoping study into existing migration and settlement organisations and networks and to develop a collaborative arrangement and implementation strategy for Central Queensland. The network and strategy will assist in positive outcomes for the community in relation to the Australian Government's 'Building Australia's future through the well-managed entry and settlement of people' policy, especially relating to employment, education and health.

- » To research and identify the migration and settlement organisations in Central Queensland working towards the Australian Government's 'Building Australia's future through well-managed entry and settlement of people' policy, especially in relation to employment, education and health
- » To research and identify the networking structure of migration and settlement organisations in Central Queensland
- » To research and identify Central Queensland's Industries migration and settlement employment strategies
- » To research and identify Central Queensland's Council and Shire's migration and settlement employment strategies
- » To identify gaps in the over arching strategies relating to Central Queensland
- » To identify solutions

02 : Regional Development Australia Overview

Regional Development Australia (RDA) was established in 2009 to bring together all levels of government to support the development of regional Australia. RDA has a pivotal role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of Australia's regions, by working with regional stakeholders to help address the economic, social and environmental issues affecting regional communities. Throughout Australia, RDA committees have been convened with a focus on being important contributors to, and drivers of:

- » social inclusion strategies that will bring together and support all members of the local and broader community
- » regional business growth plans and strategies that will help support economic development, job creation, skills development and business investment
- » environmental solutions that will support on-going sustainability and the management of climate change

Across Australia, RDA takes a leadership role in bringing together organisations to take advantage of government programs, policies and initiatives. Some of the key activities of RDA include:

- » providing an effective conduit between governments and regional communities, through a strong understanding of federal, state and local government policies and initiatives, and the ways in which local communities can engage with them
- » supporting, promoting and disseminating information on government policy initiatives for the benefit of local communities
- » supporting the growth and development of regional communities, by articulating local priorities, identifying and aligning resources, engaging with stakeholders and promoting solutions

Queensland has 12 based RDA committees: these are funded by the Australian and State Governments and administered by the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government.

03 : RDA Fitzroy and Central West Overview

In Central Queensland, the Regional Development Australia footprint is based on the Fitzroy and Central West statistical divisions. The Regional Development Australia Fitzroy and Central West committee (RDAFCW) is comprised of local leaders with broad and diverse skills and experiences; who understand the challenges, opportunities and priorities in their community.

Membership is designed to reflect interests across the region as well as across the social, economic and environmental themes. Members are also expected to have linkages within the community as well as experience in the regional planning or development and delivery of whole-of-government or other local initiatives.

The RDAFCW committee is currently comprised of ten members who work to:

- » support informed regional planning
- » consult and engage with the community in order to identify social, economic, environmental and other issues, priorities and their possible solutions
- » liaise with governments and local communities to identify and encourage the best and most appropriate programs and services to support regional development
- » contribute to business growth plans and investment strategies, environmental solutions and social inclusion strategies across the region

In collecting and analysing regional information, and considering it alongside the feedback received through engagement with local government, RDAFCW have arrived at a one vision for the region: **to create a liveable and sustainable Central Queensland**. RDAFCW will work with the communities of Central Queensland to achieve this vision by supporting projects and activities that fall under one or more of the following priority themes:

1. **creating social value**: enhancing liveability and wellbeing for all Central Queenslanders and targeting disadvantage based on culture, gender, age and/or disability
2. **strengthening the region's economic contribution**: maximising local, state and national productivity through targeted job creation, skills development, industry diversification and business growth
3. **optimising environmental outcomes**: ensuring Central Queensland protects and conserves and promotes its natural assets
4. **developing a culture of regional policy and innovation**: encouraging regional organisations to value-add to each other and act cooperatively and strategically to realise benefits at the whole-of-region level

04: Introduction

The Central Queensland region is unique, diverse and resource-rich. Many of the region's communities are experiencing unprecedented levels of economic development and growth.

Although the region has a history deeply rooted in the agricultural sector, the resource sector is now becoming fixed as the major driver of growth in Central Queensland. A wide range of large-scale industry projects have been planned for the region, ranging from the opening of new coal mines, or expansion of existing ones; to upgraded rail, ports, schools and hospital facilities, and major gas pipeline works all requiring a large skilled workforce.

Whilst these activities can provide much in the way of strengthening the regional economy, too often, these also come at the cost of degraded liveability and poor environmental outcomes. Furthermore, the pace of resource-based growth can also leave other sectors struggling to keep up, and many communities in the region are suffering economic decline. The strong Australian dollar, higher interest rates, the climate change challenge, competition for skilled labour and myriad other issues have resulted in difficult times for the agricultural – and to a lesser extent, tourism – industries that are the mainstay of many of Central Queensland's rural hubs.

Central Queensland is thus truly a microcosm of the 'dual-speed' and 'patchwork' economy. It is clear that **an appropriate and sustainable regional development approach for Central Queensland cannot be based on a 'one-size-fits-all' philosophy**. As such, RDAFCW support the view that it is necessary for all areas of a region – be they at the sub-regional, population centre, or even community of interest level – should receive support appropriate to their needs. However, for maximum impact, such activities must be prioritised according to how they can simultaneously service the objectives of the wider region, state and nation.

RDAFCW firmly believe that regional development in Central Queensland will be accelerated if regional (and sub-regional) activities can be aligned with the corporate and strategic plans of the three tiers of government.

Finally, in reflecting on both the available evidence base, and the feedback obtained through local government consultation, RDAFCW have developed a strategy that is anchored by a regional vision of **'a liveable and sustainable Central Queensland'**. Within this, the activities of RDAFCW are guided by the philosophy that regional development must be interdisciplinary in practice. That is, regions must recognise the overlapping sometimes complementary; but sometimes conflicting – nature of social, economic and environmental outcomes.

A strong focus should be placed on regional policy and innovation, for it is only in creating and adopting new practices, processes and technologies, and then embedding these in regional planning and governance systems, that regions such as Central Queensland will be able to realise their full potential.

05 : Regional Overview

The vast Central Queensland region covers approximately 30% of the state – some 50,000,000 hectares. The RDAFCW region includes the local government areas of Diamantina, Winton, Barcoo, Longreach, Barcaldine, Blackall-Tambo, Central Highlands, Banana, Woorabinda, Gladstone and Rockhampton.

The following regional overview gives a summarised description of the main features of Central Queensland – its communities, natural landscapes and economic structure. Through this whole-of-region context, the RDAFCW Committee is able to highlight the key issues that the region faces, as well as to identify the emerging regional opportunities. This overview is a key way by which regional development activities can be prioritised, according to regional needs and opportunities.

Central Queensland is a key agricultural, resources and industrial hub of Queensland's economy. In 2008, Central Queensland generated 40% of the state's coal production and 14% of its agricultural production. Ongoing growth will continue to be a significant driver of demand for all forms of infrastructure, particularly to service the requirements of the resources and energy sectors. This is especially true for industrial and transportation infrastructure in and around Rockhampton, Gladstone and Emerald.

Proximity to the Bowen Basin makes Central Queensland a key service and logistics hub for the state's coal industry, providing access to road, rail and air services.

Direct air and freight routes make Rockhampton the key logistics and freight hub connecting the Capricorn and Bruce Highways. Rockhampton also serves as the primary service centre for the region – home to the full range of government and social services including retail, recreation, health, education and cultural facilities.

Gladstone is the key industrial hub on the east coast, with a major, multi-commodity port facility. The nearby cluster of resource processing industries makes Gladstone the key location for this sector in Queensland. The emergence of an internationally significant coal seam gas to liquefied natural gas (CSG-LNG) industry, including production and export facilities located within the Gladstone State Development Area, are expected to provide a major boost to the region's economy over the coming decades. A range of activities to support liveability and sustainability will therefore be necessary to support the anticipated population growth in Gladstone.

The growing town of Emerald provides a key inland service hub for the Bowen Basin and surrounding agricultural production areas. In the west of the region, Longreach acts as a major activity centre and transport hub for western Queensland, supporting a growing outback tourism industry, and business and administrative services supporting the agriculture industry.

However – as the evidence presented shows – the Central Queensland region is blessed with unprecedented growth, but this has resulted in the long-term sustainability of many communities coming under increasing pressure. As a result, the social fabric that once supported the communities of Central Queensland is now largely inadequate.

Not only are many communities suffering with social infrastructure that is unable to meet current needs, but these same infrastructure inadequacies are also represents a major blockage for these communities in attracting and retaining further regional development initiatives that are so desperately needed to ensure their diversification and ultimately, their longevity.

06 : RDAFCW Migration and Settlement Overview

RDA Fitzroy and Central West accept responsibility to work together in harmony and partnership to achieve a caring and inclusive community, proud to embrace, respect and celebrate each other by accepting multicultural diversity.

The Regional Development Australia Fitzroy and Central West (RDAFCW) Committee in this regard is committed to supporting relevant local stakeholders (Fitzroy and Central West Statistical Divisions) together with the region in an effort to address notable levels of disadvantage and success to build a stronger and fairer society.

Together we will work to develop an awareness of our shared history, cultures and customs and to build partnerships for the community based on mutual respect, understanding, co-operation and trust.

Regional Development Australia Fitzroy and Central West (RDAFCW) recognise that the collective challenge in addressing migration and settlement, will be just that, challenging, and at times controversial. This Committee will not be deflected by such challenges and support where possible, local stakeholder goals aimed at aligning the strategic intent and policy targets of the Australian, Queensland and Local Governments in the best interest of our community members.

The purpose of this Scoping Study is to enhance RDAFCWs Migration and Settlement engagement practices and subsequent decision making processes by – identifying local representative stakeholders who are willing to work collaboratively with RDAFCW in the provision and receipt of current, valid, inclusive and relevant knowledge transfer regarding migration and settlement.

07 : Scoping Study Definition

The Scoping Study is concerned with activity that takes place across the diverse cultural landscape of Central Queensland in addressing migration and settlement issues.

As described by the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship its purpose 'is to build Australia's future through the well-managed movement and settlement of people'. The key targets of this purpose will form the basis of RDAFCW's participation and engagement.

- » Helping to meet skill demands, especially those in the resources sector
- » Responding to irregular arrivals and administering immigration detention
- » Contributing a strong offshore humanitarian program to assist some of the world's many people in need and support their settlement in Australia
- » Strengthening border security through fraud and risk strategies and working with our partners
- » Promoting the government's new multicultural policy, 'The People of Australia' and working with partners to implement its new social cohesion initiatives

This engagement includes both refugees and 457 visa holders and their families.

08: Scoping Study Findings

Regional Development Australia Fitzroy and Central West Inc (RDAFCW) in its mandate will support, promote and disseminate information on Government (Australian, Queensland and Local) migration, settlement and multicultural policy initiatives for the benefit of local communities.

To this end, the RDAFCW will make every effort to having a fully comprehensive understanding of such policies and methods in which local communities can engage with them. Therefore it is equally important for RDAFCW to fully understand the complexities of migration and settlement across the Central Queensland region so as to support culturally appropriate and inclusive engagement, dialogue and maximised participation.

The Scoping Study findings which included informal desk-top audits of both Australian and Queensland Government literature (see Annexure/Sources) and on-going dialogue between RDAFCW and government departments and agencies, revealed that migration engagement was deemed critical and was high on the agenda especially in regards to 457 temporary visa holders. The issue of 457 temporary visa holders was more critical in resource communities such as Gladstone, Emerald and Biloela.

The strategic intent of the three tiers of Government in relation to addressing migration and settlement was constant in as much as clear lines of commitment were visible in policy objectives.

However, in terms of specific localised engagement practices, there was an obvious void with stakeholders, including departments and lead agencies and industries/businesses relying on accepted protocols and existing communication frameworks inherited through historical core-business functions.

Such a void does not reflect a lessening of importance or commitment on behalf of the stakeholders to migration and settlement engagement but rather reflects a more practical and efficiency-based approach to a communication process. RDAFCW will recognise, in line with the organisation's internal processes, all current and intended processes by participating stakeholders as that of an act of good faith.

