

# **PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW**



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## MINISTER AND PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES

The Portfolio Minister is Senator Chris Evans, the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship.

The portfolio agencies are:

- the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)—a department of state
- the Migration Review Tribunal and Refugee Review Tribunal (MRT-RRT)—prescribed agencies under the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* (FMA Act).

## MAJOR AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The tasks assigned to the portfolio are:

- arrangements for the settlement of migrants and humanitarian entrants, other than migrant child education
- border immigration control
- entry, stay and departure arrangements for non-citizens
- citizenship
- multicultural affairs
- ethnic affairs.

## Department of Immigration and Citizenship

DIAC's purpose is embodied in the statement: *enriching Australia through the well-managed entry and settlement of people.*

The Department's business is:

- managing the permanent and temporary entry of people to Australia
- contributing to border security
- successfully settling migrants and refugees
- administering Australian citizenship law and policy
- promoting the benefits of a united and diverse society.

## *Portfolio Overview*

The services provided by the portfolio in Australia and overseas include:

- policy analysis and advice in relation to the role of temporary and permanent migration, and humanitarian entry, in responding to changes in Australia's social, economic and international environment
- granting visas for migrants, temporary entrants (e.g. skilled workers), business visitors, students and tourists, including identifying prior to arrival those entitled to lawfully enter Australia
- managing the entry and departure of people crossing the Australian border
- authenticating the identity of people entering Australia and maintaining a foundation identity of non-citizens
- assessing the character, health and bona fides of people applying for entry to Australia
- meeting Australia's international protection obligations and contributing to the resettlement of refugees and those in humanitarian need through the delivery of the Humanitarian Program
- preventing and deterring non-compliance with migration law
- applying appropriate sanctions to business sponsors who breach sponsorship undertakings
- locating, detaining and resolving the immigration status of unlawful non-citizens
- identifying and reducing irregular migration, people smuggling, trafficking in persons and other immigration malpractice and fraud
- increasing the ability of new permanent residents, particularly refugee and Special Humanitarian Program entrants and family stream migrants with lower levels of English proficiency, to participate in Australian life, through a settlement program including English language tuition and translating and interpreting services
- promoting the value of Australian citizenship
- deciding applications for Australian citizenship and making decisions on citizenship status
- promoting the benefits of a united and diverse society, including through programs supporting the integration of migrants and enhancing social cohesion.

### **Migration Review Tribunal and Refugee Review Tribunal**

The Migration Review Tribunal and Refugee Review Tribunal provide independent merits review of general visa decisions and protection visa decisions made by DIAC.

## **MAJOR OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2008–09**

The portfolio's two FMA Act entities – the Department and the MRT-RRT – contribute to its core responsibilities of immigration and citizenship. This section summarises each entity's aims for 2008–09.

### **Department of Immigration and Citizenship**

The two outcomes of DIAC reflect what the agency is working to achieve. They are:

- contributing to Australia's society and its economic advancement through the lawful and orderly entry and stay of people
- a society which values Australian citizenship and social cohesion, and enables migrants and refugees to participate equitably.

DIAC's key responsibilities for each outcome in 2008–09 are as follows.

#### **Outcome 1**

- Deliver the annual Migration and Humanitarian programs within the overall parameters set by government.
- Continue to implement strategies to strengthen the economic, budgetary and social benefits from both permanent and temporary migration, particularly for regional Australia.
- Continue to assist the tourism and education industries to expand, including into new markets, with a high degree of immigration integrity.
- Continue to pursue DIAC's better business solutions agenda, which places a high priority on issues such as maintaining the integrity of the Migration and Humanitarian programs and improving the delivery of visa services, ensuring accessibility for clients, cost-effective services and transparent processes.
- Continue to implement strategies to promote managed migration and strengthen international cooperative efforts against people smuggling, trafficking in persons and terrorism.
- Provide effective scrutiny at the border, including by examining passengers and crew and their movement information before their arrival in Australia and examining and confirming their identity and authority to enter Australia upon arrival.
- Provide identification, verification and biometric matching capabilities across a range of business processes, through the collection of biodata and images, and integration with alert systems.

