

Survey and Analysis
of the

Regional Sponsored
Migration Scheme

Subclass

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This report was prepared by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs on behalf of the Joint Commonwealth, State and Territory Research Advisory Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objectives of the survey

The survey was undertaken in response to the findings of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration (JSCM) report “New Faces, New Places”, September 2001. In its report, the JSCM expressed some concerns about the operation of the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) and made the following recommendation:

“...a follow-up survey of employees’ and employers’ performance should be conducted in 2003 to determine whether successful migrants were remaining in regional areas as intended.”

The objectives of the survey therefore were to assess how well the RSMS had performed against a number of indicators, the most important being:

- The proportion of migrants who stay in regional areas and are therefore continuing to contribute their skills to the local economy;
- The reasons why some RSMS migrants leave regional areas;
- Employer satisfaction with RSMS outcomes and the RSMS process; and
- Labour market outcomes, income, satisfaction and community participation.

Survey description

The survey of 500 RSMS Primary Applicants (PAs) and their employers was conducted between May and August 2004. The scope of the survey was all PAs who had been granted an RSMS visa between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2003. Thus it included people who had fulfilled their two year RSMS employer commitments and people who still had more time to go on their contract.

The survey contained 88 questions and used Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) to collect the information from PAs.

Employers of these PAs were given a shorter mail-back survey of 10 questions. The main purpose of this part of the survey was to elicit employer satisfaction with the scheme and to identify ways in which they felt the scheme could be improved.

The main topics covered by the survey, and of this report, were as follows:

- Migrant Demographics;
- Employer Relationships;
- Mobility;
- Migrant Satisfaction;
- Labour Market Outcomes;
- Income;
- Community Interactions; and
- English Language Skills.

Before the survey data was analysed in depth it was weighted to help account for biases caused by non-response. For example, people who had been in Australia longer were more difficult to track down than recent arrivals, and were therefore weighted more heavily in the sample.

Description of the RSMS visa

The RSMS is a state-specific migration mechanism that was established in 1995-96 to allow employers in regional or low population growth areas of Australia to fill skilled positions that they were unable to fill from the local labour market.

The scheme is available to all employers in all areas of Australia except Perth, Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle, Melbourne, Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

For the RSMS application to be approved, the skilled position must be for a full-time job of at least two years duration.

Size of the RSMS

Since its introduction in 1996 to the end of 2004/05 more than 11,000 visas have been granted under the scheme.

In 2004/05 more than 3,100 RSMS visas were granted. Most of these migrants went either to South Australia (30%), Queensland (20%) or Western Australia (16%). The remaining migrants went to New South Wales (11%), Victoria (9%), ACT (6%), Tasmania (4%) and the Northern Territory (3%).

Main survey findings

Employer satisfaction

Most employers were very satisfied with their outcomes from the RSMS. When asked to rate these outcomes on a scale of 1 to 10, over 80% of employers gave a rating of 8 or better. Only 2% of employers rated the scheme's outcomes worse than a 5.

Around 35% of employers identified reduced paper work and processing times as the main way the RSMS scheme could be improved. Another 40% of employers however did not think any improvements were required to the running of the RSMS.

Migrant satisfaction and settlement

The survey convincingly showed that RSMS migrants were satisfied with the scheme and were settling well in Australia.

More than 90% of those surveyed said the scheme met their expectations. In addition, almost everyone said that:

- Migrating to Australia was the correct decision (98%);
- They were made to feel welcome in Australia (96%);
- They had participated in at least 1 community activity since arrival (93%).

Lifestyle considerations such as a relaxed atmosphere, friendly people and a lack of crowds were the main things people liked about where they were living.

Mobility

The survey showed that the majority of RSMS migrants were staying in the regions and staying with their original employer. For instance:

- 91% of RSMS PAs were living in the same region as their RSMS employer and 86% intended to still be living in the same region in 12 months time;
- 83% still worked for their original RSMS employer. Of the remaining 17%, around three-quarters still lived in the same region as the RSMS employer.

Those migrants who had left their RSMS employer cited a better job elsewhere (35%), a lack of job satisfaction (25%) and being retrenched or laid off (20%) as their main reasons for leaving.

Employment and income

As well as staying in the regions, those surveyed also had good employment and income outcomes and were therefore contributing strongly to the local economy. For example:

- The unemployment rate for PAs was less than 1% and the participation rate was virtually 100%.
- 92% of those surveyed used their qualifications often or very often in their job.
- The median income of PAs was \$926 per week. This was significantly higher in real terms than the income of Independent PAs surveyed in the second wave of the second cohort of the LSIA.

INTRODUCTION

The Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) is a state-specific migration mechanism that allows employers in regional or low population growth areas of Australia to fill skilled positions that they are unable to fill from the local labour market. The scheme is available to all employers in all areas of Australia except Perth, Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle, Melbourne, Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

For the RSMS application to be approved, the skilled position must be for a full-time job of at least two years duration¹.

Since being introduced in 1995/96, more than 8,000 visas have been granted under the RSMS. In 2003/04 more than 2,200 RSMS visas were granted.

Report genesis

Although the scheme has been established almost 10 years and is growing in popularity there has been little analysis of how well the scheme is working.

This was recognised by the Joint Standing Committee on Migration (JSCM) in its report *New faces, new places – a review of State-specific Migration Mechanisms*, September 2001.

In this report the JSCM recommended that:

“...a follow-up survey of employees’ and employers’ performance should be conducted in 2003 to determine whether successful migrants were remaining in regional areas as intended.”

This report is a summary of the findings from this survey.

Aims of the report

The main aim of the report is to achieve a better appreciation of how well the RSMS has performed against a number of indicators, the most important being:

- The proportion of migrants who stay in regional areas and are therefore continuing to contribute their skills to the local economy.
- The reasons why some RSMS migrants stay and some leave the regions to which they first come
- labour market outcomes, income, satisfaction and community participation.

¹ A more detailed description of RSMS requirements is given at attachment A.

Sources of information

Information in this report is based on a survey conducted around May-August 2004 of 500 RSMS Primary Applicants (PAs) and their employers. The scope of this survey was all PAs who had been granted an RSMS visa between 1 Jan 2000 and 31 Dec 2003. Thus it includes people who had fulfilled their RSMS employer commitments and people who still had more time to go on their contract. Also, as RSMS applicants can apply onshore, some of the PAs being interviewed had been in Australia for up to 6 years.

Survey description

The survey of Primary Applicants contained 88 questions and used Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) techniques to collect the information.

Employers of these Primary Applicants were given a shorter mail back survey of 10 questions. The main purpose of this part of the survey was to elicit employer satisfaction with the scheme and to identify ways in which they felt the scheme could be improved.

The main topics covered by the survey, and of this report, were as follows:

- Migrant Demographics
- Employer Relationships
- Mobility
- Migrant Satisfaction
- Labour Market Outcomes
- Income
- Community Interactions
- English Language Skills

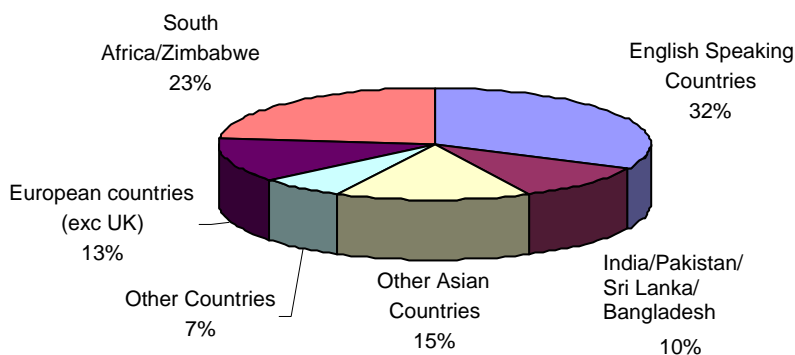
Before the survey data was analysed in depth it was weighted to help account for biases caused by non-response. For example, people who had been in Australia for longer were more difficult to track down than recent arrivals, and were therefore weighted more heavily in the sample.

1. MIGRANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Where migrants came from

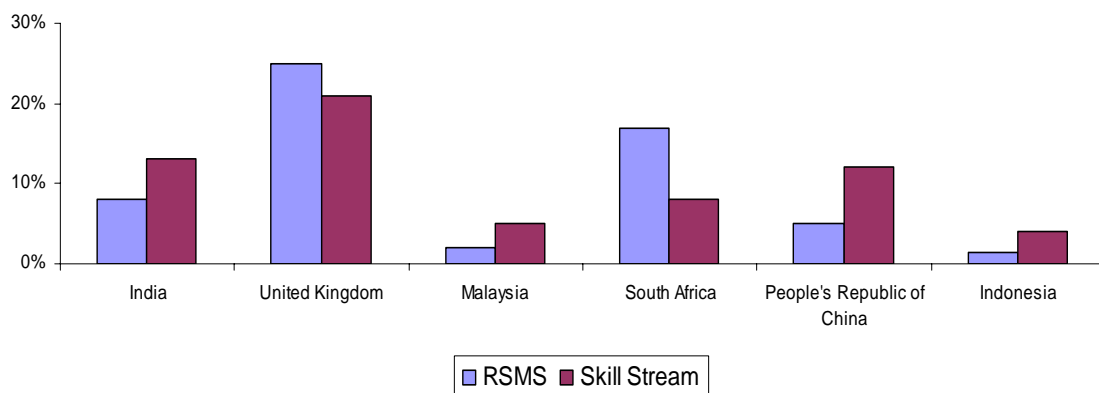
Figure 1.1 shows that the Mainly English Speaking countries² accounted for almost a third of RSMS migrants. A further 23% of RSMS migrants came from either South Africa or Zimbabwe. Only about a quarter of migrants came from Asian countries.

Fig 1.1 : Birthplace regions for Primary Applicants



As figure 1.2 shows, migrants from Asian countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia and the People's Republic of China, were under-represented among RSMS migrants when compared with skill stream migrants in general³.

**Fig 1.2 : Birthplace Comparisons
RSMS versus Skill Stream**



² Comprising UK, Canada, USA and New Zealand – with most (around three-quarters) coming from the UK

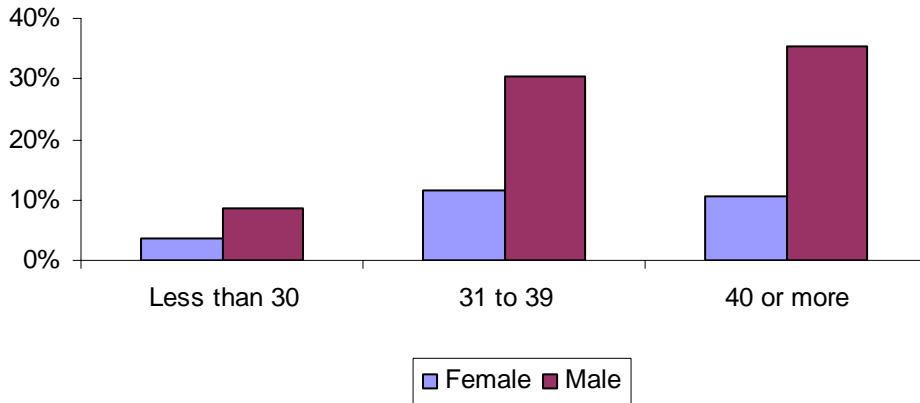
³ Source : Population Flows – Immigration Aspects 2003-04 edition

Age : Gender

Around three-quarters of RSMS Primary Applicants were male. Males were also slightly older than females with an average age of 40 compared with 38 for females.

Figure 1.3 shows that almost half (46%) of Primary Applicants were aged 40 or over. Only 13% were aged less than 30.

Fig 1.3 : Age and Gender Distribution of RSMS migrants

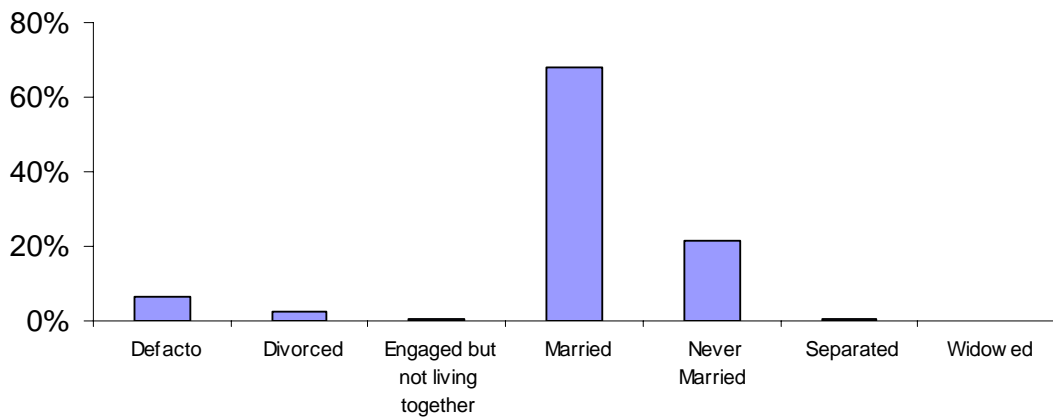


Marital Status

Three quarters of RSMS Primary Applicants were either married or in a defacto relationship. Just over a fifth had never been married.

Of those that were married or in a defacto relationship, 96% were living with their spouse and 68% had children living with them.

Fig 1.4 : Marital status of RSMS Primary Applicants



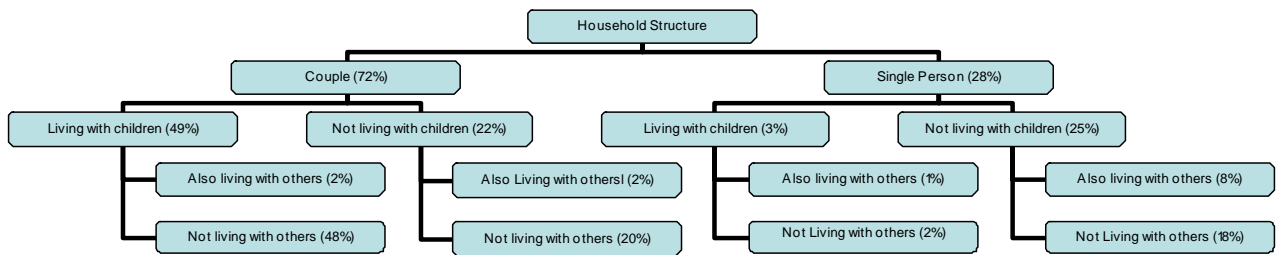
Household characteristics

For RSMS migrants the average household size was 3.0 persons and the average size of the migrating unit was 2.5 persons.

Only about 1 in 8 RSMS households contained people who were not a part of the migrating unit – in comparison 40% of SDAS households contained people from outside the migrating unit.

Figure 1.5 below shows that around half of the RSMS households comprised a Primary Applicant, their spouse and their children. A significant number - about 1 in 5 Primary Applicants - lived alone.

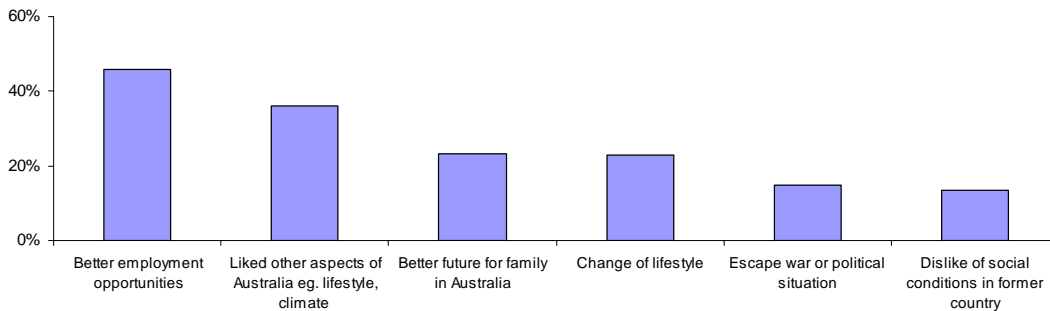
Fig 1.5: Breakdown of RSMS Household Structure



Reasons for migration

Given that RSMS migrants are intended to fill skill shortages, it was not surprising that almost half (46%) of them said that employment considerations were the main reason for migrating to Australia. Other common reasons for migration were Australia’s climate and lifestyle (36%), a better future for their family (23%) and a change of lifestyle (23%).