This level of satisfaction by RDAFCW however does not accept the level of good faith as a sustainable long-term process but rather an interim level of engagement with a long-term view of enhancement aimed at total inclusivity at a local level. Again this does not suggest that the level of importance or commitment with regard to engagement is lessened but rather maintaining a practice because of the lack of a more effective option.

RDAFCW on the other hand, in an effort to maintain International Levels of Best Practice, believe strongly in monitoring all service delivery implementation and making relevant adjustments necessary so as to maximise the best interest of all concerned. In terms of localising migration and settlement engagement practices RDAFCW will work closely with aligned stakeholders to improve the localisation and inclusivity standards of Indigenous engagement across the Central Queensland region.

09: Recommendations

It is recommended that RDAFCW:

- » Engage with key stakeholders to accept responsibility to work together in harmony and partnership to achieve a caring and inclusive community, proud to embrace, respect and celebrate each other by accepting multicultural diversity
- » RDAFCW and key partners to work together to develop awareness of our shared history, cultures and customs and to build partnerships for the community based on mutual respect, understanding, cooperation and trust
- » RDAFCW contribution is based on recognition of:
 - › Multiculturalism as a national priority
 - › Improving cultural diversity and acceptance
- » RDAFCW and key stakeholders will work in partnership with each other and with the community to develop programs and/or policies concerned with migration and settlement
- » RDAFCW will work with communities to establish the Central Queensland region as a harmonious and culturally inclusive community
- » RDAFCW will work with communities to support the integration of immigrants
- » RDAFCW will work with communities to optimise the benefits of our cultural diversity in the Central Queensland Region
- » RDAFCW will work with communities to create a holistic approach to enhancing and growing multicultural wealth in the Central Queensland region
- » RDAFCW will have a leadership role in facilitating change within the general community towards services and programs that impact on the lives of all Australians, including culturally and linguistically diverse people, their children and their families
- » RDAFCW will work collaboratively with all community and industry groups and agencies in striving to improve services, outcomes and thus the quality of life of all Australians and inhabitants of Australia
- » RDAFCW will work collaboratively with all community and industry groups and agencies so that programs and services have a greater opportunity to create sustainable cultural change

10 : Policy Unison

The Regional Development Australia Fitzroy and Central West aims to reinforce the equally critical role of the three tiers of Government in delivering leadership, empowerment and the strengthening of institutions in the essence of liveability and sustainability.

The Fitzroy and Central West is a unique region with distinctively rich natural, social and cultural features playing a critical role in the Australian society and the National economy. To view our region and its quintessential communities in nostalgic terms is to fail to see them as vital vibrant communities and as key contributors to the nation's future.

RDAFCW work tirelessly to understand the ever-changing dynamics of the region and fully appreciate that although the region is blessed with unprecedented growth, the long-term sustainability of many communities is under pressure as in many cases the economic drivers which demanded their original establishment have changed.

RDAFCW is determined to ensure that creating social value – enhancing liveability and wellbeing for all residents and targeting disadvantage based on culture, gender, age and/or disability - in Central Queensland, is aligned with the policy objectives set by the three tiers of government.

RDAFCW acknowledges the equally critical roles of the three tiers of Government in delivering leadership, empowerment and the strengthening of institutions in regional areas. RDAFCW is therefore determined to ensure that regional development in Central Queensland is aligned with the policy objectives set by the three tiers of government. It is for this reason that the 'place' of regional development in Central Queensland has been specifically explored with respect to the Australian, Queensland and local government policy objectives.

This information will allow RDAFCW to determine how well each of the proposed projects fit within a 'policy unison' objective – that is, how well they would allow Central Queensland to take its rightful place in contributing to local, state and national agendas.

11 : Department of Immigration and Citizenship Corporate Objectives

Build Australia's future through the well-managed movement and settlement of people.

The purpose of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship is to build Australia's future through the well-managed movement and settlement of people. They play a crucial role in delivering the government's economic, social and security agendas. Their work is premised on the need to manage temporary and permanent flows in and out of Australia and their consequences in the national interest.

Global advances in communications and transport have increased people's aspirations and capacity to pursue opportunities through migration. Contributing factors include economic opportunities, family reunification, political and security concerns and pressures arising in the natural environment. The decisions of people to migrate are often motivated by a combination of these factors and movements may be made with varying degrees of freedom and safety.

This complexity and that of our globally connected, multicultural society are matched by the department's evolving policies, programs and services. They seek to maximise the benefit to the nation, contributing to the economy and other government priorities. To assist in achieving this, they work closely with other government agencies and a range of strategic and community partners.

The department faces many challenges including:

- » Helping to meet skill demands, especially those in the resources sector
- » Responding to irregular arrivals and administering immigration detention
- » Contributing a strong offshore humanitarian program to assist some of the world's many people in need and to support their settlement in Australia
- » Strengthening border security from fraud and implementing risk strategies and working with our partners
- » Promoting the government's new multicultural policy, 'The People of Australia' and working with partners to implement its new social cohesion initiatives

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship Corporate Objectives:

- » Contribute to Australia's prosperity and well-being through permanent and temporary migration
- » Promote Australian citizenship and a multicultural Australia
- » Support informed public consideration of immigration issues
- » Support migrants and refugees to settle in the community and participate in Australian society
- » Meet our obligations towards refugees and asylum seekers and contribute to humanitarian policy internationally
- » Enhance Australian border security and strengthen the international travel and business environment with improved border management and travel facilitation
- » Support the integrity of our programs through high levels of compliance with Australia's migration and citizenship laws
- » Administer Australia's immigration detention arrangements, treating clients with humanity, dignity and respect

12 : Australia's Multicultural Policy

'The People of Australia'

The Australian Government is unwavering in its commitment to a multicultural Australia. Australia's multicultural composition is at the heart of our national identity and is intrinsic to our history and character.

Multiculturalism is in Australia's national interest and speaks of fairness and inclusion. It enhances respect and support for cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. It is about Australia's shared experience and the composition of neighbourhoods. It acknowledges the benefits and potential that cultural diversity brings.

Australia's multicultural policy embraces our shared values and cultural traditions. It also allows those who choose to call Australia home, the right to practise and share in their cultural traditions and languages within the law and free from discrimination.

Since 1945, seven million people have migrated to Australia. Today, one in four of Australia's 22 million people were born overseas; 44 per cent were born overseas or have a parent who was and four million speak a language other than English. We speak over 260 languages and identify with more than 270 ancestries. Australia is and will remain a multicultural society.

Supporting Australia's multicultural policy, the Australian Government has a wide ranging engagement with Australia's first inhabitants—the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This includes strengthening relationships through the National Apology; supporting the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; establishing the National Congress of Australia's first inhabitants; and an expert panel to build a national consensus on the recognition of Indigenous people in the Australian Constitution.

Australia's multicultural policy endorses and draws upon the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council's advice and recommendations to government of April 2010. It is about embracing and benefiting from the strength of our different cultural traditions. It responds to our cultural diversity and aims to strengthen social cohesion.

Australia's multicultural policy acknowledges that government services and programs must be responsive to the needs of our culturally diverse communities. It commits to an access and equity framework to ensure that the onus is on government to provide equitable services to Australians from all backgrounds.

Australia's multicultural character gives us a competitive edge in an increasingly globalised world. Multiculturalism is about all Australians and for all Australians.

13 : Australia's Multicultural Policy Principles

Principle 1

The Australian Government celebrates and values the benefits of cultural diversity for all Australians, within the broader aims of national unity, community harmony and maintenance of our democratic values.

Diverse cultural expression enriches all Australians and makes our multicultural nation more vibrant and creative. An enduring theme of Australia's multicultural policy is that everyone belongs. We celebrate diversity and recognise that expressions of diversity sit within Australia's national legal framework.

Principle 2

The Australian Government is committed to a just, inclusive and socially cohesive society where everyone can participate in the opportunities that Australia offers and where government services are responsive to the needs of Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Australians from all backgrounds will be given every opportunity to participate in and contribute to Australia and its social, economic and cultural life. Australians from all backgrounds are also entitled to receive equitable access to government services. The Government will strengthen its access and equity policies to ensure that government programs and services are responsive to the needs of Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Australia's multicultural policy aligns with the Government's Social Inclusion Agenda where Australians of all backgrounds feel valued and can participate in our society.

Principle 3

The Australian Government welcomes the economic, trade and investment benefits which arise from our successful multicultural nation.

Immigration brings much needed skills and labour. It has also given us energy, ingenuity and enterprise. Immigration and cultural diversity have created economic renewal and prosperity in our communities. Our trade relations have been strengthened, our business horizons broadened and we have become more open to the world. Our diversity of cultures and our multilingual workforce give Australia a distinct competitive advantage in the global economy.

Principle 4

The Australian Government will act to promote understanding and acceptance while responding to expressions of intolerance and discrimination with strength, and where necessary, with the force of the law.

Racism and discrimination affects people's health and wellbeing and denies people fair access to opportunities and services. The Australian Government opposes all forms of racism, discrimination, intolerance and prejudice. The Government has in place anti-discrimination laws and is committed to measures which counter racism and discrimination.

14 : Australian Government Policies and Programs

Australia's Migration Program does not discriminate on the basis of race or religion. This means that anyone from any country can apply to migrate, regardless of their ethnic origin, gender or colour, provided that they meet the criteria set out in law.

All applications for migration to Australia are assessed against requirements set out in the Migration Act and Regulations. There are different criteria for different categories of visas and the criteria are established to meet Australia's national interests and needs. The Government determines the criteria and sets the number of people who can enter under the program on an annual basis. The policies and legislation governing migrant selection are applied equally to all applicants.

The criteria for the Migration Program are selective—those applicants who meet Australia's requirements and have good prospects for successful settlement are chosen. There are detailed rules governing entry in each migration category and selection is based on a case-by-case assessment of applications.

Migrants may be selected on the basis of such factors as relationship to an Australian permanent resident or citizen, skills, age, qualifications, capital and business acumen. All applicants must also meet the health and character requirements specified by migration legislation.

If a person satisfies Australia's selection criteria, he or she stands an equal chance of being selected, unless there is a cap imposed on the number of visas allocated to a particular category.

All applicants for permanent entry to Australia must be assessed against Australia's health and character requirements, which are designed to exclude any people whose presence in Australia would not be in the interest of the Australian community.

People who may be excluded from entry on character grounds include criminals or associates of criminal organisations, war criminals and any person likely to vilify a segment of the community.

Migrants are selected under the Migration Program in three streams—Skill, Family and Special Eligibility; while the Humanitarian Program offers resettlement to refugees and to displaced persons who have suffered discrimination amounting to gross violations of their human rights.

The rules for each, in general terms:

- » **Skill:** most migrants must satisfy a points test, have particular work skills, be nominated by particular employers, have other links to Australia or have successful business or investment skills and bring sufficient capital to Australia to establish a business or investment of benefit to this country.
- » **Family:** selected on the basis of the family relationship to a sponsor in Australia—usually partners, fiancés, dependent children and parents.
- » **Special eligibility:** covers former residents who had not acquired Australian citizenship and are seeking to return to Australia as permanent residents.
- » **Humanitarian:** refugees and other Humanitarian Program arrivals must satisfy the criteria concerning refugees or humanitarian cases (see below).

Migration program

Skill stream

Visa options are available under General Skilled Migration (GSM) for skilled workers who want to live in Australia and who do not have an employer sponsoring them. These include options for skilled people applying as independent migrants as well as those sponsored by an eligible Australian relative or nominated by a state or territory government.

Two of the larger categories under GSM are the **Skilled-Independent** and **Skilled-Sponsored**. Entry under both categories is dependent on a points test.

The aim of the points test is to identify factors in a potential migrant that will benefit Australia and help with settlement. The factors assessed depend on the migration category.

