

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

**ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 February 2006**

IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

### **(84) Output 2.1: Settlement Services**

Senator Hurley asked:

DIMA Annual Report page 226 states that in 2004-05 International Social Services (ISS) approved 195 applications from former child migrants,

- what is estimated figure of child migrants that are in need of this service?
- what are the criteria for approval?

*Answer:*

Approximately 6000 children were sent to Australia from child care institutions in the United Kingdom and Malta throughout the 20th century, with 3000 children arriving in the post-war period between 1945 and 1970.

Under the British and the Australian Travel Funds Former Child Migrants have had six years of focused and specialist support to trace family and to undertake a reunion visit to the United Kingdom. Former Child Migrants from Malta have had three years.

The status of applications received under the Australian Travel Fund as at 31 August 2005:

Applications received	826
Applications approved	771
Reunion visit completed	694
Approved applicants that have not yet travelled	77
Unsuccessful applications	55

Those Former Child Migrants who were eligible to access a sponsored reunion visit and wished to do so had until 31 March 2005 to make an application and until 31 August 2005 under the Australian Travel Fund to complete travel.

Seventeen approved applicants who could not complete travel within this timeframe due to special circumstances such as ill health sought and were granted an extension of time to complete travel of 31 May 2006. The contract with ISS to administer the Australian Travel Fund will cease on 30 June 2006.

The eligibility criteria for accessing the Australian Travel Fund were:

- Funding was available for visits to family members and other relatives, including aunts and uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces; and for other related purposes, such as visits to family graves.

- Funding was available for all former child migrants, including former child migrants from Malta, and those who may have undertaken previous visits at their own expense.
- In exceptional circumstances, travel funding was provided for a spouse, child or other person as an accompanying carer, subject to medical certificate.
- Priority was given to the following groups:
  - those who still have a living parent or parents;
  - those who had already applied for the UK travel fund and were ineligible;
  - those over 65 years of age;
  - those who hold an Australian Government Pension Concession Card, a Health Care Card, or a Seniors Health Care Card;
  - those who have never had a trip back to the UK or Malta (regardless of the source of funding); and
  - those who had already formally indicated interest in the UK travel fund and were not able to apply while it was still in operation because family tracing had not been completed.
- Funding was only available for one Australian Government sponsored trip. Subsequent trips would be at the applicant's expense.
- Funding was not available for those who were funded previously by the UK travel scheme.