Fig 1.6 : Main Reasons for migration



Multiple responses were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

A significant number of Primary Applicants identified a dislike of the social or political conditions in their former home country. Table 1.1 below shows that people from South Africa or Zimbabwe were most likely to report these reasons for migration.

Preliminary Analysis of the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme Subclass

Other interesting variations were a high proportion of migrants from European and English speaking countries coming here for lifestyle reasons and a relatively large number of migrants from Asian countries coming to Australia for educational opportunities.

Table 1.1 Reasons for Migration By Region

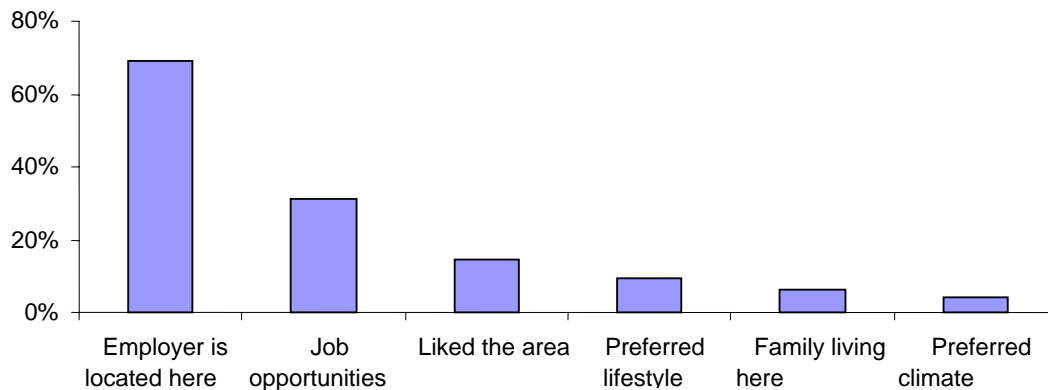
	English Speaking Countries	India and Surrounds	Other Asian Countries	Other Countries	European countries (exc UK)	South Africa/ Zimbabwe
Better employment opportunities	51%	59%	55%	53%	45%	26%
Liked other aspects of Australia eg. lifestyle, climate	48%	40%	31%	34%	44%	18%
Better future for family in Australia	14%	23%	23%	39%	14%	37%
Change of lifestyle	34%	10%	18%	21%	36%	11%
Escape war or political situation	4%	4%	1%	26%	0%	48%
Dislike of social conditions in former country	3%	10%	1%	27%	1%	39%
Education opportunities	2%	11%	17%	23%	3%	9%

Multiple responses were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

Reasons for living in current area

Almost 70% of respondents lived in their current city or town because their employer was located there, another 30% were living there because of job opportunities.

Fig 1.7 : Reasons for living in current city/town



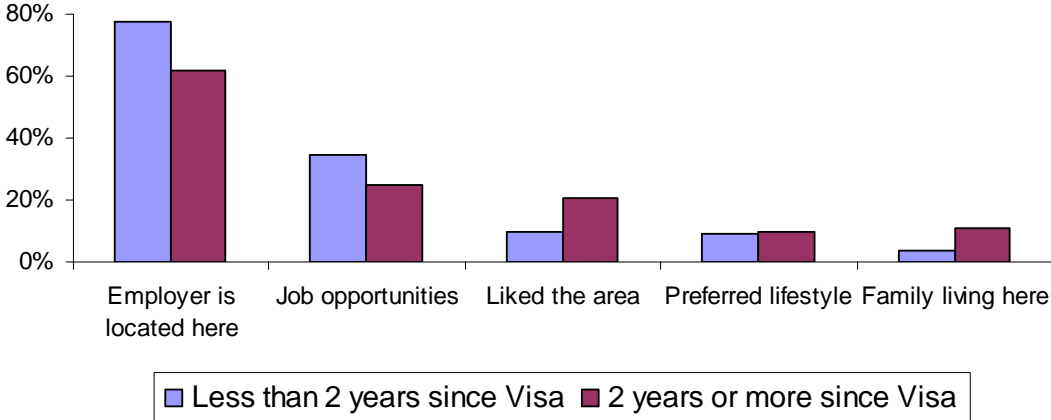
Multiple responses were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

For migrants who were still employed in their original job, the reasons for living in the current area were compared between :

- those people who had fulfilled their RSMS employment obligations and were therefore free to move elsewhere and ;
- those who had been with their RSMS employer for less than 2 years.

Figure 1.8 shows that those 'voluntarily' living in the area are less likely to say they live there for job related reasons and are more likely to say they live in the region because they like it.

Fig 1.8 : Reasons for living in current city/town - by time since Visa



Multiple responses were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

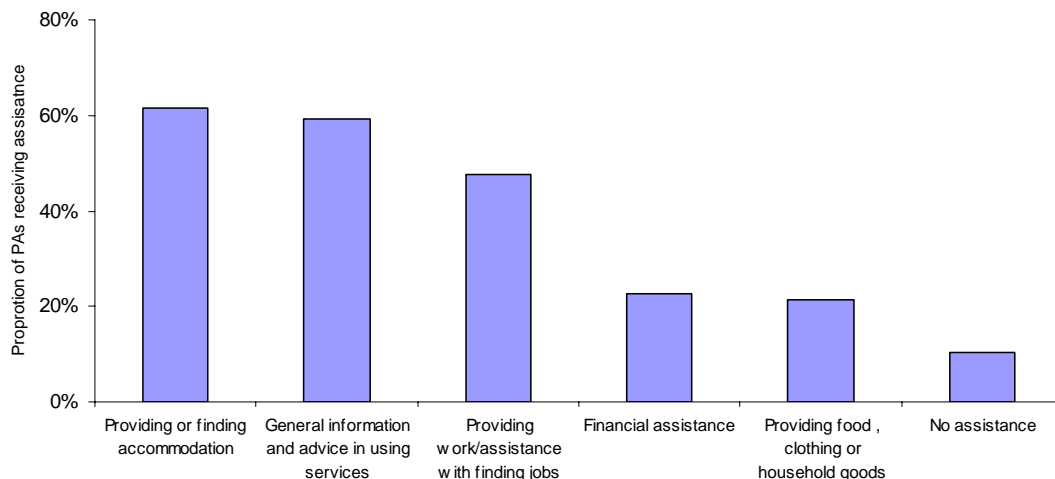
2. EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIPS

Employer assistance

It is in the employer’s interest to provide settlement assistance to RSMS migrants. A happier migrant will be more productive and more likely to stay in the region. In the RSMS survey, Primary Applicants were asked to describe the assistance that they received in their first Australian job and to assess the usefulness of the assistance. By comparing the period of time covered by this first job with the date permanent residence was granted, it is possible to tell if jobs were with an RSMS employer or not. It is these RSMS jobs that are analysed in this section.

Overall, 90% of Primary Applicants received some form of assistance from their RSMS employer. Figure 2.1 shows that “help with accommodation” and “general information/advice” were the most common forms of assistance, with around 60% of PAs receiving help in each of these ways.

Fig 2.1 : Types of assistance provided



Multiple responses were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

Around two-thirds of those Primary Applicants who received assistance described the assistance as “very helpful”; a further 24% said the assistance was “helpful”. Only 3% said the assistance was “unhelpful”.

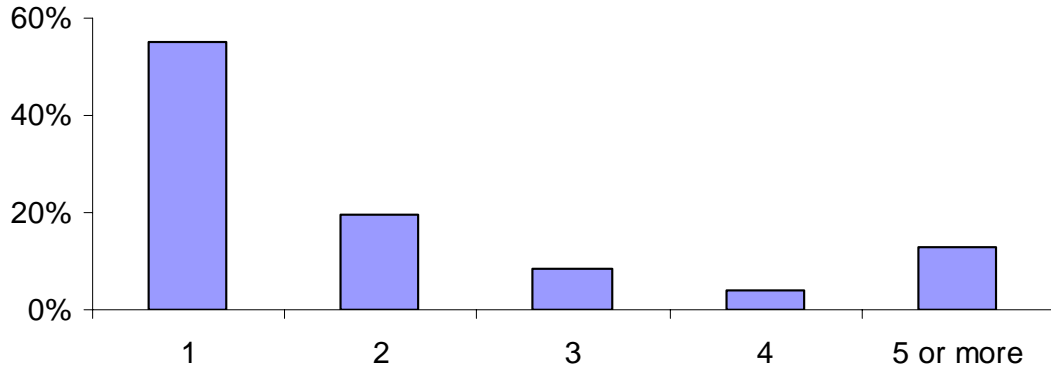
Employer use of the RSMS

As part of the survey, the employers of RSMS migrants were approached to provide their views on the RSMS scheme. Completed questionnaires were received from 224 employers.⁴ Results of the employer analysis have not been weighted.