The **Business Skills** migration category seeks to attract migrants with a proven track record of success in business or investment who will use their skills and experience to engage in business or investment activities in Australia. Such activities benefit Australia through creating employment, developing links to international markets, exporting Australian goods and services and introducing new or improved technology.

Business Skills migrants are required to obtain an ownership interest in an eligible business and actively manage that business or maintain a specified level of investment activity in Australia.

The **Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS)** enables employers to sponsor skilled workers for permanent residence in order to fill vacancies in their business. Employers need to demonstrate that:

- » they are actively and lawfully operating in Australia
- » they have made adequate provision for training employees in work relevant to the business
- » they have a need for a paid employee to fill the position
- » the position provides full time employment for at least three years
- » the occupation is specified on a list of eligible occupations for the ENS
- » they are paying the minimum salary specified for the occupation, as well as meeting all relevant Australian standards and workplace legislation for wages and work conditions

The applicant must also be able to satisfy the skill, age and English language requirements.

The **Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)** also allows employers in regional and low population growth areas of Australia to sponsor skilled workers for permanent residence, in order to fill vacancies in their business. Any employer can participate in the scheme as long as their business is actively and lawfully operating in regional or low population growth areas of Australia. This covers all areas except Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle, Melbourne, Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Perth.

The position to be filled must be of a skilled nature and the applicant must be able to satisfy the skill, age and English requirements.

The process involves regional certifying bodies, who must certify that there is a genuine need for the position and full-time employment will be provided for a minimum of two years.

State specific regional migration

The Australian Government, in consultation with state and territory governments, has introduced a number of initiatives designed to help state and territory governments:

- » address skill shortages that may exist in their jurisdictions
- » attract overseas business people to establish new or joint ventures
- » encourage a more balanced dispersal of Australia's skilled migrant intake

These initiatives are collectively referred to as State Specific Regional Migration (SSRM). They provide state and territory governments with the opportunity to influence the number and profile of skilled migrants settling in their areas.

State and territory governments determine the extent of their involvement in these initiatives based on their own development priorities.

Family stream

The family stream allows for the migration of immediate family members of Australian citizens, permanent residents or eligible New Zealand citizens, such as partners or fiancés and dependent children. Places are also available for other family members, including parents, orphan relatives, aged dependent relatives, carers and remaining relatives.

2010–11 Humanitarian program

As a member of the international community, Australia is committed to sharing the responsibility for protecting refugees' worldwide and resolving refugee situations through the system of international refugee protection. A key element of this commitment is Australia's Humanitarian program, which has two components. The component outside Australia provides resettlement to people overseas in humanitarian need and the component in Australia provides protection to people who arrive in Australia and are found to be refugees.

Since the end of World War II, Australia has resettled more than 750 000 refugees and people in humanitarian need.

In 2010–11, the government will continue to work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees along with other resettlement countries, in focusing on people from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East and South West Asia.

Migration statistics

Each year, the government sets the planning levels for the various components of the Migration and Humanitarian Programs. The planning levels determine the expected number of visas to be granted in the new program year, which equates to Australia's financial year, 1 July to 30 June.

Planning levels

Planning levels for the two programs are decided in May each year, usually just before the start of the program year. They indicate the number of visas the Australian Government has agreed may be granted in each migration category and in the components of the Humanitarian Program in the approaching program year.

Program outcomes

The Migration Program outcome is the total number of visas granted overseas to applicants, plus the number of residence approvals granted to people who are already in Australia for a temporary stay and have successfully applied to remain permanently.

The Humanitarian Program outcome is the total number of visas granted overseas to refugee and humanitarian applicants, plus the number of program-countable visas granted to people who apply for protection in Australia.

Settler arrivals

The number of **settler arrivals** is the total number of migrants who actually arrive to settle in Australia. The information is compiled from Passenger Cards. This data needs to be treated with some caution as it involves individuals self-reporting on their settlement intentions. This figure will differ from the migration program outcome figure because (among other reasons):

- » New Zealand citizens are not included in migration program figures, but are included in settler arrival figures (under the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement, Australian and New Zealand citizens may enter each other's country to visit, live and work)
- » while a visa may be granted in one program year, the migrant may not use the visa to move to Australia until the following year

On average, migrants do not arrive in Australia until two or three months after obtaining a visa, although this period can vary from a few days to up to 12 months.

Net overseas migration

Net overseas migration (NOM) is the net gain or loss of population through immigration to Australia and emigration from Australia.

Overseas travellers are included in the population if they are in Australia for a total of 12 months or more over a 16 month period. Conversely, overseas travellers are subtracted from the population if they are away for a total of 12 months or more over a 16 month period. The level of NOM is the balance of these NOM arrivals less NOM departures.

This method is known as the '12/16 month rule'. It takes account of those persons who may have left Australia briefly and returned, while still being a resident for 12 months out of 16 months.

Importantly, there is no fixed relationship in any one year between the size of the Permanent Migration and Humanitarian Programs and the level of NOM, due to large fluctuations in the arrival and departure of temporary residents.

Migrant statistics

Australia has received over 1.2 million migrants since the year 2000 compared with:

- » 900 000 in the 1990s
- » 1.1 million in the 1980s
- » 960 000 in the 1970s
- » 1.3 million in the 1960s
- » 1.6 million between October 1945 and 30 June 1960

More than 7.1 million people have migrated to Australia since the post-war migration program began (October 1945). Since July 1959, when data became available, more than 1.7 million people left Australia permanently.

The highest number of settlers to arrive in any one year since World War II was in 1969-70 when 185 099 people arrived.

The lowest number to arrive in any one year since 1948 was 52 752 in 1975-76. In 2009-10, some 140 600 new settlers arrived in Australia.

Migrant statistics From 1999–2000 to 2009–10

	Program statistics (a)		Movement statistics (b)		Demographic statistics (c)	
	Planning levels ^(d)	Program outcomes ^(d)	Settler arrivals	Net permanent gain	Net long-term gain	Net overseas migration ^(e)
99 - 00	82 000	86 000	92 300	51 200	56 100	107 300
00 - 01	88 000	94 300	107 400	61 000	74 800	135 700
01 - 02	105 000 ^(c)	105 400	88 900	40 600	93 000	110 500
02 - 03	123 220	120 600	94 000	43 500	110 800	116 500
03 - 04	128 500	128 200	111 600	52 500	112 100	100 000
04 - 05	133 000	133 200	123 400	60 800	117 200	123 800
05 - 06	153 000	157 100	131 600	63 700	135 500	146 800
06 - 07	134 000 -144000	161 200	140 100	68 000	170 200	232 800
07 - 08	171 800	171 600	149 400	72 400	206 600	277 300
08 - 09	185 300	184 800	158 000	77 000	259 100	313 400 ^(g)
09 - 10	182 450	182 400	140 600	54 300	188 800	N/A

(a) Program statistics reflect the number of legal permissions to enter Australia and do not include Australian or New Zealand citizens—they are not counts of actual persons.

(b) Movement statistics are counts of overseas arrivals and departures by categories of traveller, which include those indicating permanent stay (settler arrivals), a continuous temporary stay of 12 months or more (long term movement), or a stay of less than 12 months (short term movement—they include Australian and New Zealand citizens, but are not counts of actual persons).

(c) Demographic statistics are counts of actual persons. Net overseas migration (NOM) measures the difference between arrivals and departures on a permanent and temporary long-term basis. Persons are counted into (or out of) NOM if their total period of stay in Australia (or departure from Australia) covers 12 months out of a 16 month period.

(d) Combination of Migration and Humanitarian programs.

(e) See Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication Migration (cat 3412.0), table 3.2.

(f) Includes skill stream contingency reserve.

(g) Preliminary estimate from ABS.

www.immi.gov.au (Fact Sheet 1 - Immigration: The Background)

15 : Queensland State Government Policies and Programs

Queensland's State Migration Plan

Applications for Queensland Government state sponsorship are now open under the Queensland State Migration Plan (SMP) updated 25 January 2012.

What is the State Migration Plan (SMP)?

Each state and territory has its own list of skills that are eligible for sponsorship because they are unable to fill vacancies in those occupations by the local labour market.

The SMP is the result of a formal agreement between the Queensland Government and the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). It lists the skills that Queensland will nominate for sponsorship, and the quotas that will be accepted by DIAC.

What visas are affected by the SMP?

- » Skilled Sponsored (Migrant) Visa (Subclass 176)
- » Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional) Visa (Subclasses 475 and 487)
- » Skilled Sponsored (Residence) Visa (Subclass 886)

How will I know when an occupation's nomination limit has been reached?

Details of any quotas reached will be announced on the Work Live Play website, and the relevant eligible skills list updated.

Will the Queensland Government still accept applications under the old list?

No. The SMP is effective immediately. Please see below if you have already submitted an application, but have yet to hear from us. Please see below if you have already submitted an application, but have yet to hear from us.

I submitted my application before the SMP was announced. Am I still eligible under the old list?

If the Queensland Government's mail security date-stamped your application before 25 January 2012, your application will be considered under the previous SMP.

The new SMP is effective immediately for applications date stamped by mail security as received on or after 25 January 2012.

If your application is received on or after 25 January 2012, and your occupation is not on the list effective from that date, your application will be returned without assessment.

What has happened to the Off-List Nomination Program?

Please note that there is no longer a formal Off-List Nomination Program for Queensland.

Queensland requirements for permanent residency visas

The Skilled Sponsored (Migrant) Visa (Subclass 176) provides permanent residency for skilled workers who have a skill in high demand in Queensland.

For this visa, the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship requires nomination by the state or sponsorship by an eligible relative living in a designated area.

If your nomination application is successful, you must lodge a visa application with DIAC within 3 months or your nomination will automatically end.

Applicants seeking sponsorship from the Queensland Government for the Skilled Sponsored (Migrant) Visa (Subclass 176) must:

- » meet the Australian Government's eligibility criteria for the Skilled Sponsored (Migrant) Visa (Subclass 176)
- » have an occupation on the Skilled Sponsored (Migrant) Visa (Subclass 176) Eligible Skills List
- » meet the requirements for the nominated occupation as detailed on the Skilled Sponsored (Migrant) Visa (Subclass 176) Eligible Skills List
- » have a current positive skills assessment for that occupation from the relevant assessing authority
- » meet other nomination requirements detailed on the application form
- » include a copy of a detailed CV
- » include any other supporting documentation deemed relevant to the application
- » be assessed by Skilled and Business Migration as being likely to provide a clear benefit to the Queensland economy
- » have sufficient settlement funds (as cash) to cover potential long periods of unemployment
- » complete and submit an application form

Note: A positive skills assessment does not necessarily guarantee approval.

Applicants should also research Queensland, particularly in regard to skill needs and the cost of living. Skilled and Business Migration may decide not to nominate an applicant if the applicant appears to have insufficient settlement resources.

www.workliveplay.qld.gov.au

16 : Researching Queensland and intended settlement region

16.1 Live in Rockhampton Region

Accommodation

The Rockhampton region offers a range of housing options, from modern style houses and apartments to the traditional wooden “Queenslander” house. Short-term accommodation can be found at Queensland Holidays.

Buying a home or land to build on

The Queensland Government’s Housing and Homelessness Services provides information about buying and renting in Queensland, with fact sheets available in a number of languages.

Aside from the local papers, web sites offer a quick view of the types of land, houses and apartments available as well as the asking prices for property in an area.

If you are not a permanent resident of Australia you will need Australian Government approval to purchase property. Full details of these rules are available from the Foreign Investment Review Board website.

Renting

To find out about your rights and responsibilities as a renter, visit the Residential Tenancies Authority web site. If you wish to rent a place to live, rental properties can be found at:

- » realestate.com.au (rentals area)
- » domain.com.au

For more information on buying or renting property in Queensland, visit the Real Estate Institute of Queensland web site.

