

Overstayers

Who are overstayers?

“Overstayers” are people who are suspected of remaining in the Australian community unlawfully after their temporary visa expires. They are people who arrived in Australia with valid temporary visas, mainly as tourists but also as Working Holiday Makers, students and temporary residents.

Overstayers by visa category

The number of visa overstayers in the Australian community at 30 June 2007 was estimated to be around 46 500. This is a slight increase on previous estimates of 46 400 at 30 June 2006, 47 800 at 30 June 2005, under 51 000 at 30 June 2004, and around 59 800 at 30 June 2003.

The slight increase in the estimated number of overstayers may be attributed to the new error rate applied to the 30 June 2007 Overstayers Estimate. Due to more thorough sampling techniques and higher data quality, the error rate applied to the 30 June 2007 Overstayers Estimate was 11 per cent lower than the error rate applied to the 30 June 2006 Overstayers Estimate. It is unlikely that the increase in overstay numbers for June 2007 reflect a major environmental shift such as lower adherence to conditions of entry to Australia.

At 30 June 2007, Visitor visa holders comprised the greatest number of overstayers (around 39 400), followed by Student visa overstayers (around 2800) and Temporary Resident visa overstayers (around 2300), with other visa categories making up around 2100 overstayers.

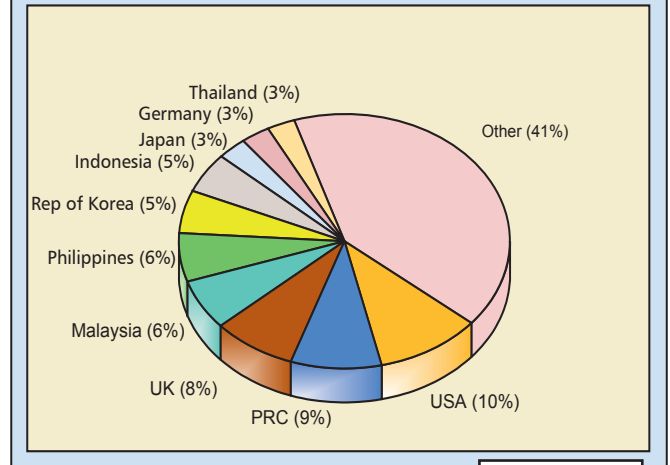
Nationality of overstayers

At 30 June 2007, the largest number of overstayers were from the USA (approximately 4800), the PRC (approximately 4100) the UK (approximately 3800), Malaysia (approximately 3000) and the Philippines (approximately 2900). For further information please refer to Appendix E.

This ranking reflects, to a certain extent, that many of these countries are also the source of the biggest number of visitors. While visitors from the USA and the UK are two of the top three highest overstayers in absolute terms, as a percentage of the number of Visitor and Temporary visas issued to people from those countries, they are a low overstay risk.

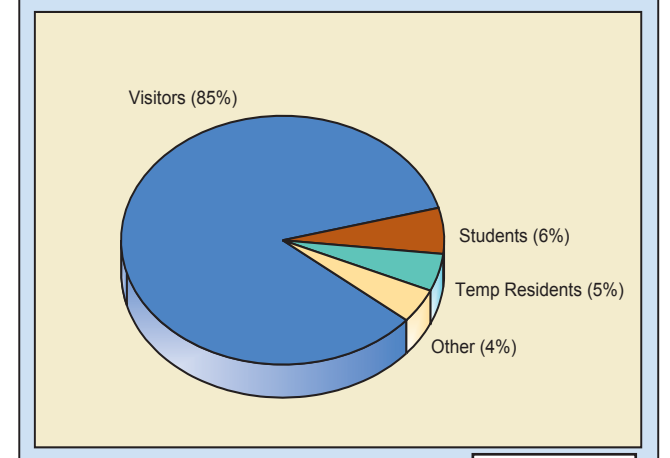
Total overstayers from the PRC increased by approximately 11 per cent between the 30 June 2006 and 30 June 2007 Overstayers Estimates. This may be attributed to the improving economic conditions being experienced in the PRC which has resulted in higher expenditure on travel. The majority (73.0 per cent) of overstayers from the PRC had overstayed by one year or more, making the PRC a country of concern for overstayers.

Fig. 3-41: Composition of overstayers by citizenship at 30 June 2007



Source Data: IMIRS

Fig. 3-42: Overstayers at 30 June 2007 by visa category



Source Data: IMIRS

Age and sex of overstayers

At 30 June 2007, approximately 62.0 per cent of recorded overstayers were male and 38.0 per cent were female. The largest age group of overstayers is 41-50 years of age, followed by 31-40 years of age.