⁴ These employers employed 264 of the 507 RSMS employees in the sample. This is a good rate of response as DIMIA systems could provide employer name and address information for only two-thirds of employees.

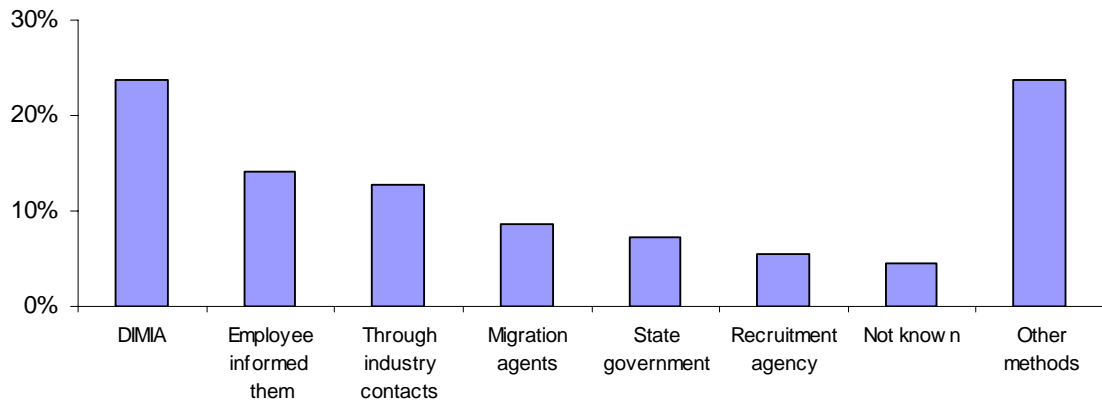
Figure 2.2 shows that while more than half of the employers surveyed had sponsored only one RSMS migrant, around 1 in 8 had employed 5 or more RSMS migrants.

Fig 2.2 Number of RSMS migrants sponsored



In figure 2.3 it can be seen that although employers learnt about the RSMS in a wide range of different ways, no single method was dominant.

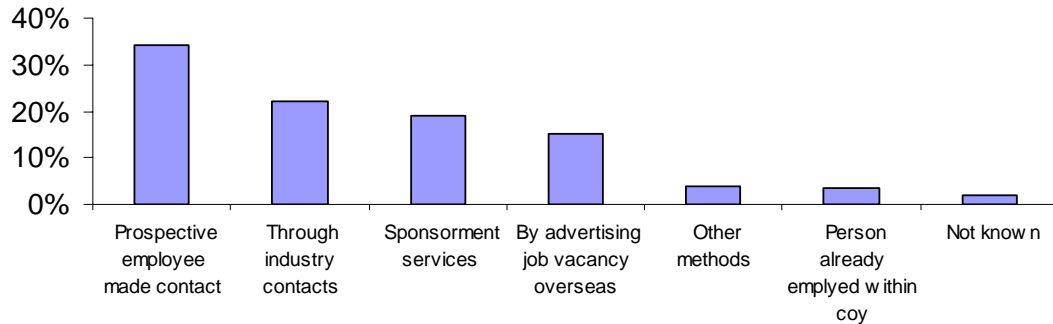
Fig 2.3 : How employer found out about RSMS



Multiple responses were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

Employers found their RSMS employees mainly by prospective employees making contact with their organisation (34%), industry contacts (22%) and sponsorship services (15%).

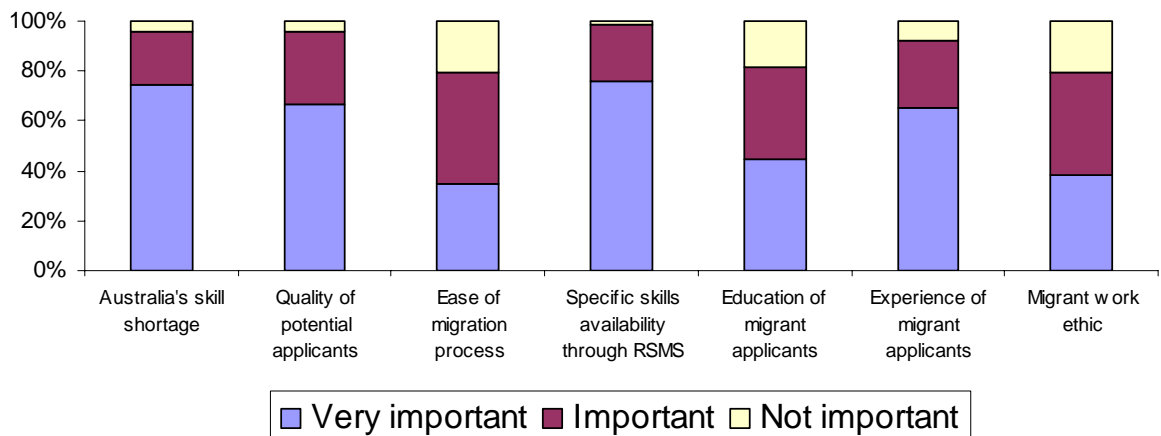
Fig 2.4 : How RSMS employee found



An employer can be attracted to the RSMS for a variety of reasons. In the survey, employers were asked to say how important factors such as Australia’s skill shortage, the quality of potential applicants and the ease of the migration process were in influencing their decision to become involved in the RSMS.

As can be seen from figure 2.5 the employers surveyed said that the most persuasive factors were a shortage of local skills and a belief that the RSMS can provide suitably qualified migrants to address these skill shortages. In relative terms, employers placed less importance on a quick and easy migration process or the work ethic of migrants.

Fig 2.5 : Factors influencing involvement in regional migration - relative importance

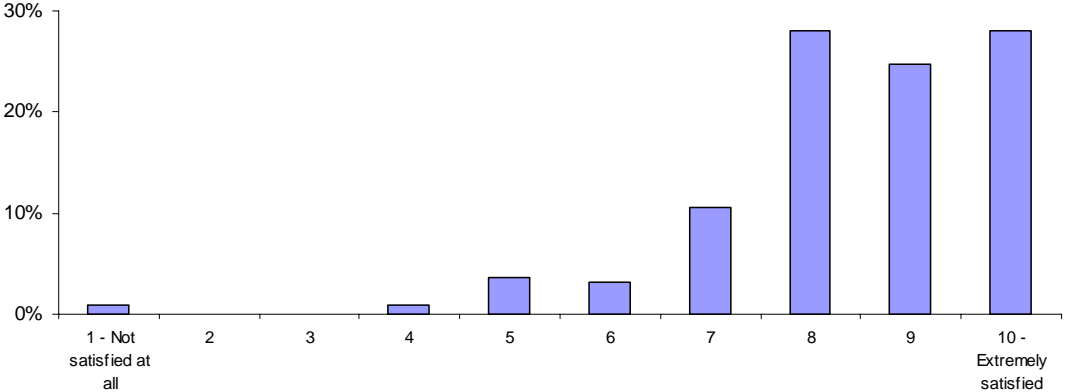


Employer attitudes to the RSMS

Employers were asked to use a 10 point scale to rate their satisfaction with the outcomes of the RSMS. A “10” on this scale meant the employer was extremely satisfied with the RSMS outcomes whereas a “1” meant that they were extremely dissatisfied.

Figure 2.6 shows that most employers were more than satisfied with the RSMS scheme. Over 80% of employers rated the scheme an “8” or above and only 2% of employers rated the scheme worse than a “5”.