Healthcare

Queensland’s public hospital system provides quality emergency care services across the state to people who are seriously injured or ill and need immediate treatment. The phone number to call in an emergency is 000.

In outpatient clinics, hospital doctors or private doctors who come to the hospital for scheduled sessions each week, provide a wide range of specialist medical and surgical services depending on the size of the hospital and community.

For more information on Queensland’s healthcare system, visit the Queensland Health web site.

For information on Australia’s nationwide healthcare insurance system, visit the Medicare Australia web site.

For private health insurance enquiries please visit Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and the Australian Government’s Private Health web site.

There is a major public hospital and two private hospitals in Rockhampton and 10 smaller hospitals across the region in Baralaba, Biloela, Moura, Theodore, Blackwater, Emerald, Springsure, Mount Morgan, Woorabinda and Yeppoon. Queensland Health lists the exact location and a facility profile for each of these hospitals.

Education

Queensland has a world-class education system. The school year usually runs from January to December and is broken into four semesters. The longest holiday period is around Christmas and New Year.

The levels of schooling are:

- » primary school (prep - year 7)
- » secondary (high) school (years 8 - 12)
- » tertiary education

The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development has identified that the learning outcomes and resources available to Australian students are well above the average.

Queensland has compulsory schooling for children aged 6 to 16. Compulsory schooling is designed to develop the academic and social skills of students, encouraging the development of effective life skills. Also, there is a compulsory participation requirement, so that all young people participate in learning or earning up until 17 years of age, giving young people more opportunities to develop their careers.

Detailed information on Queensland's education system is available from Education Queensland. Tertiary or higher education in Queensland refers to universities and other education and training providers operating in the state, such as private colleges and colleges of technical and further education (known as locally as TAFEs).

The Central Queensland Institute of TAFE has campuses at Rockhampton and Emerald with additional campuses at Blackwater and Yeppoon. Central Queensland University, Rockhampton, Emerald provides a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

Childcare

We know that children are important, that's why in Queensland we value providing quality early childhood education and care services for all Queensland children. There are many options available, including childcare centres and home care, where children can come together, play and learn in safe surroundings.

More information on Queensland's childcare facilities can be found on the childcare services area of the Department of Communities web site.

Transport

Rockhampton is the major airport in Central Queensland with 12 flights a day between Rockhampton and Brisbane and four direct flights between Rockhampton and Sydney each week serviced by Qantas and Virgin Blue. Local and island services operate regularly.

The National and State highway systems pass through Rockhampton which is located at the main junction of the coastal (Bruce) highway, and the central western (Capricorn) highway.

Good passenger rail infrastructure also exists. Queensland Rail's express Tilt Train service operates daily and takes about seven or six hours to travel between Rockhampton and Brisbane.

Daily coach services operate from Rockhampton to the rest of Australia.

16.2 Live in Gladstone Region

Accommodation

While houses in new estates tend to be 4-bedroom brick and tile, the region has the usual mix of housing options - older, elevated, "Queenslanders" with wide verandas, weatherboard high-set homes and a smaller number of units/apartments.

Short-term accommodation can be found at Queensland Holidays.

Buying a home or land to build on

The Queensland Government's Housing and Homelessness Services provides information about buying and renting in Queensland, with fact sheets available in a number of languages.

Aside from the local papers, web sites offer a quick view of the types of land, houses and apartments available as well as the asking prices for property in an area. Some useful web sites include:

- » realestate.com.au
- » domain.com.au

If you are not a permanent resident of Australia you will need Australian Government approval to purchase property. Full details of these rules are available from the Foreign Investment Review Board website.

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If you wish to rent a place to live, rental properties can be found at:

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- » domain.com.au

For more information on buying or renting property in Queensland, visit the Real Estate Institute of Queensland web site.

Healthcare

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In outpatient clinics, hospital doctors or private doctors who come to the hospital for scheduled sessions each week, provide a wide range of specialist medical and surgical services depending on the size of the hospital and community.

For more information on Queensland's healthcare system, visit the Queensland Health web site.

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Detailed information on Queensland's education system is available from Education Queensland.

Tertiary or higher education in Queensland refers to universities and other education and training providers operating in the state, such as private colleges and colleges of technical and further education (known as locally as TAFEs).

Post-secondary qualifications can be gained at the Central Queensland Institute of TAFE or Central Queensland University, both located in Gladstone.

Childcare

We know that children are important, that's why in Queensland we value providing quality early childhood education and care services for all Queensland children. There are many options available, including childcare centres and home care, where children can come together, play and learn in safe surroundings.

More information on Queensland's childcare facilities can be found on the childcare services area of the Department of Communities web site.

Transport

Gladstone has a modern regional airport with connections to Brisbane, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns. Qantaslink's subsidiary airline Sunstate Airlines services the Gladstone region.

The region is serviced by a well maintained network of roads. The main north-south route is the Bruce Highway and the primary western route is via the Dawson Highway. Gladstone itself is 21km off the Bruce Highway.

Regular freight and passenger rail services are available from Gladstone to inland and coastal centres in Queensland, and also to interstate capital cities. The tilt train passenger service takes less than six hours to travel from Brisbane to Gladstone. Information about rail options to and from Gladstone can be found on the Queensland Rail (QR) Traveltrain site.

16.3 Live in Central West Queensland

Accommodation

House prices throughout the region are extremely reasonable. Most of the houses in the Central West region are of weatherboard and fibre-cement, along with many Queenslander-style homesteads.

There is a large rental stock in the Central West region, though availability fluctuates.

For more information on housing and rental accommodation visit the Longreach Shire web site.

Short-term accommodation can be found at Queensland Holidays.

Buying a home or land to build on

The Queensland Government's Housing and Homelessness Services provides information about buying and renting in Queensland, with fact sheets available in a number of languages.

Aside from the local papers, web sites offer a quick view of the types of land, houses and apartments available as well as the asking prices for property in an area. Some useful web sites include:

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Detailed information on Queensland's education system is available from Education Queensland.

Tertiary or higher education in Queensland refers to universities and other education and training providers operating in the state, such as private colleges and colleges of technical and further education (known as locally as TAFEs).

Many of the region's schools are small, and children benefit from smaller class sizes and individual attention. Schools are also well-integrated into and supported by the community. The School of the Air offers tailored education for children unable to reach a mainstream school.

Post-secondary qualifications can be gained at the Central Queensland Institute of TAFE, which has campuses in Longreach and Barcaldine, or the Open Learning Institute at Longreach.

Childcare

We know that children are important, that's why in Queensland we value providing quality early childhood education and care services for all Queensland children. There are many options available, including childcare centres and home care, where children can come together, play and learn in safe surroundings.

More information on Queensland's childcare facilities can be found on the childcare services area of the Department of Communities web site.

Transport

- » Air
 - › A daily QantasLink service operates between Longreach and Brisbane (two hours), with twice weekly flights to Townsville (almost two hours).
 - › Barcaldine has three QantasLink services per week from Brisbane, returning the same day (two hours).
 - › Blackall has a QantasLink service from Brisbane that operates on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
 - › Bedourie (Diamantina Shire) is served by four flights per week on the Brisbane-Mount Isa Circuit by MacAir.
 - › A weekend aircraft service (known as the world's longest mail run) from Port Augusta in South Australia is provided by Airlines of South Australia.

- » Rail
 - › Queensland Rail provides a twice weekly passenger service from Brisbane to Longreach stopping at Jericho, Barcaldine and Ilfracombe.
 - › The Longreach Railway Station is the western terminus for the 'Spirit of the Outback' passenger rail service with a bus connection to Winton.
 - › There are regular rail freight and road freight services.
- » Road
 - › The region is serviced by a well maintained network of roads.
 - › Highways leading to the region are Landsborough and the Capricornia.
 - › Self Drive - North-west from Brisbane on the Warrego Highway.
 - › West from Rockhampton on the Capricorn Highway.
 - › West from Townsville on the Overlander's Way (Flinders Highway and Barkly Highway).
 - › North via Bourke along the Kidman Way from north-west New South Wales to connect with the Matilda Highway.
 - › Tambo lies around 1000km north west of Brisbane on the Landsborough Highway.
- » Coach
 - › Greyhound Australia services all towns on the Warrego and Landsborough Highways between Brisbane, Charleville, Longreach and Mount Isa. There are daily departures on this route.
 - › Aramac and Muttaborra do not have any regular public transport. Barcaldine is the nearest town from which services may be accessed.

17 : Local Area Multicultural Partnerships Program 2009-12

Purpose

The Local Area Multicultural Partnerships (LAMP) initiative is a unique partnership between the Queensland Government and local government to support local government to integrate the principles and practices of multiculturalism throughout their organisations and promote positive intercultural relations in their local region.

Strategic vision

The Queensland Government, LAMP funded councils and Local Government Association of Queensland working together to develop strong, inclusive and informed communities across Queensland where people feel connected, valued and supported to participate fully in all aspects of community life, regardless of their cultural, linguistic or religious backgrounds.

Aims

LAMP is designed to support the Queensland Government's multicultural policy objectives of ensuring that all Queenslanders, regardless of their cultural, linguistic or religious backgrounds:

- » have equitable access to services and programs that respond appropriately to their needs
- » are able to fully participate in and benefit from all aspects of life in Queensland
- » feel a sense of belonging in a cohesive and harmonious community

In particular, LAMP aims to:

- » strengthen multiculturalism in the local government sector
- » promote positive intercultural relations and social cohesion in participating local council areas

Objectives

Specific objectives for the LAMP program include:

- » increased local government consultation and engagement with community members from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- » increased accessibility of local government programs, services, and planning and decision-making processes to community members from CALD backgrounds
- » increased responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity of local government programs and services
- » increased participation by people from CALD backgrounds in local government planning and decision making processes
- » increased participation by people from CALD backgrounds in community programs, activities and events delivered and/or sponsored by local government councils
- » increased cultural and linguistic diversity within local government workforces
- » increased cultural awareness and competence among local government workforces
- » increased council support for programs, activities and events that improve community understanding of multiculturalism and its benefits and/or promote intercultural understanding, respect and harmony
- » effective and sustainable multicultural and cross-cultural networks within and between participating local council areas

Target Groups

Funding under LAMP is intended to support efforts by local councils to increase their capacity to deliver responsive and accessible local government to people from CALD backgrounds (ie, migrants and refugees, and their descendants), and to promote positive intercultural relations and social cohesion within their local areas.

Multicultural Affairs Queensland currently recognises refugee communities (especially African refugees), Pacific Islander communities, and Australian South Sea Islanders as high priority target groups, due to their vulnerability to social and economic exclusion.

At a broader level, LAMP is intended to benefit all Queenslanders, through the increased participation of people from CALD backgrounds in local government, and by strengthening social cohesion and community harmony in participating local government areas.

www.communities.qld.gov.au

18 : Local Council Programs

18.1 Rockhampton Regional Council

Multiculturalism and Migrant Support - Council embraces the diversity of cultures that form our community.

Council is working on compiling new policy incorporating information from the four previous councils, and consolidating it into one Multiculturalism and Migrant Support Policy.

Local Area Multicultural Partnerships Program

The Local Area Multicultural Partnerships (LAMP), initiative is a partnership between the Queensland Government and Rockhampton Regional Council to support local government to:

- » Integrate the principles and practices of multiculturalism throughout their organisations
- » Promote positive intercultural relations in their local region

The LAMP program helps to promote harmonious and cohesive community relations, access to services and community involvement in consultation and planning. This program was first established in 1998.

Through fostering community relations LAMP aims to:

- » Broaden the inclusion of diverse cultural and linguistic groups in community building strategies;
- » Increase the levels of understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity in local government and community life; and
- » Facilitate more fully integrated approaches to the ongoing management of community relations.