### *Portfolio Overview*

- Continue to implement strategies to promote compliance, and prevent and deter non-compliance, with immigration law.
- Locate people who are no longer permitted to stay in Australia and regularise their immigration status, including, where necessary, through their removal from Australia.
- Monitor business sponsors for compliance with sponsorship undertakings and, as appropriate, apply sanctions for those in breach and/or refer their cases to other relevant agencies.
- Investigate *Migration Act 1958* breaches where appropriate.
- Continue to manage and process applications for protection visas onshore.
- Effectively manage detention services and continue to implement reforms.
- Ensure that all clients are managed in a fair, reasonable and timely way to an immigration outcome.
- Facilitate the effective management of asylum seekers.

### **Outcome 2**

- Continue to work with the community, not-for-profit organisations and government agencies to improve the framework for delivery of programs and services that better equip eligible settlers to participate equitably in Australian society.
- Promote the value of Australian citizenship.
- Continue to develop and implement strategies to maintain the integrity of citizenship application processing.
- Implement any Government policy changes regarding Australian citizenship, including any changes to citizenship law passed by the Parliament.
- Ongoing administration of a formal citizenship test.
- Promote social cohesion and mutual respect in a multicultural society through our community relations and anti-racism programs.
- Promote improved responses to Australia's cultural diversity through the implementation of the *Access and Equity* strategy.
- Coordinate the development, implementation and review of the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security for the Ministerial

Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, as requested by the Council of Australian Governments.

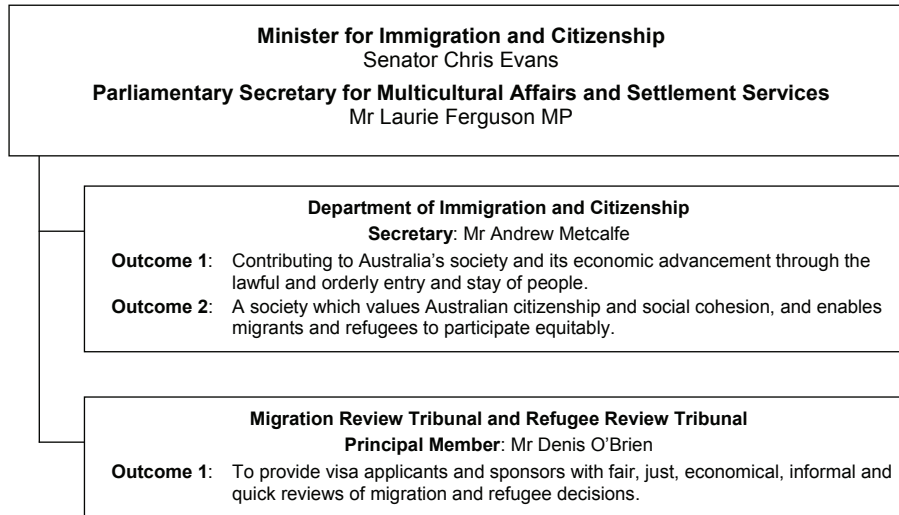
- Support increased settlement of humanitarian entrants and other migrants in regional Australia.

### **Migration Review Tribunal and Refugee Review Tribunal**

The Migration Review Tribunal will continue to provide final independent merits review of decisions concerning the refusal or cancellation of migration and temporary entry visas.

The Refugee Review Tribunal will continue to provide final independent merits review of decisions concerning the refusal or cancellation of protection visas.

**Figure 1: Portfolio structure and outcomes**



**PORTFOLIO RESOURCES MADE AVAILABLE IN THE BUDGET YEAR**

**Table 1: Portfolio resources made available in the Budget year**

	Appropriation			Receipts	Total
	Bill No. 1 \$m	Bill No. 2 \$m	Special \$m	\$m	\$m
<b>Department of Immigration and Citizenship</b>					
Administered appropriations	483.808	4.196	5.513	-	493.517
Departmental appropriations	1,185.004	36.124	-	45.382	1,266.510
<b>Total:</b>					<b>1,760.027</b>
<b>MRT-RRT</b>					
Administered appropriations	-	-	-	-	-
Departmental appropriations	39.791	-	-	-	39.791
<b>Total:</b>					<b>39.791</b>
Resources available within portfolio:					<b>1,799.818</b>

