



PLANNING FOR SERVICES DELIVERED UNDER THE SETTLEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

Planning for settlement services is the process by which the Australian Government identifies new arrivals who are most in need of assistance to settle, identifies what their particular needs are and how best to target policy and programs to meet those needs. This section provides an overview of the Department's planning processes for settlement services, particularly for the Settlement Grants Program (SGP).

The purpose of this section is to make the planning processes undertaken by the Department transparent and understandable for all stakeholders, particularly service providers and clients.

DIAC's Planning Framework for Settlement Services

Aim of the Settlement Services Planning Framework

A sound planning framework for settlement services, including the SGP, is critical to ensure that services match migrants' needs, there is effective and efficient use of resources, there is clarity of roles and responsibilities and services are coordinated to avoid duplication.

The Department's planning framework enables:

- a client focused approach in planning for service delivery;
- early and systematic identification of new and ongoing settlement needs and service delivery issues on a state and territory basis;
- appropriate targeting of services for the SGP Target Group through a sound process of assessment of clients' needs; and
- a defined communication channel for settlement stakeholders to advise government on changing needs and priorities, new caseloads and the unmet settlement needs of new arrivals.

Settlement Services Planning Cycle

Planning for settlement services begins with a good understanding of the composition of both the Humanitarian and Migration Programs. It is essential that settlement policies and programs take into account the size and focus of these programs.

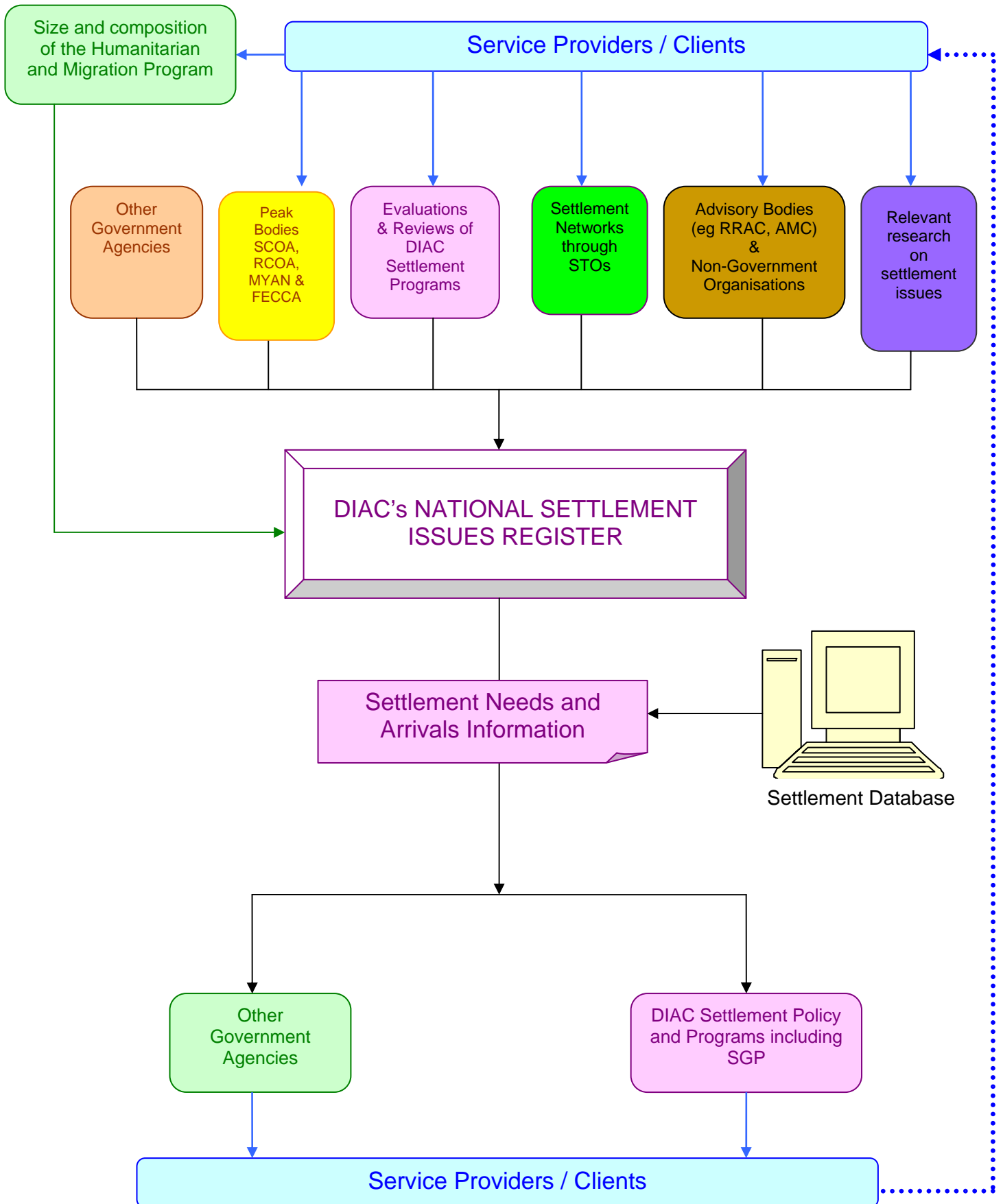
Once the Programs have been approved by Government, planning for the settlement services that will be required can be undertaken.