Funded Activity Areas:

- » Social planning, social action and group advocacy
- » Sector support and development
- » Community group development and support

Geographic Coverage and Office Locations:

The main office base for the program is the Community Development Office on the Ground Floor of the School of Arts Building in Bolsover Street Rockhampton. Programs and activities however are provided at a number of locations throughout the Region. Contact with other areas in the Region is undertaken through periodic liaison, outreach days, one off events and programs, phone and email contact.

Multicultural Resource Centre (MRC)

This centre is a meeting and gathering place and a one stop shop for new arrivals and residents. A place to access information from a broad range of services and programs including domestic violence, immigration matters, interpreters, advice on Council services, facilities and more. The MRC is located at the School of Arts Building, Ground Floor, 230 Bolsover Street Rockhampton.

Multicultural Morning Tea

Free for everyone to come along to meet, greet and make new friends from different communities and cultures in a friendly informal atmosphere. Various guest speakers share new information and show how to access their services available within our Rockhampton region.

Multicultural Morning Teas held in different venues: Yeppoon, Mount Morgan, Gracemere and Rockhampton. Please phone Community Development on 07 4936 8569 for more information on the next Multicultural Morning Tea.

www.rockhamptonregion.qld.gov.au

18.2 Gladstone Regional Council

Multicultural

Multiculturalism is a strategy for all Australians. It encourages us all to express, share and value our cultural heritage and that of others. Multiculturalism aims at ensuring that all Australians have equality of opportunity to benefit from, and contribute to, all aspects of life without prejudice or discrimination.

Gladstone Regional Council (GRC) has developed the Gladstone Multicultural Strategy in partnership with Gladstone Multicultural Association Incorporated (GMAI) and members from the culturally and linguistically diverse community to establish a multicultural framework for the Gladstone region.

Local Area Multicultural Partnership (LAMP)

The LAMP program is a partnership strategy between state government and Gladstone Regional Council to support and engage with the community to actively promote harmony and enjoy a multicultural community. The LAMP program assists with a number of community initiatives to promote multiculturalism and a harmonious community, including:

- » The Gladstone Multicultural Festival
- » The Gladstone Multicultural Strategy
- » The Sister City Program

The LAMP program is jointly funded by the State Department of Communities and Gladstone Regional Council.

Sister City Program

The LAMP Program also provides assistance and support to the Sister City Program. The Sister City relationship between Gladstone and Saiki City was established on September 4th, 1996. The Sister City movement is a worldwide concept, which operates under the principles of furthering communication and exchanges at a person-to-person level through city-to-city affiliations.

The Gladstone' Sister City Advisory Committee, which is a community based working group, advises Gladstone Regional Council on ways and means to enhance the Sister City Program between the cities of Gladstone and Saiki.

Gladstone Multicultural Strategy

The Gladstone Multicultural Strategy aims to identify some of the barriers to community integration and to formulate strategies to achieve community cohesiveness. A community committee is currently leading the implementation phase of the Multicultural Strategy under the umbrella of the Gladstone Intercultural Reference Group, which meets monthly.

Multicultural Strategy 2007

The findings of ABS 2006 census triggered the need of engaging and consulting various sectors of the community to identify issues and solutions stemming from a large influx of new residents to the Region.

The Multicultural Strategy 2007 aimed to create a holistic approach to address some of the Multicultural issues affecting, which were impacting the community as a whole. **Gladstone Region Cultural Diversity Profile** (ABS Census)

Some of the findings from the ABS census 2006 include:

- » Approximately 40% of our community were born overseas or have parents who were.
- » 72 nationalities in Gladstone Region
- » 29 Different languages spoken at home

- » Dramatic fast change in demographics trend (Migrant population grew from 4.8% in 2001 to 17.8% in 2006)
- » English, New Zealanders and Filipinos are the largest communities
- » Indian, Iranian, Chinese, South African are some of the emerging communities
- » German, Farsi, Mandarin, Hindi, Arabic are some of the most spoken language at home other than English

Intercultural Reference Group

The Intercultural Reference group (IRG) is perhaps the most significant outcome of the Gladstone Multicultural Strategy 2007. The IRG is a group of key community stakeholders to steer, coach and supervise the implementation of the top ten Multicultural projects, which have been identified by the local community as the main priorities.

This Reference group is a collective body of individuals, which have the common interest of developing and implementing a holistic approach for Multicultural Affairs within Gladstone Area.

The IRG gets together once a month on the last Wednesday of every month at the Community Advisory service. The IRG has developed significant tangible outcomes for the Gladstone Region Community including:

- » Cultural Diversity Forum 2008 Outcomes
- » Cultural Diversity Forum 2009 Outcomes
- » Gladstone Region New Residents Booklet

Gladstone Regional Council leading on Cultural Diversity implementations

Gladstone Region is proudly a Cultural Diverse community, in which Multiculturalism is not only appreciated but also encouraged. Gladstone City Council adopted a Cultural Diversity Policy in December 2008 in order to formalize its commitment to Multiculturalism.

Currently Gladstone Regional Council is developing a new Community Inclusive Policy which is more integrative as it embraces a more Community broader concept for all Gladstone Residents. Gladstone Regional Council is implementing a number of strategies to increase its level of readiness to deliver services for all Gladstone residents including:

- » Customer Service Translating and Interpreting Services
- » Cross Cultural Awareness (for all staff members)
- » Disaster Management Multilingual Resources (Floods and cyclones)

Support for new residents

Gladstone Regional Council, in cooperation with regional partners, offers a range of information resources and opportunities for new residents to the Gladstone Region.

Welcome to Gladstone booklet

The Welcome to Gladstone Booklet was produced by the Gladstone Regional Council under the Local Area Multicultural Partnership (LAMP) program and the Intercultural Reference Group and sponsored by QGC. The booklet is intended to provide a basic idea of the services and assistance available from government and non-government organisations in the Gladstone region, and where you can go to ask for advice. In its pages you can find practical information that may help you settle in the Gladstone area and integrate into life in Australia.

18.3 Central Highlands Regional Council

Corporate Objective

Developing and promoting our regional identity and image while nurturing our local communities and sense of place.

- » Forge a united Central Highlands regional identity through improved communications
- » Promote the region's unique diversity and hospitality
- » Support and promote community events and festivals
- » Encourage and foster arts and cultural initiatives and programs
- » Plan develop and maintain open-spaces and streetscapes to improve civic pride
- » Build community networks across the region to enhance our unique lifestyle
- » Promote the use of libraries as learning, information and community hubs
- » Create strong and supportive communities through active engagement and partnerships

Statement of Intent

- » Promote cultural diversity within the region by attracting a wider range of multi-cultural programs, services, activities and events in partnership with Central Highlands Development Corporation and community

18.4 Longreach Regional Council

The Community Development and Youth Development Offices are located next to the library at 124b Eagle Street, Longreach.

Services

The Community Development Officer provides information and support services to individuals, families and community organisations. These services are partly funded by the Queensland Government Department of Communities.

1. Information Services

- » General community advice
- » Referrals to human service organisations
- » Production of an annual New Residents' Guide
- » State and Federal funding information

2. Group Support

- » Facilitation of community education and other training/ programs
- » Coordination of the bi-monthly Regional Multi Agency Network Meetings and Luncheons
- » Chairing the Central West Domestic/Family Violence Network
- » Activity planning, implementation and evaluation assistance for organisations
- » Cultural awareness and promotional activities
- » Assisting groups with funding applications.
- » Distribution and promotion of organisational activities, events, training etc.
- » Working with human service organisations to achieve better outcomes for community members.

19 : Community Groups

Australian South Sea Islander Independent Rockhampton

PO Box 788 ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700

61 Emu Park Road NORTH ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700

Activities: History, heritage, culture

President: Mr Joe Leo OAM

Telephone: (07) 4934 8230

Fax: (07) 4934 8133

Contact: Ms Joanne Warkill

Telephone: (07) 4930 8133

Mobile: 0417 842 762

Secretary: Ms Kerri Dorman

Telephone: (07) 4936 2868

Fax: (07) 4934 8133

Joskeleigh Community Association

356 Joskeleigh Rd JOSKELEIGH QLD 4702

Activities: Social, historical, management of the SSI museum, historical recording.

President: Mr Cecil Parter

Telephone: (07) 4934 4926

Fax: (07) 4934 4996

Secretary: Mrs Doris Leo

Telephone: (07) 4934 4926

Fax: (07) 4934 4996

Joskeleigh South Sea Islander Community Development Association

c/- 137 Stanford St ROCKHAMPTON NORTH QLD 4701

Activities: Social, historical

President: Mrs Deanne Toby

Fax: (07) 4921 4052

Treasurer: Ms Bronwyn Warcon

Telephone: (07) 4934 4835

Kanaka Town Collective Housing (Katch)

PO Box 5752 CQMC ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4702

Shop 4/72 High St (cnr Ford St) ROCKHAMPTON NORTH QLD 4701

Chairperson: Mrs Leonee Bickey

Telephone: (07) 4926 5166

Fax: (07) 4926 7114

Administrator: Mrs Sharon Youse

Telephone: (07) 4926 5166

Fax: (07) 4926 7114

Rockhampton Australian South Sea Islander Community

285 Creek St ROCKHAMPTON NORTH QLD 4701

Telephone: (07) 4928 8317

Fax: (07) 4926 1794

Queensland Chinese Forum - Central Queensland

PO Box 6485 CQMC ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700

Website: www.queenslandchineseforum.com.au

Administrator: Ms Dorothy Koo

Mobile: 0402 316 697

Email: dkhoox25@bigpond.net.au

Rockhampton Chinese Association and Temple Society

PO Box 6485 CQMC ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4702

152 Bedford St ROCKHAMPTON NORTH QLD 4701

Activities: Social, community, charity work

Secretary: Dr Dorothy Khoo

Mobile: 0402 316 697

Email: dkhoox25@bigpond.net.au

President: Mr David Li

Filipino Community - Clermont

7 French Court CLERMONT QLD 4721

Activities: Cultural, social

Committee Member: Ms Rosie Scharf

Telephone: (07) 4983 1258

Mobile: 0447 419 398

Central Queensland German-Australian Club

12 Hume St ROCKHAMPTON NORTH QLD 4701

Activities: Social activities

President: Mr Chris Tollner

Telephone: (07) 4928 8816

Secretary: Mr Graham Guth

Telephone: (07) 4928 0959

Mobile: 0408 989 386

Central Queensland Multicultural Association Inc

PO Box 5535 CENTRAL QUEENSLAND MC QLD 4702

Bldg 209 CQU, Carlton Street CENTRAL QUEENSLAND MC QLD 4702

Activities: Provide assistance and information to new migrants

Member: Mr Masud Khan

Telephone: (07) 4928 4225

Fax: (07) 4930 9631

Mobile: 0435 828 945

Email: m.khan@cqu.edu.au

President: Mrs Dawn Hay

Telephone: (07) 4930 9631

Fax: (07) 4930 9871

Mobile: 0438 751 974

Email: cqma_inc@hotmail.com

The Gladstone Multicultural Association Inc. (GMAI)

GMAI is a non-profit organisation formed to promote harmony amongst the different cultural communities in the Gladstone Region. Gladstone Multicultural Association Inc. comprises many cultures including Australian, and we would like to invite you to join us in the development and promotion of multiculturalism in the Gladstone Region.

The association was established to produce an annual multicultural festival in Gladstone that would allow local ethnic groups to showcase the food, dance and songs of their countries of origin. This festival is a flagship event for the association and is instrumental in creating community awareness of the value and richness that people from other countries can add to a community's culture.

The association is a totally volunteer organisation relying on state and local government, as well as local business and industry, for financial support to put on this event.

In addition to the annual festival, the association conducts social events through the year to highlight the social customs of particular ethnic communities. Events, such as a Honky Tonk Cocktail Party, a Latino night and a Fiji and Pacific Islanders night.

