

Special Arrangements for the Family¹

Background

- 4.1 Accredited Family Members will be provided with information concerning Australian immigration requirements. Special reception, departure, quarantine, customs, and duty-free arrangements will also be set up.

Information campaign

- 4.2 The information being provided to the Family concerning Australian immigration, quarantine and customs requirements is part of the larger Visitor Information Campaign (VIC), which is described in detail in Chapter 5.
- 4.3 The Family is specifically targeted in the booklet, website, and video components of the VIC.

Booklet

- 4.4 The 24-page booklet, *A 'must read' for visitors to Australia*,² includes four pages specifically addressed to “Olympic and Paralympic Families”. These set out the special arrangements applying to these groups and provide further contact points for SOCOG, the Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee (SPOC), AQIS, DIMA, ACS, Australian

¹ The Olympic and Paralympic Family Members are referred to as *Family* in this report.

² ACS, Submissions, p. 61, Exhibit 2.

Communications Authority (ACA), Therapeutic Goods Administration, Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA) and Business Club Australia.

Internet

- 4.5 The booklet forms the basis of the content of a DIMA-coordinated website and the pages relating to the “Olympic Family” provide similar information to that in the booklet. In addition to contact addresses, hyperlinks are provided to DIMA, ACS, ACA, AQIS, ASDA, and SOCOG sites for further information.

Video

- 4.6 AQIS is coordinating the production of a 7-8 minute video aimed at the Olympic and Paralympic Families. It will be shown to 200 National Olympic Committees, 125 Paralympic Committees, other peak bodies, and international sports marketing bodies in Australia prior to the Games.
- 4.7 The video will advise Family Members of the Australian Government’s general entry and departure requirements, and of the availability of further information from the booklet and website.
- 4.8 AQIS funding of \$40,000 covered the production of the video in English, for translation by the end of September 1999. The estimated additional \$10,000 required for conversion to French, Spanish, Russian, German, Arabic, Japanese and Chinese will also come from AQIS. Versions in five languages are expected to be ready by the end of September 1999. Copying and subsequent distribution internationally through DFAT will involve a further (unspecified) cost which will be met from the AQIS funding allocation.³

Arrival

- 4.9 A key issue for Australia’s immigration and border control authorities will be the identification of accredited Family Members.
- 4.10 The ETA system, rather than the combined accreditation card, will be the basis of admission of Family Members. This is expected to help combat fraud, and facilitate entry and arrival processing. The Committee noted the dependence on computer systems to handle the general and specific

3 AQIS, Submissions, pp. 214, 222, 358.

demands of the Games period, and the consequent need for a robust computer system.

- 4.11 The ETA platform's electronic record of the Family Member's OTA/PTA should enable the ready identification of most of the Family arriving in Australia and assist coordination of their greeting and processing.

Special arrival arrangements

- 4.12 Most Family Members will be able to be identified as they reach the primary line at Sydney International Airport. Their validated combined accreditation card and/or their streaming to dedicated queues will assist in appropriately targeting special Family arrangements. The entry of accredited Family Members for the Games will be managed through DIMA and SOCOG who intend to develop scenarios and projected resolutions in advance of the Games, to be implemented if required during the Games period. They will also develop an appropriate "chain of escalation" to handle emerging issues.⁴
- 4.13 The handling of the particular sensitivities attached to the Family will require an arrangement similar to the Entry Advisory Group, but able to operate within a much more demanding time frame. DIMA will establish an Entry Response Team (ERT) at Sydney International Airport, specifically to facilitate the entry of Family Members. The ERT concept was used for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.⁵
- 4.14 The team will supplement the activities of the entry operations centre, and enhance the normal DIMA presence working with immigration inspectors. The prime focus of the ERT will be to deal with entry-related problems of Family Members that may be encountered off shore or on arrival in Australia. These include travellers not having applied for entry/accreditation and hence there being no record of an SPV on DIMA systems or if additional information has been received after the visas come into existence and before the person arrives in Australia.⁶
- 4.15 DIMA and SOCOG will maintain their Games presence at Sydney airport from 15 August until early November 2000.⁷ In addition to its primary meeting and processing activities SOCOG will provide medical and

4 SOCOG, Submissions, p. 175, Evidence, p.90.

5 DIMA, Submissions, pp. 134, 355; SOCOG, Evidence, pp. 84-85.

6 DIMA, Submissions, pp. 134, 355.

7 SOCOG, Submissions, p. 178.

language services and transport to accommodation. SAC is providing discrete areas as Family transport interchanges.⁸

