

## Changes to lodgement arrangements of Refugee and Humanitarian visa applications with 'proposal forms'

### Who does this information apply to?

This information applies to people who are intending to lodge an application for a Refugee and Humanitarian visa with Form 681—*Refugee and Special Humanitarian Proposal* (proposal form).

### What changes are taking place?

From 1 April 2012, all applications for a Refugee and Humanitarian visa with a proposal form must be lodged at one of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's Offshore Humanitarian Processing Centres (OHPCs) in Victoria or New South Wales (NSW).

While this will not impact applicants from Africa, the Middle East\*, Pakistan or Afghanistan, who already lodge their visa applications at OHPCs, it will effect applicants from all other countries. From 1 April 2012, applicants from any country not currently lodging visa applications at an OHPC will be required to lodge their application at the NSW OHPC. Visa applications can be sent to:

#### **Offshore Humanitarian Processing Centre Department of Immigration and Citizenship**

**By Post:** GPO Box 9984  
Sydney NSW 2001

**By courier:  
(no hand deliveries)** Level 3, 26 Lee Street  
Sydney, NSW 2000

### Why is the department making changes to the way it processes visa applications?

Processing Refugee and Humanitarian visa applications accompanied by proposal forms has taken place in Australia for clients residing in Africa, the Middle East\*, Pakistan and Afghanistan for some years.

The latest changes are intended to streamline and standardise global processing arrangements, and will mean that all applications are processed in the same way. This should create a fairer and more equitable processing system. Processing visa applications in the NSW OHPC will also make it easier for proposers and authorised recipients in Australia to communicate with the department.

\*The 'Middle East' comprises Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen

## **How will proposers be able to track applications if they are moved to the NSW OHPC?**

Proposers can contact the OHPC in the same ways they contact the department's offices overseas. The OHPC prefers that you make contact by email. If you do not have access to email or need to contact the OHPC urgently, telephone and fax numbers are also available.

Email: [nsw.offshore.humanitarian@immi.gov.au](mailto:nsw.offshore.humanitarian@immi.gov.au)  
Telephone: 1300 658 731 (in Australia)  
+61 2 8666 5652 (outside Australia)  
Fax: +61 2 8666 5909

## **Will the transfer of applications have any effect on the decision of applicants' cases?**

No, the location of the processing of visa applications has no impact on the outcome. A decision will be made in Australia using the same criteria as that used by the department's offices overseas.

## **Will the transfer of applications have any effect on how long it takes cases to be finalised?**

The transfer of applications to Sydney is intended to create a fairer processing system, in which applications will be processed in the order they are received. This may mean some transferred cases are finalised sooner than they would otherwise have been.

## **How will I know if an application has progressed or a decision has been made?**

The NSW OHPC will make contact with you if your proposed case progresses or a decision is made. It is therefore important that proposers notify the department if there is a change of address or contact details. If your proposed application progresses to the interview stage, NSW OHPC will send the case to a departmental office overseas near to the applicant to enable them to arrange an interview.