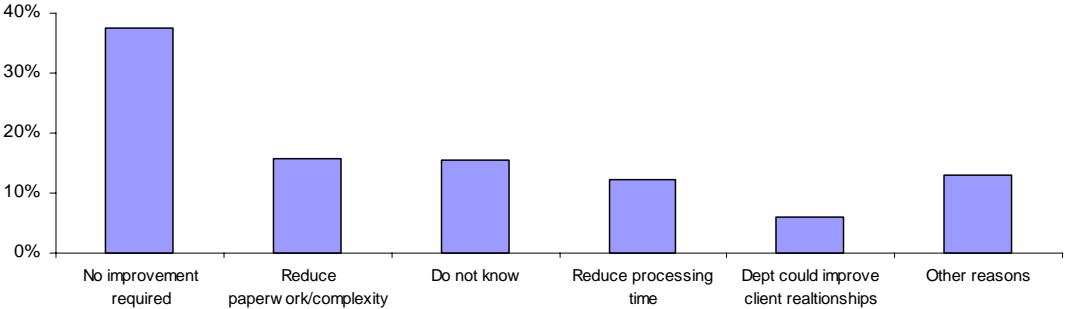
Fig 2.6 : Employer satisfaction with RSMS outcomes



While employees may be very happy with the *outcomes* of the RSMS they may still have valid concerns about the RSMS *process*. For this reason, employers were also asked to identify ways in which the RSMS could be improved.

In this regard, employers seem fairly satisfied with the way that the RSMS is being run. Almost 40% said that no improvement was required to the RSMS and a further 15% could not think of any way that the scheme could be improved. The inter-related issues of reducing paper work and reducing long processing times were identified as a cause for concern by about 35% of employers in total.

Fig 2.7 : Ways that employers think the RSMS could be improved



Multiple responses were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

3. MOBILITY

Staying in Designated Area

At the time of interview, 91% of Primary Applicants were living in designated areas. Figure 3.1 shows how these migrants were distributed across the various states and territories.

Figure 3.1: Location of RSMS migrants at the time of the survey

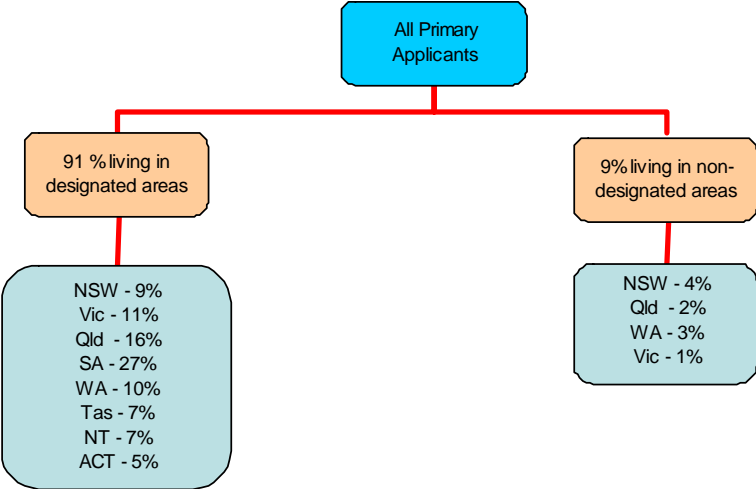
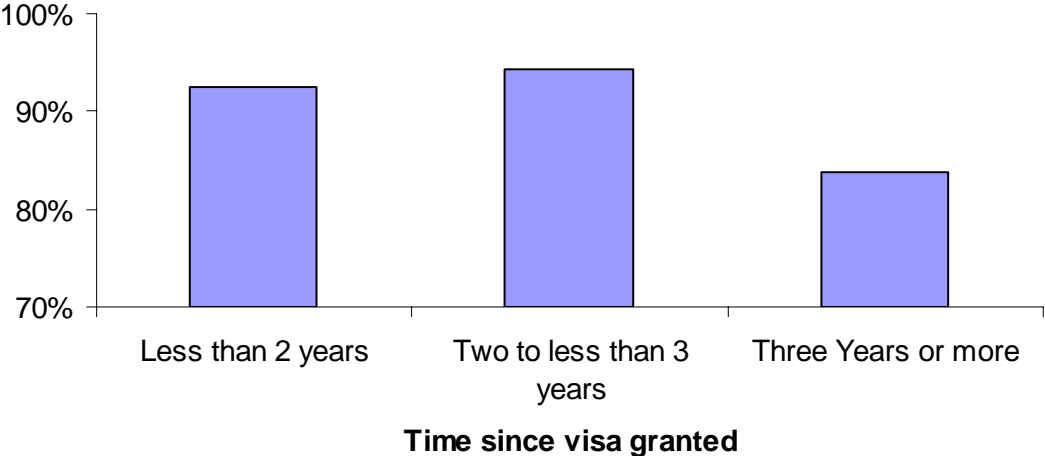


Figure 3.2 shows that over time, there is a slight drift of migrants from designated areas to non-designated areas. For instance, migrants that have had permanent residence for 3 years or more, and as a consequence have completed their employment obligations, are slightly less likely to be living in a designated area than other migrants.

Fig 3.2 : Proportion living in designated areas over time



Movement intentions

Migrants were also asked if they intended to move to another region of Australia in the next twelve months. Among those currently living in designated areas, around 8% of migrants said they intended to move. Only 2% of migrants living in non-designated areas expressed this intention.

Table 3.1 provides some insights into where people want to move and where people want to leave.

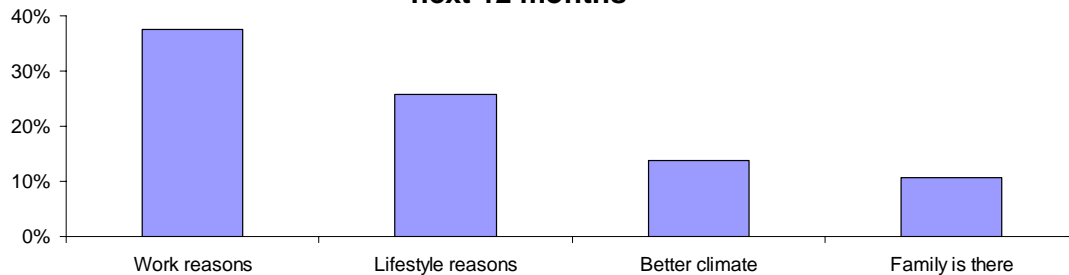
Table 3.1 : Current and Proposed State of residence, persons intending to move within 12 months

State/Territory	% of movers currently living here	% of movers living here in 12 months
NSW	20%	14%
Vic	6%	10%
Qld	18%	45%
SA	23%	9%
WA	13%	14%
Tas	2%	3%
NT	13%	6%
ACT	6%	0%

What this table shows is that almost half of those who intend to change location, want to either move to Queensland or move within Queensland. What is also interesting is the relatively higher numbers of people that want to move from South Australia or the Northern Territory compared with the number of people that intend to move into these areas.

Work (38%) and lifestyle (26%) dominate the reasons why people want to move (figure 3.3)

Fig 3.3 : Reasons for moving, Persons intending to move in next 12 months



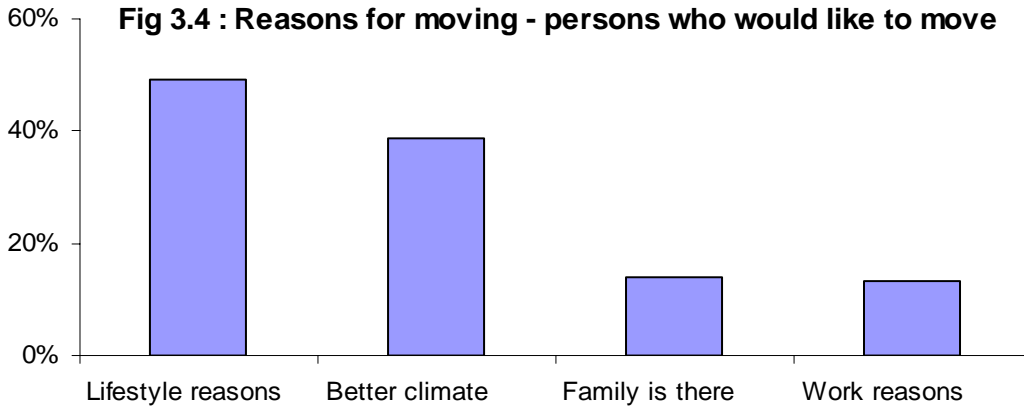
Multiple response were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

Movement preferences

Similarly, all migrants were also asked if they would prefer to live in another part of Australia. Again, a slightly higher proportion of migrants living in designated areas (32%) preferred to live elsewhere compared with migrants living in non-designated areas (25%).

