

# Refugee and asylum seeker health

RCH Immigrant health

July 2019 – please do not use after December 2019

# Definitions

## Refugee

- Someone who 'owing to a **well founded fear of being persecuted** for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is **outside the country of his nationality**, and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is **unable** or, owing to such fear, is unwilling **to return to it**'

UNHCR 1951 'Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees' and 1967 'Protocol relating to the status of refugees'

## Asylum seeker

- A person who has left their country of origin, **applied for recognition as a refugee in another country, and is awaiting a decision on their application**. They are not given the rights, protection, assistance associated with UNHCR refugee status

Not every asylum seeker is found to be a refugee

But all refugees were initially asylum seekers

# Trends at a Glance

The global population of forcibly displaced increased by 2.3 million people in 2018. By the end of the year, almost 70.8 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations. As a result, the world's forcibly displaced population remained yet again at a record high.

**70.8** MILLION FORCIBLY DISPLACED WORLDWIDE

as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations at end-2018

- 25.9 million refugees
- 20.4 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate
- 5.5 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate
- 41.3 million internally displaced people<sup>1</sup>
- 3.5 million asylum-seekers

**13.6** MILLION NEWLY DISPLACED

An estimated 13.6 million people were newly displaced due to conflict or persecution in 2018. This included 10.8 million individuals displaced<sup>2</sup> within the borders of their own country and 2.8 million new refugees and new asylum-seekers.

**16%**

Countries in developed regions hosted 16 per cent of refugees, while one third of the global refugee population (6.7 million people) were in the Least Developed Countries.

**37,000** NEW DISPLACEMENTS EVERY DAY

The number of new displacements was equivalent to an average of 37,000 people being forced to flee their homes every day in 2018.

**3.5** MILLION ASYLUM-SEEKERS

By the end of 2018, about 3.5 million people were awaiting a decision on their application for asylum.

**4 IN 5**

Nearly 4 out of every 5 refugees lived in countries neighbouring their countries of origin.

<sup>1</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre of the Norwegian Refugee Council.  
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>3</sup> The number of new individual asylum applications for Turkey does not include Syrian nationals who receive protection under the Temporary Protection Regulation and relates to applications submitted to UNCHR until 10 September 2018, when the government assumed full responsibility for registration and refugee status determination.  
<sup>4</sup> This number includes both refugees and migrants from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela worldwide as of February 2019. See: [www.unhcr.org/5c6fb2d04](http://www.unhcr.org/5c6fb2d04)  
<sup>5</sup> These figures refer only to refugees under UNHCR's mandate. In addition, Lebanon hosted 475,100 and Jordan 2,242,600 Palestine refugees under the mandate of UNRWA.

**2.9** MILLION DISPLACED PEOPLE RETURNED

During 2018, 2.9 million displaced people returned to their areas or countries of origin, including 2.3 million IDPs and nearly 600,000 refugees. Returns have not kept pace with the rate of new displacements.

**67%**

Altogether, more than two thirds (67 per cent) of all refugees worldwide came from just five countries:

<b>Syrian Arab Republic</b>	6.7 million
<b>Afghanistan</b>	2.7 million
<b>South Sudan</b>	2.3 million
<b>Myanmar</b>	1.1 million
<b>Somalia</b>	0.9 million

**1.7** MILLION NEW CLAIMS

Asylum-seekers submitted 1.7 million new claims. With 254,300 such claims, the United States of America was the world's largest recipient of new individual applications, followed by Peru (192,500) Germany (161,900), France (114,500) and Turkey (83,800).<sup>3</sup>

**3.7** MILLION PEOPLE

For the fifth consecutive year, Turkey hosted the largest number of refugees worldwide, with 3.7 million people. The main countries of asylum for refugees were:

<b>Turkey</b>	3.7 million
<b>Pakistan</b>	1.4 million
<b>Uganda</b>	1.2 million
<b>Sudan</b>	1.1 million
<b>Germany</b>	1.1 million

**81,300** REFUGEES FOR RESETTLEMENT

In 2018, UNHCR submitted 81,300 refugees to States for resettlement. According to government statistics, 25 countries admitted 92,400 refugees for resettlement during the year, with or without UNHCR's assistance.

