

**SUBMISSION NO. 190**

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**Sent:** Friday, 3 June 2005 9:05 AM  
**To:** Committee, FHS (REPS)  
**Subject:** Intercountry adoption

Last September (2004), my husband, biological daughter and I travelled to Bangalore, India to collect our 16 month old son, Rajesh.

My brief comments regarding the process would be these:

For us the process was relatively straightforward and it still took 2 years. I think the whole thing could be shortened by about 50% with process improvements and better/more resources. Very bureaucratic and form-filling and none user or 'customer' friendly ie no easy-to-follow guidelines Very few 'updates' along the way - we had to initiate Compulsory education sessions were not especially helpful except for meeting others on the same journey. Our social worker was very flexible which given some time constraints at our end was very useful - not sure if this would have been the case with all. Given that the whole exercise is costly ie fee based, lots of room for improvement DIMIA costs are excessive. For us approval to allocation was relatively quick (3 months) but allocation to travel was longer - 6 months. Everything is 'on hold' as you don't know when things are going to happen. ICARN playgroups are fantastic and a total source of support and ideas. No 'welcome' packs from Centre link with info on entitlements c/w local birth

As I was already a parent, I knew my way around various services, but as a new parent, the process could be a lot more welcoming. it would be good to have some post-adoption workshops or formal support outside the 4 social worker visits.

Happy to discuss further if requested.

Regards

Alison Verghese  
[REDACTED]