Language

- 4.16 At Sydney airport SOCOG and SPOC will have staff and volunteer hosts with multilingual skills trained to provide hospitality services to all visitors during the Games period. SOCOG plans to provide Spanish and French speakers for the duration of the Games, and call upon specialist linguists as needed or as API data indicates an imminent potential demand. A multilingual switchboard permitting access to other languages will also be available.⁹
- 4.17 Border control personnel will have to deal with a wider range of languages than usual, and this demand will be concentrated in time. ACS has some multilingual staff, and these will be used to assist passengers. Consideration is being given to using appropriately cleared SOCOG volunteers to supplement ACS language resources.¹⁰
- 4.18 SOCOG envisage using DIMA's Translating and Interpreting Service as a back-up to its own Language Services Operations. This is expected to provide languages not catered for by SOCOG's own arrangements, additional support for high demand languages, and an overnight service (11 pm to 7 am).¹¹ DIMA noted that the Games' demands on its interpreting services could lead to a lack of these for other DIMA non-Games activities.¹²

Customs

- 4.19 API will provide ACS with some data relating to the details of the Family, so that Customs can be aware of with whom they are dealing. Family Members will be required to fill out the customs declarations and generally to conform to standard customs requirements. However, there will be some exceptions.

Duty-free:

- 4.20 A *'must read'* for visitors to Australia advises that accredited Family Members will receive a special duty-free concession for both accompanied
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8 SOCOG, Submissions, pp. 177-178; SAC, Submissions, p. 150.

9 SOCOG, Evidence, p. 85.

10 ACS, Submissions, p. 69.

11 DIMA, Submissions, pp. 134, 355.

12 DIMA, Submissions, p. 134.

and unaccompanied baggage and cargo. Normally, unaccompanied baggage does not attract the duty-free concession. Athletes and others commonly bring a large number of small gifts such as memorabilia and badges. Collectively, these items could readily exceed the personal \$400 limit if carried by one person. The \$400 limit to duty-free goods entry has been waived for Family Members. Special arrangements have been put into place to permit concessional entry arrangements for goods associated with the Games.¹³

Drugs:

- 4.21 The Games period is one of potentially increased border threats through the importation of narcotics, performance enhancing drugs, and other prohibited imports.
- 4.22 Family Members will not be exempt from customs requirements.¹⁴ ACS is, however, cooperating with Games authorities with a view to providing more stringent checks. This is because, in some instances, particularly in relation to performance-enhancing drugs, the Games' organisers' requirements are more restrictive than Australian law.
- 4.23 ACS is working with interested parties, such as SOCOG, AOC, IOC, the Therapeutic Goods Administration and the Australian Sports Drug Agency to determine an approach to this issue. The standard procedure for including drugs in Customs Prohibited regulations is for the Minister for Health and Aged Care to request the Minister responsible for the ACS to do so. However, because some of these drugs are in common medical use, they cannot be identified as prohibited imports. ACS is training staff in the recognition of people who may be users of performance enhancing drugs, and examining existing scanning and other detection mechanisms to determine whether they can identify those drugs.¹⁵
- 4.24 ACS will not treat Family Members detected carrying performance enhancing drugs any differently from anybody else carrying such drugs. If Family Members arrive in Australia with, for example, steroids prescribed by a medical practitioner, there are existing procedures to allow such goods in for personal medicinal purposes. This process involves contact with the Therapeutic Goods Administration, and would cause some delay in processing the person through the border checks.¹⁶

13 ACS, Evidence, pp. 37-38; Submissions, p. 350.

14 ACS, Evidence, pp. 30-31.

15 ACS, Evidence, pp. 31-32, 38; Submissions, p. 350.

16 ACS, Evidence, pp. 30-31.

Conclusion

- 4.25 The Committee endorses the ACS approach to its border control responsibilities, and also its moves to accommodate the Games' organisers' special professional interests. The Committee was concerned that the potentially public nature of any examination of Family possessions could generate prejudicial media coverage. Although some airports have examination areas away from the main public areas, this was not apparently the case with Sydney International Airport.¹⁷