A social group, Women Connecting Women, was started to provide an opportunity for newly arrived migrant women to socialise with others and learn what the region had to offer. It was also an opportunity to gain information about Gladstone's support services such as schools, stores and professional services, as well as recreational and cultural activities.

From mid-February 2010, the association employed a Bicultural Support Assistant (BSA) with funding from the Multicultural Development Association Inc in Brisbane, following the joint signing of a MOU. The role of the BSA is to train and coordinate a number of Bicultural Support Workers who will provide a link between ethnic mothers and childcare professionals to facilitate understanding between them.

The association now wishes to develop further as the principal service provider to the regional ethnic community. It has established an office at the Neighbour Centre, 103 Toolooa Street, Gladstone and is actively working with the Gladstone Regional Council and local and state community organisations to identify services to meet the needs of ethnic communities.

The Gladstone Multicultural Association Inc is now an Approved Community Service Provider with the Qld Department of Communities this will assist the Gladstone Multicultural Association Inc to obtain funds to deliver services and projects. The need for these specifically targeted services and projects will become more apparent as Gladstone grows with the influx of workers to support the growth of major new industries, particularly the LNG industry.

A large number of these workers are expected to be brought from overseas due to the limited skill-sets available in the region. These workers and their partners will add to the already large number of new arrivals brought to Australia during the recent industry boom.

President: Craig Butler

Phone: (07) 4973 6793

Mobile: 0448 882 917

Email: president@gmai.org.au

PO Box 1324 Gladstone QLD 4680

Women Connecting Women (WCW)

A subcommittee of the Gladstone Multicultural Association Inc. was created to assist immigrant women to interact with others and increase their engagement with their new city, its people and its culture.

Many women newly arriving in the Gladstone region can often be isolated due to language barriers, through not knowing anyone in the region, not understanding Australian ways or simply feeling a sense of loss for their home country.

WCW is a social group of Australian women and immigrant women who occasionally meet in an informal setting to connect, to talk, to discuss issues and to support each other.

The Women Connecting Women group focuses on the needs of all women and their families and endeavours to help:

- » To learn about Gladstone and Australian culture
- » To receive support from Australian women
- » To practice their English in an informal setting
- » To build connectedness with the community
- » To assist new arrivals in identifying their specific interaction needs, then linking them to the appropriate local, state, or commonwealth services
- » To develop social links between each cultural community, to share in one another's culture and to promote the benefits of a multicultural society
- » To develop a sense of pride in our diverse community especially amongst the youth, in order to encourage harmony and reduce prejudice
- » To contribute to the wellbeing of the community

Women Connecting Women now have a facebook page, so we can help all women from all different parts of life. We are like an information centre for women that might need any sort of information. So pop on to Women Connecting Women facebook, become a member and enjoy the friendship of other members. For further information regarding Women Connecting Women please contact:

Chairperson: Kerry Patricia Perrie

Email: womencwomen@gmail.org.au

Welcoming Intercultural Neighbours Inc (WIN)

9 Derby Street GLADSTONE QLD 4680

Website: www.womensinterculturalnetwork.org

Activities: Women's issues, social, welfare services

Program: Coordinator: Ms Natalia Muszkat

Mobile: 0423 177 411

Email: womens.intercultural.network@gmail.com

President: Ms Nicole Babcock

Mobile: 0467 249 620

Email: nikibabcock@gmail.com

Central Highlands Multicultural Festival

Central Highlands Development Corporation undertakes the coordination of this Central Highlands Regional Council event which draws together a proactive committee. The program features workshops and performances by local and visiting groups, as well a food stalls offering global cuisine and a very popular International Beer and Wine tent. This mix all ensures this free event is well attended with over 5000 attendees.

For event information, please visit the Central Highlands Multicultural Festival website. The 2012 Central Highlands Multicultural Festival will be held on Saturday 25 August.

20 : Industry

Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland - September 2011

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the review of the permanent employer sponsored visa categories. As the state's peak business organisation, CCIQ recognises the importance of skilled and semi-skilled migration to Australia's population and productivity agenda
- 1.2 CCIQ represents the interests of 25,000 businesses across Queensland, many of which operate in rural and regional areas where skill shortages are particularly acute. CCIQ is supportive of migration policies and frameworks that generate employment, increase productivity and improve the ability of businesses to meet their skills and labour needs as well as addressing ongoing shortages.
- 1.3 CCIQ anticipates that skills and labour shortages will be prevalent throughout Australia over the coming decades as our population continues to age and as competition for highly skilled labour intensifies in both domestic and international markets. As the natural population growth rate declines and new entrants to the workforce stagnates and even declines, overseas migration is likely to play an increasingly important role in expanding the nation's workforce. More specifically, factors which have affected Queensland's long term stock of skills include:
 - › Rapidly expanding businesses and economy;
 - › Falling numbers of new entrants to the workforce;
 - › The ageing of the existing workforce;
 - › The changing role of public and private enterprises in skill formation;
 - › The impact of production demands on the time available to train; and
 - › Structural changes within industry sectors.
- 1.4 Irrespective of the most recent economic downturn there are currently statewide recruitment difficulties in a number of trades and professions, and in many regional areas skill and labour shortages, recruitment and staff retention continue to be a significant challenge. The shortage of workers within Queensland is a true and real impediment to the economic growth of Queensland. The economic cost of skill and labour shortages is significant and these shortages are a complex problem requiring a considered response hence the importance of employer sponsored migration.

2.0 Objectives of the Review

- 2.1 CCIQ is particularly interested in the following objectives of the review:
 - › consider whether these programs are meeting the skill needs of Australian employers in an effective and efficient manner;
 - › ensure people migrating to Australia through these programs have the skills and experience that employers need;
 - › help businesses in regional, remote and low population growth areas in Australia to recruit the skilled workers they need to manage and grow their operations
 - › ensure these programs meet the government's commitment to simplify the visa structure and create a robust visa program that will reduce bureaucratic red-tape for employers, as well as make the visa process easier to understand for employers and visa applicants.

CCIQ Response to Questions

How can the government best facilitate access to skilled and semi-skilled migrants in the areas they are most needed while maintaining employment and training opportunities for Australian workers? For example:

3.0 Should there be multiple pathways to sponsor semi-skilled workers?

- 3.1 CCIQ is supportive of multiple pathways to sponsor permanent skilled and semi-skilled workers. Namely skilled workers through the Employer Nominated Scheme and the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme and semi-skilled workers through Labour Agreements including Enterprise Migration Agreements and Regional Migration Agreements.
- 3.2 The case for skilled migration is widely recognised however there exists considerable demand for semi-skilled workers as well. This is largely as a result of the resource projects attracting semi-skilled labour in the regions leaving a vacuum of unfilled positions with little likelihood of attracting domestic workers to the bush.
- 3.3 Currently there are many circumstances where semi-skilled or unskilled workers cannot be found within Australia to meet labour needs. CCIQ believes that there continues to be significant need for immigration programs for unskilled low skilled workers, with more arrangements for industry support and facilitation. We understand these programs require careful management, but relying on working holiday arrangements alone has not been effective.
- 3.4 CCIQ supports the use of labour agreements for industry sectors and large employers. These agreements allow companies to have stable, on-going arrangements in place to employ appropriately skilled migrant workers over time, as part of their workforce planning strategies. However, these agreements take an inordinate amount of time to finalise. There is a strong case to provide the relevant departments additional resources to ensure these agreements are negotiated in a timely manner. The Chamber is heartened by the Federal Government's statement that it will promote and encourage the wider use of Labour Agreements for larger projects that are in the national interest and are of significant economic benefit.

4.0 What additional protections are needed when sponsoring semi-skilled workers?

- 4.1 CCIQ is keen to protect the integrity of the employer sponsored visa programs. We support a co-operative approach between governments and industry to investigate breaches at national and state levels. We also support the sanctioning of employers who deliberately breach their obligations.
- 4.2 However, employers continue to be unclear about the overlap between the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship legislative requirements, and the extent to which either can over-ride the other. In order to resolve this issue we believe that the Government should supply a clear and simple statement on employers' rights and obligations under the employer sponsored visa programs. The Department's Industry Outreach Officer program has also been highly regarded by employers as a means of ensuring employers are aware of their rights and obligations under the three programs and should continue.
- 4.3 CCIQ currently notes there is a significant focus on the rights for the immigrant employee but at the same time there needs to be some surety for the employer that the visa holders actually meet their obligations of the visa program under the RSMS and ENS. There needs to be a lever for the Department to use to keep overseas workers in the region and under the arrangements of their initial visa.
- 4.3 CCIQ currently notes there is a significant focus on the rights for the immigrant employee but at the same time there needs to be some surety for the employer that the visa holders actually meet their obligations of the visa program under the RSMS and ENS. There needs to be a lever for the Department to use to keep overseas workers in the region and under the arrangements of their initial visa.

5.0 How can the government ensure that employer sponsored migrants perform well in the labour market and are not exploited? For example, what is the role for English language requirements, skills assessments, salary thresholds and age restrictions?

5.1 English Language

CCIQ has historically expressed concern over the formal English language requirements of visa holders. This has partially compromised the flexibility and intent of the visa arrangement. Business recognises the need for English language capabilities in the workplace particularly for workplace health and safety reasons. However, we note that many businesses encourage and or offer assistance for intensive English language classes for their workers as a matter of course. The requirement that visa applicants need to have proficiency in English to at least an average band score of 4.5 across the four test components in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test is not in itself an issue although CCIQ maintains the opinion that this is excessive. CCIQ believes the difficulty is that this requirement slows down the application process significantly as prospective employees often have to wait considerable lengths of time before being able to take the test.

5.2 Salary Thresholds

CCIQ believes there are a number of problems associated with the lack of consistency across schemes in relation to wage thresholds. CCIQ's overarching principle in this issue is that there should be parity between the employment terms and conditions of visa holders and Australian citizens/residents. Employers overwhelmingly feel that the industrial relations system should have primacy over setting the wages and conditions of visa holders as it does Australian workers. The primary determinant of salary and employment conditions for all workers should be the relevant industrial instrument.

5.3 Skills Assessments

5.3.1 CCIQ would welcome a reduction in the number of skill lists. Businesses looking to skilled migration to alleviate the impact of significant skills shortages are confronted with a complex and confusing array of skills lists, making it increasingly difficult to identify whether or not particular visas would meet their needs. Small businesses in particular are often time-poor and the complexity of the system can act as a significant barrier.

5.3.2 CCIQ has previously expressed significant concerns in relation to the methodology applied in determining occupations for inclusion in the skilled occupations lists. We have also questioned whether the lists adequately reflect the skills needs of Queensland's small to medium sized businesses and the needs of regional and remote areas. Current methodology makes a judgement of the relative value of particular occupations and skills to the Australian economy, which is a highly subjective process that is made even more complex by the diverse and regional nature characterising Australian industry. In particular, CCIQ does not wish to see an outcome where SMEs are disadvantaged because the skill shortages they are faced with are not classified as being of "high economic value to Australia".

5.3.3 Niche occupations and small industries, which are largely overlooked in Australia's migration programs, are also unlikely to be included in a SOL. For example, occupations within creative or emerging industries as well as occupations that are more specialised such as computer programmers or irrigation technicians. Although these occupations or industries may not be seen as providing high economic value to Australia, many are providing a significant contribution to Australia's competitive edge by enhancing Australia's productivity growth and innovative capacity.

5.3.4 Unfortunately, SOL omit many professional "business" skill areas such as entrepreneurship, small business management, and commerce, which are skills vitally important to the growth of our economy and, with the aging population, are skills increasingly in shortage across all industries and regions.

5.4 Training

The issues of commitment to training must continue to be assessed in a flexible way, to ensure that it does not disadvantage any sector, occupation or region.

6.0 What concessions or flexibilities are needed to support positive economic and social outcomes in regional and low-growth areas, and how could these be implemented? For example: Are lower salary thresholds or English requirements appropriate?