Overwhelmingly, the places they preferred to live were Queensland (37%) and Western Australia (23%).

These migrants were more likely to give lifestyle and climate as reasons for moving than people who seriously intended to move in the next 12 months (figure 3.4).



Multiple response were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

Changing job: Changing region

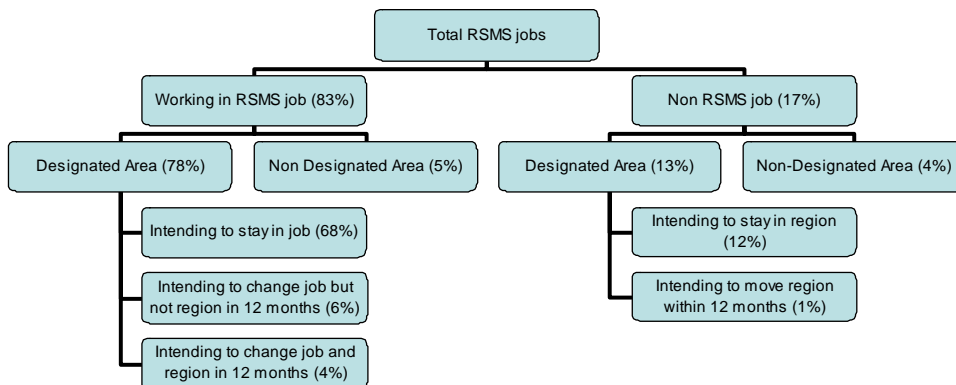
As mentioned in the introduction, an important aim of the RSMS survey was to find out how many skilled migrants stay in the regions after they have completed their employer contract. If a migrant chooses to stay in a region after completing their RSMS job then the RSMS scheme will have provided a longer term benefit through migrants continuing to contribute their skills to the local economy, regardless of whether they change employer.

In the RSMS survey, questions were asked to find out if people had changed jobs with their employer since arrival, whether they intended to change jobs or regions within the next 12 months.

The following hierarchy chart uses this information to show the following –

- 91% are still *living* in a designated area and 86% still intend to be living in the same designated area in 12 months time.
- 83% are *working* for their RSMS employer and 78% are working for their RSMS employer and living in a designated area.
- Of the 17% that were not working for their RSMS employer – most (around three-quarters) are still living in a designated area.

Fig 3.5: Occupational and Regional Mobility



Preliminary Analysis of the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme Subclass

Further analysis of those that had left their RSMS employers, showed the main reasons for leaving the job were because they:

- Got a better job (35%)
- Were not satisfied with the job (25%)
- Had been retrenched or laid off (20%)

Those still with their employer, but intending to leave within the next twelve months had similar motivations for leaving, i.e.:

- Intend to get a better job (32%)
- Not satisfied with the job (28%)
- Moving to another area (14%)

4. MIGRANT SATISFACTION

The RSMS survey contained a number of measures to evaluate a migrant’s satisfaction.

These measures were :

- Whether migrating to Australia was correct decision
- Whether the RSMS scheme met their expectations
- Whether they were made to feel welcome
- What more could have been done to help them settle in the region
- What they like and dislike about their region

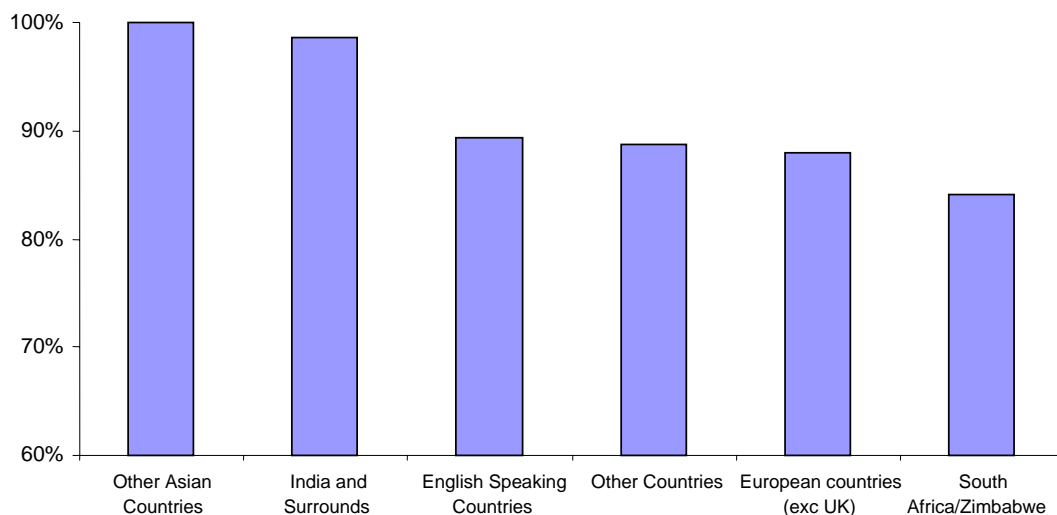
Migration decision

Reassuringly, almost all migrants (98%) said that migrating to Australia was the correct decision. This high level of satisfaction was equally evident for males and females and was consistently high regardless of people’s region of origin.

Satisfaction with the RSMS scheme

Overall, 91% of Primary Applicants said the scheme met their expectations. Virtually all migrants from India and other Asian countries were satisfied with the RSMS. Those from South Africa/Zimbabwe were the least satisfied.

Fig 4.1: Proportion satisfied with RSMS scheme



The main reasons for dissatisfaction with the scheme were an application process that was too long and complex (5% of all respondents) and problems with the job (2% of all respondents).

Were RSMS migrants made to feel welcome?

Almost everyone (96%) said that they were made to feel welcome in Australia when they first settled. As with the SDAS scheme there was a correlation between being made to feel welcome and the Primary Applicant’s assessment of the scheme. For instance, only 3% of people who said the RSMS scheme met their expectations said they weren’t made welcome when they came to Australia. In comparison, 10% of those who said the RSMS scheme did not meet their expectations also reported that they were not made to feel welcome when they came to Australia.

What more could have been done to help people settle in the region?

All survey respondents, were asked if additional things could have been done to help them settle when they first arrived in Australia. The results of this question are summarised in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 : Additional things that would have helped with settlement

Nothing	68%
More information/assistance on available services	12%
Less bureaucracy/more information on rules and regulations	6%
More social acceptance/friendliness	3%
More housing assistance	2%
More employment assistance	2%
Other	9%

Multiple response were allowed to this question - so figures when totalled exceed 100%

As can be seen, around two-thirds of migrants felt that there was no further settlement assistance required. A significant number of migrants felt that additional information on services such as banking, healthcare and taxation or access to migrant networks would have helped them with settlement.

Relatively few migrants felt that Australians were unfriendly or not accepting.

What people liked about their City/Town

RSMS respondents were asked to state what they liked about their current city or town.

Table 4.2 shows that a quiet, relaxed atmosphere, the Australian lifestyle and the Australian people were the things most appreciated by respondents about their current town or city. Economic factors were ranked much lower.

It should be noted however that this is a list of things people liked about their local area. The question “What do you like about *Australia* “ would produce a different set of responses.

What people disliked about their City/Town

People had a lot less to say when it came to what they dislike about their city/town (Table 4.3). In fact 38% said they disliked nothing about where they were living. Compared with the SDAS survey a relatively high number of RSMS respondents disliked the quietness or remoteness of where they were living.