Quarantine

- 4.26 A *'must read'* for visitors to Australia advises Family Members that AQIS needs to inspect goods such as sports equipment, drugs, therapeutic substances, diet supplements and foods in order to protect Australia's unique environment. Individual Family Members will bring some of these items as personal baggage, but the bulk is expected to arrive as freight. Family Members are advised that used equipment should be clean to avoid importation of soil, sand or organic matter.
- 4.27 AQIS has expressed confidence that it can handle the increased activity associated with the Games. It believes that most cargo will come in some time before the Games, and that much of it will not be of quarantine interest. In addition, the Family cargo will represent only a small percentage of the total amount regularly handled in Sydney.
- 4.28 In order to provide a convenient service for the Family and spread out the demand for AQIS services, AQIS is considering off shore inspection and clearance of some special cargo, primarily sporting gear such as sailing boats, wheelchairs and other bulky items. AQIS may be able to make officers available for this in key European, Asian, and US locations.
- 4.29 AQIS also proposes to institute some special arrangements for the Games period. These will include the imposition of special requirements on some imported material, surveillance by AQIS staff, and use of approved quarantine waste disposal companies. This approach will allow flexibility without compromising quarantine standards.¹⁸
- 4.30 SOCOG and AQIS have a special memorandum of understanding to deal with equestrian matters which in no way constrains the exercise of the relevant statutory responsibilities. Horses are expected to arrive on SOCOG-sponsored flights in time to undergo a two-week quarantine

17 ACS, Evidence, p. 40.

18 AQIS, Submissions, p. 24.

period at Horsley Park, which will be gazetted as a temporary animal quarantine station. Other horses arriving will be subject to normal quarantine arrangements at other animal quarantine stations.¹⁹

Paralympic Family

- 4.31 There will be some special additional measures to expedite the arrival and departure of Paralympic Family Members.
- 4.32 Sydney International Airport meets all the statutory requirements in the provision of facilities for persons with disabilities. There will be ramps providing quick access into buses that have been specially designed or cleared to carry the Paralympians.²⁰
- 4.33 In relation to quarantine issues, the Paralympic/Olympic section of the information brochure *A 'must read' for visitors to Australia* notes that there are special entry provisions for guide dogs, and that import procedures should be initiated 9-12 months prior to arrival.²¹
- 4.34 Paralympic Family Members, like Olympic Family Members, are expected to arrive on commercial flights. The specific requirements for efficiently disembarking wheelchairs and reuniting their owners with them are being addressed. So too are the particular needs of visually impaired.²²
- 4.35 SOCOG also recognises that some members of the Paralympic Family will have specialised medication requirements, and the intention is to develop a recognised list of the relevant drugs to facilitate customs and quarantine processing.²³

Potential arrival problems

Family Members lacking combined accreditation cards

- 4.36 SOCOG expects that 35 per cent of the accredited Family will arrive in Australia without their combined accreditation cards.²⁴ This is not an

19 AQIS, Evidence, p. 45; Submissions, pp. 358-359.

20 SAC, Evidence, p. 110.

21 Exhibit 2.

22 SOCOG, Evidence, pp. 86-87.

23 SOCOG, Evidence, p. 90.

24 SOCOG, Evidence, p. 81.

immigration issue. As accredited Family, they will have OTA/PTA which will allow them to enter Australia, after which they will receive SOCOG accreditation.

Health

- 4.37 Accredited Family Members (most of whom will not be competing athletes), do not have their health status checked until their passenger card is inspected on arrival in Australia.²⁵ Assessment of the possible consequences of admission and decisions on action will then have to be made, and the Committee understands that this will be one of the functions of the ERT.

Arrivals away from Sydney International Airport

- 4.38 Most of the detailed planning for the Games period has focussed on accredited Family Members arriving at Sydney International Airport, because this will handle most of the Games' traffic. However, SOCOG expects that a significant number of accredited Olympic Family Members arriving from overseas for Games training and acclimatisation will make their initial landfall elsewhere.²⁶ For immigration purposes they may be identified as Family by their OTA/PTA. SOCOG will provide them with Games combined accreditation cards at interstate centres.²⁷
- 4.39 Some VIP and light aircraft may arrive at other airports in the Sydney region. All light and private aircraft arriving from overseas are required to land at an international airport capable of carrying out customs, immigration and quarantine procedures. Arrivals at other airports require prior approval.²⁸ These arrangements, and coordination with DTRS, allow the relevant border checks to be made.

Early arrivals

- 4.40 To date some 36 Olympic teams, as well as other national teams and bodies have indicated their intention to train in Australia before the Games.²⁹ They may expect to be accorded the special status of, and special arrangements for, "*accredited* members of the... Families" (Committee's emphasis) mentioned in the Olympic/Paralympic Family section of A

25 DIMA, Evidence, p. 8.

26 DIMA, Submissions, p. 108.

27 SOCOG, Evidence, p. 90.

28 DIMA, Submissions, pp. 130, 352.

29 DIMA, Submissions, p. 118.

'must read' for visitors to Australia. However, although the section refers to "accreditation in accordance with the Olympic Charter" it does not make explicit the time limit of one month before and after the Games which is inherent in that definition.