6.1 CCIQ has provided a detailed response to this question in sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this submission.

7.0 Is there a role for provisional visas that require migrants to stay in the region for a set period of time?

7.1 CCIQ believes that unless the overseas worker is no longer needed by the sponsoring employer then there should be an expectation that the migrant stay in the region for the period of that agreement. Furthermore the Department or employer must have some form of leverage for this outcome to be ensured.

8.0 Would the continued use of local certifying bodies and/or exceptional circumstances provisions provide more integrity when assessing individual applications?

8.1 CCIQ believes that Regional Certifying Bodies (RCBs) must have a local presence and a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the local labour market in the region for which they are certifying.

8.2 CCIQ feels that RCBs can perform an important role in raising awareness of the visa options available to employers and provide a valuable link to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship in regional and rural areas.

8.3 Chambers of Commerce have proven over time that they can constructively perform these duties, delivering valuable services to the business community. CCIQ strongly supports the departmental monitoring of RCB approvals, (which already occurs), to ensure arrangements being approved are in line with local workforce availability. Furthermore there should be continued feedback on this monitoring with the opportunity for continuous constant improvement. being approved are in line with local workforce availability. Furthermore there should be continued feedback on this monitoring with the opportunity for continuous constant improvement.

8.4 CCIQ wishes to recognise the importance of the Industry Outreach Officer for CCI in ensuring consistency of arrangements across all CCIQ Office RCBs.

9.0 Other Issues

9.1 Skills recognition: Prospective migrants overseas, and those already in Australia with skills or training obtained overseas, should have access to a system, delivered both overseas and within Australia, which would:

- › assess the training they have already undertaken, formal or otherwise;
- › assess their skills; and
- › document all of this.

CCIQ supports the COAG proposal for a one-stop, offshore process for the recognition of overseas qualifications. This process must be designed to maintain the integrity of the qualifications system, and protect employer and consumer confidence in the workers' skills.

9.2 Electronic Lodgement

CCIQ supports the activities of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to reduce the regulatory burden and simplify the processes of the Business Skills Visa Program. However there continues to be a need to have options outside of electronic lodgement such as paper lodgement.

9.3 Time to Adapt

CCIQ highlights that should there be significant change then business needs sufficient time to adjust to any changed arrangements.

10.0 Conclusion

- 10.1 This review inquiry is of significant interest to CCIQ as a significant number of our members are using skilled workers from overseas, under the employer sponsored visa categories, as a means of addressing prevailing skills shortages that exists in many industries and regions across the State.
- 10.2 CCIQ believes that skilled and semi-skilled migration is an important component of the skills shortages agenda as it can deliver workers for immediate or emerging shortages in relatively short timeframes. However, CCIQ recognise that skilled and semi-skilled migration is only part of a wider population and workforce policy approach.
- 10.3 These issues are of significant importance to the Queensland business community and CCIQ would be happy to expand upon the issues raised within this correspondence.

www.cciq.com.au

21 : Refugee

Refugee and Humanitarian Visas

Australia's Immigration Program has two components:

- » Migration Program for skilled and family migrants
- » Humanitarian Program for refugees and others in refugee-like situations.

This fact sheet provides details of Australia's Humanitarian Program. Details of the Migration Program are available in Fact Sheets 20–40.

- » Fact Sheet Index

Background information

One of the major challenges facing the world today is protecting refugees who have been forced to leave their homes by armed conflict and human rights abuses.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that there were 43.7 million forcibly displaced people worldwide at the end of 2010, the highest number in 15 years. Of these, 27.5 million were internally displaced persons; 15.4 million were refugees and 837 500 asylum seekers.

- » www.unhcr.org

As a member of the international community, Australia shares responsibility for protecting these refugees and resolving refugee situations. This commitment is most strongly expressed through the Humanitarian Program.

Humanitarian Program

The Humanitarian Program has two important functions:

- » the onshore protection/asylum component fulfils Australia's international obligations by offering protection to people already in Australia who are found to be refugees according to the Refugees Convention
- » the offshore resettlement component expresses Australia's commitment to refugee protection by going beyond these obligations and offering resettlement to people overseas for whom this is the most appropriate option.

Onshore protection

The onshore component of the Humanitarian Program aims to provide options for people who wish to apply for protection (or asylum) after arrival in Australia. More information on the onshore component of the program is available on the department's website.

- » Seeking protection in Australia

Offshore resettlement

The offshore resettlement component comprises two categories of permanent visas. These are:

- » **Refugee:** for people who are subject to persecution in their home country, who are typically outside their home country, and are in need of resettlement. The majority of applicants who are considered under this category are identified and referred by UNHCR to Australia for resettlement. The Refugee category includes the Refugee, In-country Special Humanitarian, Emergency Rescue and Woman at Risk visa subclasses.
- » **Special Humanitarian Program (SHP):** for people outside their home country who are subject to substantial discrimination amounting to gross violation of human rights in their home country, and immediate family of persons who have been granted protection in Australia. Applications for entry under the SHP must be supported by a proposer who is an Australian citizen, permanent resident or eligible New Zealand citizen, or an organisation that is based in Australia.

Note: There are a limited number of SHP visas available. Demand for these visas is extremely high. This means that applications may take several years to be decided and most will be unsuccessful.

- » Proposing an applicant

Composition of the offshore resettlement program

The size and composition of the resettlement program are influenced by a number of factors. These include:

- » UNHCR assessments of the resettlement needs of refugees overseas
- » the views of individuals and organisations in Australia conveyed during community consultations with the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship
- » Australia's capacity to assist

Outcomes of 2010–11 program

In 2010–11 a total of 13 799 visas were granted under the Humanitarian Program, of which 8971 visas were granted under the offshore component and 4828 visas were granted under the onshore component. See the tables below for further details on the 2010–11 program outcomes.

Woman at Risk

In 2010–11, 759 visas (12.7 per cent) of the Refugee category were granted to Woman at Risk visa applicants, exceeding the nominal annual target of 12 per cent.

Applications

In 2010–11, a total of 54 396 applications were made for visas under the offshore component of the Humanitarian Program. Of these, 29 793 were made under the Refugee category and 24 603 were made under the SHP category.

Note: The high demand for visas mean that it may take several years for applications to be decided and most will be unsuccessful.

Humanitarian Program figures

Humanitarian Program grants by category 2006-07 to 2010-11

Category	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Refugee	6003	6004	6499 ²	6003	5998
Special Humanitarian (offshore)	5183	4795	4511	3233	2973
Onshore ¹	1793	2131	2492	4534	4828
Temporary Humanitarian Concern	38	84	5	-	-
Total	13 017	13 014	13 507	13 770	13 799

1 Includes protection visas and onshore humanitarian visa grants that are countable under the Humanitarian Program.

2 This figure included a one-off allocation of 500 refugee places for Iraqis.

2010-11 offshore visa grants by top ten countries of birth

Countries	Number of visas granted
Iraq	2151
Burma	1443
Afghanistan	1027
Bhutan	1001
Congo (DRC)	565
Ethiopia	381
Sri Lanka	289
Iran	271
Sudan	243
Somalia	190

More information on the 2010-11 Humanitarian Program is on the department's website.

» Humanitarian Program Statistics

More detailed statistics on the past Humanitarian Programs are available in the department's annual reports.

» Departmental Annual Reports

Offshore – Resettlement

The offshore component of the Refugee and Humanitarian Program has two categories.

- » The Refugee category for people subject to persecution in their home country.
- » The Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) category for people who, while not being refugees, are subject to substantial discrimination amounting to a gross violation of their human rights in their home country.
 - › People who wish to be considered for an SHP visa must be living outside their home country and be proposed for entry by an Australian citizen, permanent resident, eligible New Zealand citizen, or an organisation operating in Australia

These categories go beyond our international obligations and have been introduced to enhance our assistance to those in need.

The number of applications for resettlement received is far greater than the visas available each program year. For instance, in 2010-11 there were about 24 000 applications for SHP visas and only around 3000 visas granted.

Who is Eligible?

A person may be eligible if:

- » they are outside Australia
- » they have been identified as a refugee or a person subject to persecution or substantial discrimination amounting to gross violation of human rights in their home country and deemed to be in humanitarian need.

Applicants must also satisfy the decision maker that there are compelling reasons for giving special consideration to the grant of a visa. This criterion is common to all permanent visa subclasses under the offshore Humanitarian Program. It involves an assessment of various factors including:

- » the degree of persecution or discrimination to which the applicant is subject in their home country
- » the extent of the applicant's connection with Australia
- » whether or not there is any suitable country available, other than Australia, that can provide for the applicant's settlement and protection from discrimination
- » the capacity of the Australian community to provide for the permanent settlement of persons such as the applicant in Australia.

Most humanitarian visas are granted to applicants who are outside their home country. If a person is living in their home country, it is unlikely that they will meet the criteria to be granted a refugee or humanitarian visa.

Refugee Visa (Subclass 200)

This visa is for people who are subject to persecution in their home country and are in need of resettlement. The majority of applicants who are considered under this category are identified by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and referred to the Australian Government by the UNHCR.

In-country Special Humanitarian Program Visa (Subclass 201)

This visa offers resettlement to people who have suffered persecution in their country of nationality or usual residence and who have not been able to leave that country to seek refuge elsewhere. It is for those living in their home country and subject to persecution in their home country.

Global Special Humanitarian Program Visa (Subclass 202)

The Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) visa is for people who, while not being refugees, are subject to substantial discrimination and human rights abuses in their home country. People who wish to be considered for a SHP visa must be proposed for entry by an Australian citizen or permanent resident over the age of 18, an eligible New Zealand citizen or an organisation operating in Australia.

Emergency Rescue Visa (Subclass 203)

This visa offers an accelerated processing arrangement for people who satisfy refugee criteria and whose lives or freedom depend on urgent resettlement. It is for those subject to persecution in their home country and assessed to be in a situation such that delays due to normal processing could put their life or freedom in danger.

Woman at Risk Visa (Subclass 204)

This visa is for female applicants, and their dependents, who are subject to persecution or are of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), are living outside their home country without the protection of a male relative and are in danger of victimisation, harassment or serious abuse because of their gender. The majority of applicants who are considered under this category are identified and referred to the Australian Government by the UNHCR.

www.immi.gov.au

22 : Settlement

22.1 Humanitarian Settlement Services

Australia has a long and proud history of resettling people in humanitarian need and the Australian Government is committed to helping new arrivals become active participants in the community as soon as possible. In recognition that humanitarian clients often face additional challenges to those faced by other migrants, they receive specialised assistance during the initial settlement period.

Initial settlement support

Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) provides intensive settlement support, through a coordinated case management approach, to newly-arrived humanitarian clients on arrival and throughout their initial settlement period.

Support through the HSS program is tailored to individual needs, including the specific needs of young people. HSS endeavours to strengthen the ability of humanitarian clients to participate in the economic and social life of Australia and to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge to independently access services beyond the initial settlement period.

Coordinated case management model

Services are provided to clients based on need; therefore, not all clients require all services. HSS providers assess and identify client needs and deliver a tailored package of services to meet those needs.

Case management

Case management overarches all services and coordinates the delivery of services to clients under the program. Case management plans are developed for each single client and family based on a complete needs assessment.

Case management coordinates the delivery of services to clients including airport reception and transit assistance, property induction and initial food provision, assisting clients to register with Centrelink, Medicare, banks, schools and an Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) provider and assists clients to meet their health needs and attend health assessments.

Case management plans also connect clients with other settlement, community and youth programs. Clients are assisted to participate in their local communities through connection to local social, recreational and sporting organisations.

Accommodation services

The accommodation service provides clients with accommodation upon their arrival in Australia, either in long-term accommodation, or in short-term housing arrangements before sourcing long-term accommodation. Accommodation services may also include the provision of a basic household goods package to help clients to establish their new residence in Australia.