Table 4.2: Top 10 Things liked about City/town

Thing Liked	Percent of Respondents
Relaxed atmosphere	35%
Not crowded or overpopulated	31%
Lifestyle/way of life/outdoor lifestyle	28%
The people/caring friendly people/hospitable	27%
Environment/peaceful environment	26%
Weather/climate	21%
Quality of life/better life for family	16%
Clean environment/cleanliness no pollution	13%
Geography of country/beautiful/scenery/places visit	13%
Places accessible/ease of getting around	9%
<i>Frequency of Economic Factors</i>	
Cost of living/standard of living	6%
A good job/employment/job opportunities	4%
More opportunities/better prospects	2%
Economic conditions (nfi)	0%

Note - people could nominate more than 1 thing they liked, hence the sum of percentages will exceed 100%

Table 4.3: Top 10 Things disliked about City/town

Thing Disliked	Percent of Respondents
Nothing	38%
Too isolated/remote	16%
Weather/climate	13%
Too quiet/pace of life too slow	9%
Quality & availability of goods/services	4%
Provision of goods and services	3%
High unemployment/No jobs	3%
Too few people	3%
Transport system e.g public transport	3%
Lack of culture	3%

Note - people could nominate more than 1 thing they disliked, hence the sum of percentages will exceed 100%

5. LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES

In this section, the following indicators of labour markets success are discussed:

- Unemployment and participation rates
- Use of qualifications in job
- Job satisfaction
- Occupational skill
- Hours worked

Unemployment and participation rates

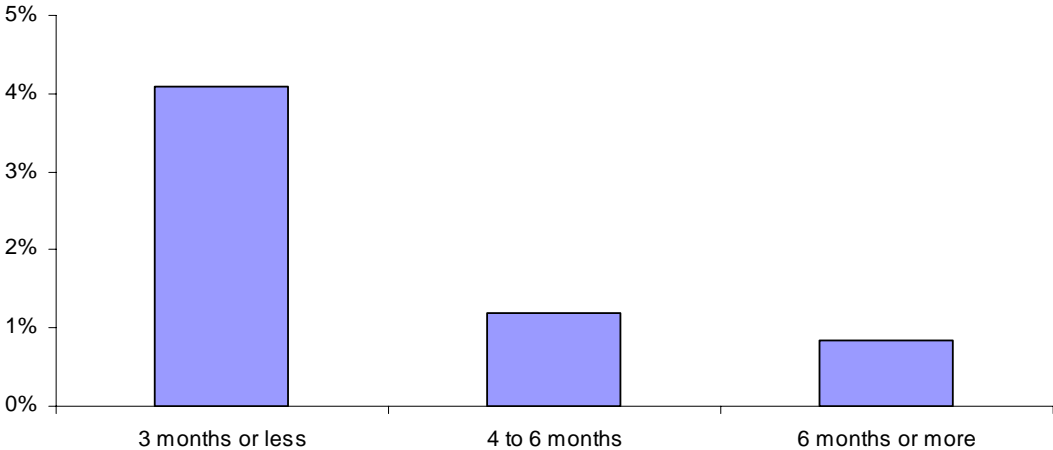
The unemployment rate for RSMS Primary Applicants was extraordinarily low (only 1 person out of more than 500 surveyed) and the Participation rate was extraordinarily high (only 1 person was not in the labour force).

Furthermore, since arrival:

- Everyone surveyed had been employed at one time or another.
- Only 6% had experienced any spells of unemployment.

Figure 5.1 shows that among the 6% that had experienced unemployment, most had found work quickly. For example, only a third of these people had been unemployed for more than 3 months in total.

Fig 5.1: Total time unemployed since arrival



Of the small number who had been unemployed at some time since arrival, the main difficulties faced when finding work were a lack of Australian experience (22%) and a lack of jobs (10%). A large number (31%) said they had not experienced any problems.

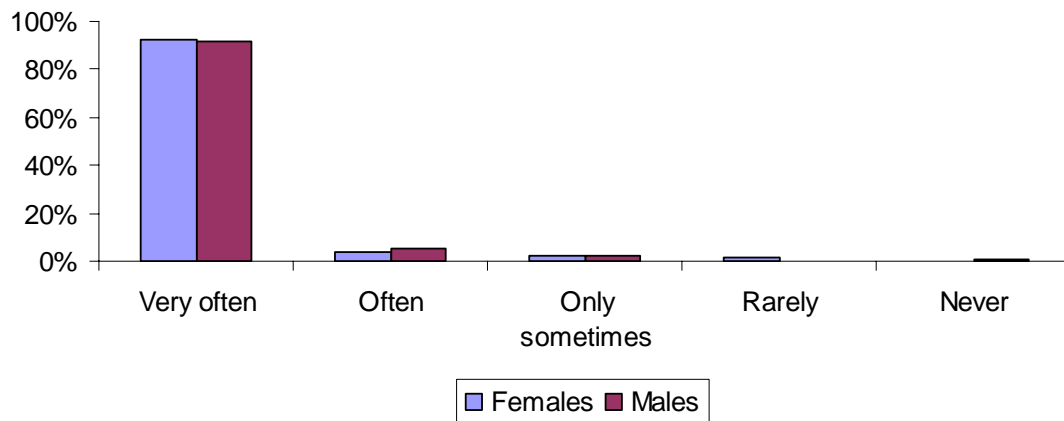
Unlike the SDAS survey no-one cited a lack of recognition of overseas qualifications.

Use of qualifications in job

Figure 5.3 shows that almost all RSMS migrants are working in jobs that make extensive use of their skills and qualifications. Some 92% of those surveyed said they used their qualifications very often in their current job and a total of only 3% said they used their qualifications “only sometimes”, “rarely” or “never”.

Figure 5.3 also shows that there is little variation between gender when it comes to the use of qualifications in the workplace.

Fig 5.3 : Use of qualifications by gender

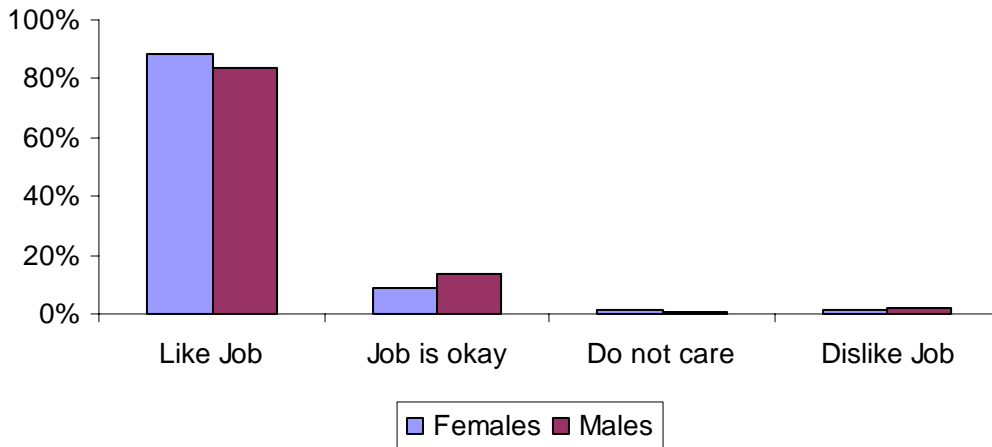


Job satisfaction

With so many respondents working in jobs that complement their skills and qualifications, it would be expected that levels of job satisfaction would also be high. This is indeed the case.

Figure 5.4 shows that more than 80% of male and female RSMS migrants like what they are doing, a further 13% overall described their job as “okay”. Only 2% of respondents actually disliked their job.

Fig 5.4 : Attitudes to job by gender



Occupation

Respondents were asked to state the job title and duties of their current Australian job and the job they last held in their former home country. From figure 5.5 it is apparent that most RSMS migrants⁵, particularly those in professional fields, were working in Australia in a job that is at a similar skill level to the job they held overseas.

Fig 5.5 : Percent Australian jobs at same occupational level as job in former country



Given the high levels of job satisfaction among respondents plus the extensive use of skills and qualifications in the job, it is not surprising to find that 95% of those surveyed said that they were working in their preferred occupation.

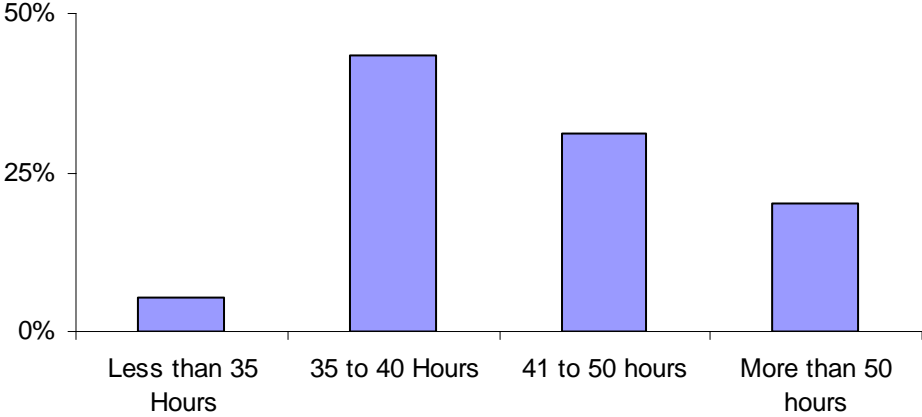
For the small number of people concerned, the main reason for not working in their preferred field was that they still had to complete their contract commitments.