The planning framework for settlement services constitutes an ongoing cycle of:

1. identification and analysis of ongoing, emerging and predicted settlement issues and needs being encountered by Target Group arrivals;
2. settlement issues and needs recorded in the department's National Settlement Issues Register; and
3. referral of issues to ensure that they are effectively addressed.

This cycle is depicted in the following Flowchart and more detail is provided below on each of the steps.

Settlement Services PLANNING Flowchart



Step 1 - Identification and analysis of settlement needs

The success of settlement services planning relies on timely and effective communication between settlement stakeholders on a range of issues.

Clients' settlement needs is the starting point for considering funding for services with a focus on furthering the skills of vulnerable migrants in order to become self reliant.

DIAC collects information on settlement needs through an extensive consultation processes as follows:

Settlement Networks – State and Territory Offices

- At the state/territory level, DIAC collects information about existing and emerging settlement needs, the availability and effectiveness of services to meet those needs and also on best practice initiatives to address issues, through their ongoing liaison with settlement networks.
- Settlement networks vary across jurisdictions depending on the size and structure of the relevant DIAC Office's, state/territory government liaison and planning mechanisms, and desire of other settlement stakeholders for engagement with DIAC. The extent of consultations that may occur between DIAC and stakeholders may vary across jurisdictions depending on stakeholders identified priorities and needs.
- Settlement networks generally include state/territory government and service agencies, local governments (particularly in areas receiving significant levels of migration), local branches of Commonwealth agencies, settlement service providers, relevant community organisations, migrant and refugee communities, employers and business groups.

Peak Bodies

- DIAC has several formal agreements in place with a number of peak bodies and reference groups representing the settlement sector. These organisations play advocacy roles on behalf of the sector for the delivery of services, support dialogue within the settlement sector and engage with DIAC to contribute to settlement policy and programs, taking into account the views and experiences of their membership.

- Peak bodies involved in consultations with DIAC about settlement needs include:
 - *Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA)*: the national peak body representing over 50 migrant and refugee settlement agencies across Australia. SCOA brings settlement service providers together at a national level in order to create cohesion amongst members, and improve collaborative and strategic planning processes for the settlement sector.
 - *Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA)*: the national umbrella body for more than 149 organisations and 560 individual members, working with refugees and asylum seekers. RCOA is actively involved in new research, policy development, information and representation on refugee issues.
 - *Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA)*: the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. FECCA provides advocacy, develops policy and promotes issues on behalf of their constituency to government and the broader community. FECCA supports multiculturalism, community harmony, social justice and the rejection of all forms of discrimination and racism.
 - *Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN)*: a peak advisory body providing a nationally coordinated approach to facilitating and improving service delivery for multicultural youth through advocacy.

Other Government Agencies

- Information is collected via formal and informal liaison with a number of mainstream Commonwealth government agencies who provide services to all Australians including the Settlement Services Target Group.
- DIAC organises and chairs quarterly, interagency meetings between DIAC, the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).
- DIAC also participates in Interdepartmental Committees (IDCs) at the Commonwealth level to progress issues requiring cross portfolio coordination or policy development. These cover a range of topics including for example whole-of-government social policy issues through the Secretaries Committee on Social Policy (SCoSP), Homelessness Reforms through the Homelessness Delivery Review Board and Homelessness Delivery Network, Mental health through the APS 200 group, Not-for-profit Sector Reforms and improving education and employment outcomes for refugees and other vulnerable migrants and their children.

Reference Groups and Non-Government Organisations

- *Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council (RRAC)*: an expert reference group on refugee and humanitarian settlement matters. RRAC advises the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services on matters relating to the settlement of migrants and humanitarian entrants. In doing so, RRAC improves the information flow on settlement policy between the Government and the community sector.
- *Australian Multicultural Council (AMC)*: advises the Government on matters relating to multicultural affairs, seeks to strengthen access and equity, undertakes research around multicultural policy, assists with cultural diversity celebrations and Harmony Day activities and implementation of the 'People of Australia Ambassadors' Program.

Non Government Sector

- DIAC holds regular dialogues with non-government organisations (NGOs) including community organisations, volunteers and peak councils/bodies.

DIAC Settlement and Multicultural Programs

- Information on settlement needs is also identified through analysis of evaluation reports of the suite of DIAC settlement programs.

Research Papers

- Settlement issues raised in relevant research conducted by DIAC and other organisations is also identified and analysed.

Step 2 - National Settlement Issues Register

At the centre of planning for settlement services is the documentation of the needs of DIAC's clients. These needs are captured and documented in the Department's National Settlement Issues Register. The register captures information by regions in each state and territory.

This register provides the Department with a sound evidence base on settlement issues. The information contained in the register is used to develop a summary of settlement needs which is included at Section 2 of the SGP Application booklet.

The information provided on settlement needs is also informed by data from DIAC's Settlement Database. The Settlement Database contains records of permanent arrivals and residence grants, including data on country of birth, age, sex, migration category, main language, English proficiency, location of residence and other variables.

Step 3 - Referral of issues to ensure that they are effectively addressed.

The information on settlement needs in Section 2 of the SGP Application booklet is used by SGP grants assessors to prioritise potential projects.

Outstanding settlement issues are referred to the relevant departmental settlement policy and program areas for advice and action as appropriate.

Where outstanding settlement issues are the responsibility of other mainstream agencies, referrals of these settlement issues are brought to the attention of these agencies.