Structured onshore orientation program

The onshore orientation program is available to all clients aged 15 and over and focuses on delivering competency based outcomes. Orientation sessions are tailored to individual client needs and learning capacities, within a National Orientation Framework. The competencies set out critical skills and knowledge clients need to live and function independently in Australian society, and to continue their settlement journey beyond the HSS.

- » Humanitarian Settlement Services – Onshore Orientation Program Booklet – 2011
- » Humanitarian Settlement Services – Onshore Orientation Program Brochure – 2011

Completion of services

HSS is focused on humanitarian clients reaching sustainable and measurable settlement outcomes that will stand them in good stead for their settlement journey. Exit from the HSS program is based on clients achieving clearly defined settlement outcomes. These include:

- » residing in long-term accommodation (generally a lease of at least six months in duration)
- » being linked to the required services identified in their case management plan
- » school age children are enrolled and attending school
- » ensuring clients have understood the critical messages of the orientation program and have the skills and knowledge to independently access services

It is expected these settlement outcomes will generally be reached between 6 to 12 months of the client's arrival. Clients holding the following visas are eligible for HSS:

- » Refugee category (subclass 200, 201, 203 and 204) visas
- » Global Special Humanitarian (subclass 202) visa
- » Protection (subclass 866) visa.

www.immi.gov.au - Fact Sheet 66

22.2 Settlement Grants Program (SGP)

The Settlement Grants Program (SGP) was introduced on 1 July 2006 following a review of settlement services program funded by the department.

Aim of the SGP

The aim of the SGP is to deliver services which assist eligible clients to become self reliant and participate equitably in Australian society as soon as possible after arrival.

Settlement needs

The funding priorities of the SGP are informed by an annual assessment of settlement needs and through consideration of the statistical data. This approach ensures that services provided through the SGP are:

- » targeted towards those communities and locations in greatest need of settlement assistance
- » responsive to changing settlement patterns and needs

SGP funding

SGP funding is:

- » on an application basis
- » offered for periods of one, two or three years
- » based on financial years and is provided for a fixed period
- » expected to be fully committed at the beginning of each financial year

Clients and Service Providers

Clients

The SGP target group comprises permanent residents who have arrived in Australia during the last five years as:

- » humanitarian entrants
- » family stream migrants with low levels of English proficiency
- » dependants of skilled migrants in rural and regional areas with low English proficiency

Select temporary residents, (Prospective Marriage, Provisional Partner, Provisional Spouse and Provisional Interdependency visa holders and their dependants) in rural and regional areas who have arrived in Australia during the last five years and who have low English proficiency also fall within the target group.

Service Providers

To be eligible for funding under the Settlement Grants Program, an organisation must be either:

- » a not-for-profit, incorporated, community organisation
- » a local government organisation
- » currently funded to deliver services under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)
or
- » in rural and regional areas, a government service delivery organisation

www.immi.gov.au

There is currently no Settlement grant Program operating in Central Queensland (2011-2012).

23 : 457 Visa

Temporary Business (Long Stay) - Standard Business Sponsorship (Subclass 457)

This is the most commonly used program for employers to sponsor overseas workers to work in Australia on a temporary basis. Employers can be either:

- » Australian businesses
- » overseas businesses

Who is this visa for?

This visa is for employers who would like to employ overseas workers to fill nominated skilled positions in Australia.

How much will this visa cost?

You must pay a non-refundable application charge.

- » Employer Sponsored Temporary Visa Charges

What does this visa let me do?

With this visa you can employ overseas workers for a period of between one day and four years.

With this visa those people you employ from overseas can:

- » work in Australia for a period of between one day and four years
- » bring any eligible secondary applicants with them to Australia – secondary applicants can work and study
- » after entering Australia, have no limit on the number of times they travel in and out of Australia

The Temporary Business (Long Stay) visa (subclass 457 visa) is designed to enable employers to address labour shortages by bringing in genuinely skilled workers where they cannot find an appropriately skilled Australian.

You can find the list of occupations that are eligible under the subclass 457 visa program on the department's website www.immi.gov.au/skilled/skilled-workers/legislative-instruments/

The subclass 457 visa is the most commonly used program for employers to sponsor overseas workers to work in Australia on a temporary basis. The subclass 457 visa allows businesses to employ overseas workers for up to 4 years in skilled occupations only.

Subclass 457 visa holders can:

- » work in Australia for a period of between one day and 4 years
- » bring any eligible dependants with them to Australia — dependants can work and study
- » after entering Australia, have no limit on the number of times they can travel in and out of Australia

How this Visa Works

A booklet has been prepared for the Subclass 457 – Business (Long Stay) visa, which is available in booklet 9.

- » Booklet 9 – Temporary Business (Long Stay) (Subclass 457) Visa

For this visa you will need to be approved as an eligible sponsor. You will also need:

- » an eligible nominated occupation
- » an eligible nominated employee

The process for obtaining a Subclass 457 Business (Long Stay) visa is summarised in the table below.

Who	Responsibility
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » apply to be a sponsor to recruit overseas workers » nominate the occupations you want to fill, and the employees you want to fill those positions » recruit the overseas workers to fill your nominated positions » act as a sponsor for your employees applying for a visa » co-operate with department's monitoring requirements » meet obligations as part of the program
Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » accepts the offer of employment from the employer » applies for a visa » meets all conditions on their visa

Subclass 457 – market salary rates

All sponsors of Subclass 457 visa holders (457 sponsors) will be required to adhere to a new series of Sponsorship Obligations. For 457 sponsors, the obligation to ensure equivalent terms and conditions of employment will mean that they pay market salary rates to their overseas workers.

For current Subclass 457 visa holders, transitional arrangements will apply.

- » Subclass 457 – Market Salary Rates
- » Subclass 457 – Market Rates Frequently Asked Questions – Sponsors
- » Subclass 457 – Market Rates Frequently Asked Questions – Visa Holders

Validity periods

The validity period of the:

- » sponsorship is three years
- » nomination is 12 months
- » visa is between one day and four years

Applying for a new visa or changing employer

If you have an employee who wants to apply for a new visa (where their current visa is about to expire), the employee must lodge a new visa application.

If you want to change employer or position (within the validity of their current visa), you are not required to apply for a new subclass 457 visa.

- » Applying for this visa

Visa labels

There are a number of eligible passports for travel to Australia without a visa label.

- » Visa labels

Medicare levy exemption

The Medicare Levy is a tax paid through the personal tax system in Australia. People granted temporary residence visas may be subject to the Medicare Levy. The Medicare Levy is based on the taxable income of the individual for each income tax year.

If you are from a country that has no reciprocal health care arrangements with Australia, you and your dependents, who have not been entitled to Medicare benefits can seek an exemption from the Medicare levy in your end of financial year income tax return. Your lack of entitlement to Medicare benefits must be certified by the Minister for Health.

If you are from a country with reciprocal health care arrangements with Australia, Medicare assistance is available for immediately necessary treatment. Nationals from reciprocal countries are therefore not exempt from the Medicare levy.

- » Medicare > Medicare Forms > Medicare Levy Exemption Certification Form
- » Employee Obligations > Health insurance

Definitions

These definitions will help you understand the information on these pages.

- » Definitions - www.immi.gov.au

More information

Further information for subclass 457 visa holders is available.

- » Australian Taxation Office - www.ato.gov.au
- » Fair Work Online - www.fairwork.gov.au

Employer Eligibility

An employer needs to be approved as a sponsor in order to employ skilled workers from overseas. The following requirements must be met for an employer to become a sponsor.

Domestic business sponsors

If you are an employer with a business that operates in Australia, you must meet benchmarks relating to the training of Australian citizens and permanent residents.

Overseas business sponsors

If you are an employer with a business that has no formal operating base or representation in Australia, you may apply to bring employees to Australia to do one of the following:

- » establish a business operation in Australia
- » fulfil obligations for a contract or other business activity in Australia.

Note: Overseas Business Sponsors do not need to be operating in Australia but may need to meet other employer eligibility requirements.

Employing local labour and non-discriminatory employment practices

From 27 June 2009, there has been a requirement for sponsors under subclass 457 visa program to attest that they have a strong record of, or a demonstrated commitment to:

- » employing local labour non-discriminatory employment practices

No adverse information

To meet this requirement, there must be nothing adverse known about the business or a person associated with the business.

Adverse information includes the conviction, finding of non-compliance, administrative action, investigation, legal proceedings or insolvency. Adverse information is relevant to a person's suitability as an approved sponsor, when it occurred within the previous three years.

Training benchmarks

Applicants who apply for approval as sponsors under the subclass 457 visa program must demonstrate their contribution and commitment to the training of Australians by providing evidence of meeting the training benchmarks.

Sponsorship accreditation

Some employers can also apply for accredited status which will qualify them for priority processing for all subclass 457 nominations and visa applications.

- » Sponsorship Accreditation Eligibility

Before lodging an application, please read all related requirements.

- » Eligibility

Employee Eligibility

As an employee, you must meet all the following requirements:

- » be sponsored by an employer to fill a nominated position
- » have skills, qualifications, experience and an employment background which match those required for the position
- » demonstrated English language proficiency
- » be eligible for any relevant licences or registration required for the nominated position
 - › Nomination Eligibility
- » you can apply for this visa while you are in Australia, only if the last visa you held is not a Transit visa (Subclass 771) or a Special Purpose visa

Health requirements

There are a number of health requirements that must be met by health industry workers and their accompanying family members.

- » Information Form 1163i Health requirements for temporary entry to Australia

Further information regarding health requirements for visa applicants.

- » Health Requirements

Health examinations for visa applicants outside Australia must be conducted by an approved overseas doctor.

- » Immigration Panel Doctors

Health insurance requirements

Subclass 457 visa holders granted visas after 14 September 2009 will be required to maintain arrangements for health insurance.

- » Employee Obligations > Health insurance
- » Subclass 457 – Health Insurance Frequently Asked Questions – Sponsors
- » Subclass 457 – Health Insurance Frequently Asked Questions – Visa Holders

English language proficiency requirements

From 14 September 2009, all primary Subclass 457 visa applicants who are sponsored by a Standard Business Sponsor must demonstrate that they have English language proficiency that is equivalent to an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test score of at least 5 in each of the four test components of speaking, reading, writing and listening. Prior to 14 September 2009, applicants required an average test score of at least 5 across the four test components.

Where the nominated occupation requires a higher level of English (equivalent to IELTS test score of more than 5 in each of the four test components) because it forms part of that occupation's registration, licensing or required for the grant of that registration, licence or membership.

This requirement affects all new subclass 457 visa applications from 14 September 2009, as well as visa applications which were made before but not decided by 14 September 2009.

- » Changes to the Subclass 457 Visa Program – English Language Requirements
- » Requirements Frequently Asked Questions About English Language Requirements

Character requirements

You must meet all character requirements.

- » Character Requirement

Limitation of applications

If you are in Australia, your current visa may have restrictions which will prevent you from applying for this visa.

- » Information form 1026i Limitation on applications in Australia

Skills assessment

Australia requires visa applicants to have the skills required for their nominated positions. Where necessary for safety or to prevent fraud, Australia will undertake more extensive skills assessments to confirm skills claimed by applicants.

Australia requires formal skills assessments of some trade occupations. This arrangement commenced on 1 July 2009 and will be extended as capacities are increased.

More information on this new skills assessment process is available on the Trades Recognition Australia website.

- » Trades Recognition Australia

Australian Values Statement

If you are aged 18 years or over, you must declare that you will respect Australian values and obey the laws of Australia. For this visa, the values statement is included in the general declaration section of the application form. When you sign the application form it means you will also be signing the values statement. You will not be required to have read the *Life in Australia book*, but may do so if you wish.

You are also encouraged to gain an understanding of Australia, its people and their way of life, before applying for this visa.

- » Australian Values - Overview

Before lodging an application, please read all related requirements.

- » Eligibility

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