⁵ The relatively low percentage of managers/administrators remaining in the same field is more likely to be a result of respondents giving imprecise descriptions of their occupation – for example “farm manager”. Such vague descriptions are then difficult to code consistently.

Hours worked

RSMS migrants generally worked long hours. One in five worked more than 50 hours per week and only 5% were not in full-time employment (i.e. working less than 35 hours per week).

Fig 5.6 : Hours worked per week



6. INCOME

The median income of RSMS Primary Applicants was \$926 per week. This is around \$220 more than the weekly earnings of PA's from the SDAS survey and about \$110 more than Independent PA's from wave 2 of the second cohort of the LSIA.⁶

Table 6.1 shows how median incomes vary across different categories of RSMS migrants.

Table 6.1 - Median incomes across selected categories

<i>Region of Origin</i>	
Mainly English Speaking Countries	\$ 967
South Asia	\$ 914
Other Asia	\$ 785
Other Countries	\$ 934
European countries (exc UK)	\$ 873
South Africa/Zimbabwe	\$ 949
<i>Age</i>	
Aged less than 30	\$ 764
Age 30 to 39	\$ 905
Aged 40 and over	\$ 1,049
<i>Time since arrival</i>	
Less than 2 years	\$ 919
Two to less than 3 years	\$ 932
Three years or more	\$ 920
<i>Gender</i>	
Female	\$ 804
Male	\$ 977
<i>Use of qualifications</i>	
Often, Very Often	\$ 930
Only sometimes	\$ 708
Rarely or Never	*
<i>Preferred Job</i>	
Not in preferred job	\$ 660
In preferred job	\$ 936
<i>English Language</i>	
English not first language	\$ 881
English first language	\$ 949

⁶ The median earnings of Independent PA's from the LSIA was \$760 pw, which is \$816 pw when adjusted for the '8-capital-city' CPI

Table 6.1 continued

<i>Occupation level</i>		
Managers		\$ 941
Professionals		\$ 1,052
Associate Professionals		\$ 922
Tradespersons		\$ 775
Advanced Clerical		*
Intermediate Clerical Workers		\$ 689
Intermediate Service Workers		\$ 866
Elementary Service workers		*
Other unskilled workers		\$ 691
<i>Location</i>		
Designated Area		\$ 921
Non-Designated Area		\$ 1,066
All Persons		\$ 926

As would be expected the highest incomes are associated with being male, coming from an English speaking country, and working in a preferred job in a skilled occupation.

In contrast to the SDAS survey, older RSMS migrants seemed to be earning more, however increased time in Australia was not associated with higher earnings.

7. COMMUNITY INTERACTION

Community activities

As table 7.1 shows there was a high rate of participation in community activities among RSMS migrants. Overall, 93% of migrants had taken part in one or more community activities since arrival. Participation rates ranged from 89% for migrants from India and surrounding countries to 100% for other countries.

Looking at specific activities revealed some significant differences:

- Those from English speaking countries were less likely to participate in religious activities and activities related to their country of origin. They were more likely to get involved in activities involving sports or hobbies.
- Those from South Africa/Zimbabwe were more likely to participate in religious and local school activities.
- Those from India and surrounds were less likely to participate in a local school activity or an activity involving sports or hobbies. They were more likely to take part in activities related to their country of origin.

Some of this variation could be due to demographic as well as cultural differences. For example, migrants with children are much more likely to participate in local school activities. Similarly younger migrants are more likely to take part in sporting activities.

Table 7.1 Participation in community activities by region of origin

	Religious Activity	Local school activity	Country of origin activity	Local community activity	Activity involving sports or hobbies	Any of these
India and surrounds	28%	24%	47%	56%	59%	89%
Other Asian countries	39%	31%	44%	42%	61%	93%
English Speaking Countries	19%	37%	11%	58%	82%	92%
European countries (exc UK)	19%	28%	22%	51%	75%	92%
South Africa/Zimbabwe	46%	58%	33%	64%	74%	96%
Other countries	45%	58%	47%	62%	92%	100%
Total	31%	40%	29%	56%	74%	93%

Interacting with neighbours

Another indicator of successful settlement is interactions with neighbours. As can be seen from table 7.2, there is quite a high level of neighbourly communication - only 7% of RSMS migrants did not speak to their neighbours and the average RSMS migrant speaks with around 5 neighbours. For the SDAS the equivalent statistics were 13% not speaking with neighbours and an “average” migrant speaking with 3.7 neighbours.

Preliminary Analysis of the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme Subclass

Table 7.2 : Number of persons spoken to or living in street or nearby

	Mainly English Speaking Countries	European Countries (exc UK)	South Africa Zimbabwe	India and Surrounds	Other Asian countries	Other countries	Total
No people	5%	7%	8%	6%	11%	8%	7%
1 or 2 people	20%	16%	6%	21%	17%	11%	15%
3 to 5 people	17%	19%	25%	34%	28%	23%	23%
6 to 10 people	38%	44%	41%	30%	28%	44%	37%
More than 10 people	20%	14%	20%	10%	16%	14%	17%
Median	5.6	5.4	6.4	4.0	4.5	6.5	5.4

8. LANGUAGE

English language skills

More than 60% of Primary Applicants spoke English as a first language. Of the remaining non-native English speakers – eight out of ten said their English skills had improved since arrival and less than one out of ten had required access to interpreting services.

Table 8.1 : English Language Skills

Characteristic	(%)
Proportion speaking English as first language	61%
Proportion not speaking English as first language	39%
Proportion not speaking English as first language <i>whose English improved since arrival</i>	81%
<i>who required interpreting services</i>	8%
<i>who received interpreting services</i>	7%

Knowledge of interpreting services

RSMS migrants who did not speak English as a first language were asked if they were aware of state and territory specific interpreting services and the Commonwealth Interpreting and Translating Service.

Overall, 17% of these migrants said they were aware of the Commonwealth Interpreting and Translating Service.

Knowledge of the relevant state and territory translation services was difficult to quantify because of the very small numbers of persons involved. However it would appear that most people were not aware of state specific translating services. A typical example was South Australia, where only 19% of people who did not speak English as a first language were aware of the South Australian Interpreting Service.

As only 8% of non-English speakers surveyed felt the need to use an interpreting service, this low level of awareness may not be a cause for concern.

APPENDIX 1. RSMS requirements

An employer can take part in the scheme if their business is in any area except Brisbane, Gold Coast, Newcastle, Sydney, Wollongong, Melbourne and Perth.

One important way in which employers can identify potential migrants is through the Skill Matching Database. This contains the educational, occupational and personal details of Skilled-Independent category applicants and Skill Matching visa applicants.

The **employer** must demonstrate that the position:

- is a genuine full-time vacancy;
- is available for at least two consecutive years;
- requires qualifications equivalent to at least Australian diploma level (this includes trade certificates);
- cannot be filled from the local labour market; and
- employment and remuneration is in accordance with Australian industrial laws;

The **applicant** must demonstrate that :

- they have the relevant qualifications equivalent to at least an Australian diploma;
- they satisfy any mandatory licensing, registration or professional membership requirements;
- the position is for a fixed term of at least two years (supported by evidence of a contract);
- they are less than 45 years of age;
- they have functional English language ability;

Since 1 July 2001, visa cancellation provisions apply where:

- the employee has not commenced employment with the employer within six months of arriving in Australia (or after visa grant if already in Australia); or
- an employee has left the employer within the two year period for reasons within their control.

Cancellation of a visa will **not occur** where a nominating employer terminates an employee's contract within the two year period, provided the employee has made a genuine effort to complete the two years with the approved employer.