- 4.41 Because of the very specific one month before/after limitations attached to the SPV and accreditation process, Games participants who do not meet those restrictions will not have OTA/PTA on arrival, nor will they have combined accreditation cards. Australian identification of individuals to whom appropriate courtesies might be extended will therefore be heavily reliant on information from DIMA contact personnel in the home countries (see para 3.9).
- 4.42 Early arrivals will also have no entitlement to the special arrangements available to accredited Family Members. This may be a source of friction at the entry point, particularly among those whose early arrival for Games preparation is an indication of confidence that they will be successfully nominated for accreditation by their home countries.
- 4.43 A further source of potential friction will be the claims by persons claiming to be Family Members, or claiming Family membership through relationship with a Family Member.

Conclusion

- 4.44 The Committee noted that two potential issues, identification and entitlements of early arrivals, arise from the nature of the accreditation arrangements. Nevertheless, the Committee was concerned that they have the potential to reflect poorly on Australia's coordination of the immigration arrangements for the entry and departure of Family Members.
- 4.45 The Committee noted that the proposed Entry Response Team, which would function during the Games period, was intended to resolve arrival problems for the accredited Families. The Committee's view was that the early creation of the ERT would facilitate the provision of coordinated authoritative advice on Family entry matters, and would provide the team with practical experience prior to the major Games period demand.

Recommendation 5

- 4.46 **The Committee recommends that the proposed Entry Response Team (ERT) be formed as a matter of urgency to enable full and proper training and testing to ensure that the ERT will be able to perform its duties efficiently.**

Departure

- 4.47 The peak departure pressure on Sydney International Airport will be in the day after the Olympic Games close. ACS is confident of its ability to meet that demand, but considers the major constraints are check-in and baggage handling. In order to insulate Family Members from some of the airport terminal pressures, consideration is being given to arranging airline and baggage check-in at the Games Village and other locations.³⁰ At the time of the Committee hearings, however, it was not certain that all airlines carrying Family Members out of Australia would have on-site access at the Village.³¹

Recommendation 6

- 4.48 **The Committee recommends that consideration be given to allowing airlines carrying large numbers of Family Members access to the Village on the day of departure.**
- 4.49 These proposed measures will not fully segregate Family Members from other departing visitors. SOCOG is arranging Family transport and farewells, but the Family's coaches will still have to compete with traffic on the access roads and at Departures set down and parking.³² The Family will also be required to pass through the standard customs and immigration checks at the airport.
- 4.50 ACS is exploring the possibility of Customs processing at the Village for a small number of charter flights, and has expressed a willingness to examine extending this service, provided border integrity can be

30 ACS, Evidence, p. 35; SAC, Submissions, p. 150.

31 Ansett, Evidence, p.128; Qantas, Evidence, p.126; ACS, Evidence, p. 228.

32 SOCOG, Submissions, p. 177; SAC, Submissions, p. 150.

assured.³³ The Committee endorses the intention to provide specialised services to the Family on departure. It notes, however, that the plans appeared tentative at the time of the hearings.

Recommendation 7

- 4.51 **The Committee recommends that consideration be given by the border control authorities to the provision of dedicated border clearance arrangements for Family Members, possibly through off-site processing.**

Staying on

- 4.52 According to DIMA, at recent Games “test events” there have been:
a number of instances where people... have lodged applications for refugee status.³⁴
- 4.53 These incidents are expected to continue, with an unpredictable number of Family Members applying for asylum or protection during the Games period. The Committee was advised that no conclusions could be drawn from incidents which coincided with the Atlanta Olympic Games.
- 4.54 Some Family Members may apply to remain in Australia at the time of entry. As with other applicants at that point, the request will be handled at the primary line. The ERT will deal with the Family Members at the airport. At Games’ venues the NSW Police Service will be the first line of contact and will refer cases to DIMA.
- 4.55 Family Members seeking protection as refugees will be handled within existing DIMA procedures. Any Family claim for political asylum will be referred to DFAT for consideration, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade has the relevant power in asylum cases.³⁵
- 4.56 Essentially, having Family status will add to the sensitivity of any requests for asylum or protection, but the procedures will follow existing established practices which are outlined in Chapter 9.

33 ACS, Submissions, p. 350; Evidence, p. 228.

34 DIMA, Submissions, p. 104-105.

35 DFAT, Submissions, p. 83.

4.57 At the time of the Committee's hearings, a number of the Family-specific arrangements were still under consideration.³⁶ Consequently the Committee was not able to assess their potential effectiveness.

36 Eg, wheelchair & visually impaired arrangements, AQIS outposts, SOCOG/DIMA scenario preparation, airline access to the Village, dedicated Family departure arrangements.