**138,600** UNACCOMPANIED AND SEPARATED CHILDREN

Some 27,600 unaccompanied and separated children sought asylum on an individual basis and a total of 111,000 unaccompanied and separated child refugees were reported in 2018. Both numbers are considered significant underestimates.

**1/2** CHILDREN

Children below 18 years of age constituted about half of the refugee population in 2018, up from 41 per cent in 2009 but similar to the previous few years

**Venezuela**  
 Venezuelan refugees and asylum-seekers grew in number. The broader movement of Venezuelans across the region and beyond increasingly took on the characteristics of a refugee situation, with some 3.4 million outside the country by the end of 2018.<sup>4</sup>

**Lebanon**  
 Lebanon continued to host the largest number of refugees relative to its national population, where 1 in 6 people was a refugee. Jordan (1 in 14) and Turkey (1 in 22) ranked second and third, respectively.<sup>5</sup>

## Purpose 2 at a glance – 2017–18

Figure 7 – purpose 2 at a glance

### PEOPLE AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP

■ **80,562**

people conferred

■ **19,331**

people acquired by descent,  
adoption and resumption



### Australian citizenship in Antarctic Territory

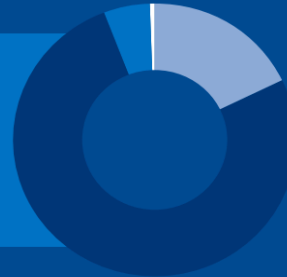
With icebergs as a backdrop and curious penguins watching on, plumber Terry Barrell became an Australian citizen on 24 January 2018 at Davis research station in the Australian Antarctic Territory. Mr Barrell, who was born in the United Kingdom, has been working at Davis station since November 2017. Terry Barrell was one of more than 12,000 new citizens welcomed at more than 350 citizenship ceremonies as part of Australia Day celebrations. It's only the second time in history that someone has become an Australian Citizen in Antarctica.



### PERMANENT MIGRATION PROGRAM

**162,417**

total Migration  
and Child Program  
places granted



● **111,099** skill

● **47,732** family

● **3,350** child

● **236** special eligibility

### TEMPORARY VISAS GRANTS

**8,694,048** temporary visas granted

**351,516** maritime crew and transit

**1,856,614** New Zealand

**13,074** other temporary

**378,292** student

**180,459** temporary resident (other)

**64,470** temporary resident (skilled)

**5,639,167** visitor

**210,456** working holiday maker

## Appendix A: Years at a Glance

Table 21 – Years at a glance

	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
<b>Permanent Migration Program and child outcome</b>	<b>189,770</b>	<b>183,608</b>	<b>162,417</b>
Skill stream places	128,550	123,567	111,099
Family stream places	57,400	56,220	47,732
Special eligibility stream places	308	421	236
Child places delivered outside the managed Migration Program	3,512	3,400	3,350
<b>Temporary visas granted</b>	<b>7.7 million</b>	<b>8.4 million</b>	<b>8.7 million</b>
Visitor visas granted	4.8 million	5.3 million	5.6 million
Number of eVisas granted	3.4 million	4.1 million	4.9 million
Student visas granted	310,845	343,035	378,292
Working holiday maker visas granted	214,583	211,011	210,456
Special Category (subclass 444) visas granted	1.9 million	1.9 million	1.9 million
Maritime crew and transit visas granted	345,873	352,394	351,516
Temporary Work (skilled) (subclass 457) visas granted	85,611	87,580	64,470
Temporary residents (other) visas granted	130,807	145,100	180,459
<b>Refugee and humanitarian entry</b>			
Humanitarian program visas granted (2015-16 and 2016-17 included visas granted towards the annual resettlement component of the Humanitarian Program, and the additional 12,000 places for people displaced by conflict in Syria and Iraq)	17,555	21,968	16,250
Number of Illegal Maritime Arrival legacy caseload applications finally determined (grants and refusals)	2,165	8,000	7,041
<b>Citizenship</b>			
Number of people conferred with Australian citizenship	133,126	137,750	80,562
Number of people whose applications for Australian citizenship by conferral, descent and resumption were approved	148,502	146,405	99,893

# Refugee applicant

## Offshore program



### Humanitarian entrant



## Onshore arrival



### Asylum seeker



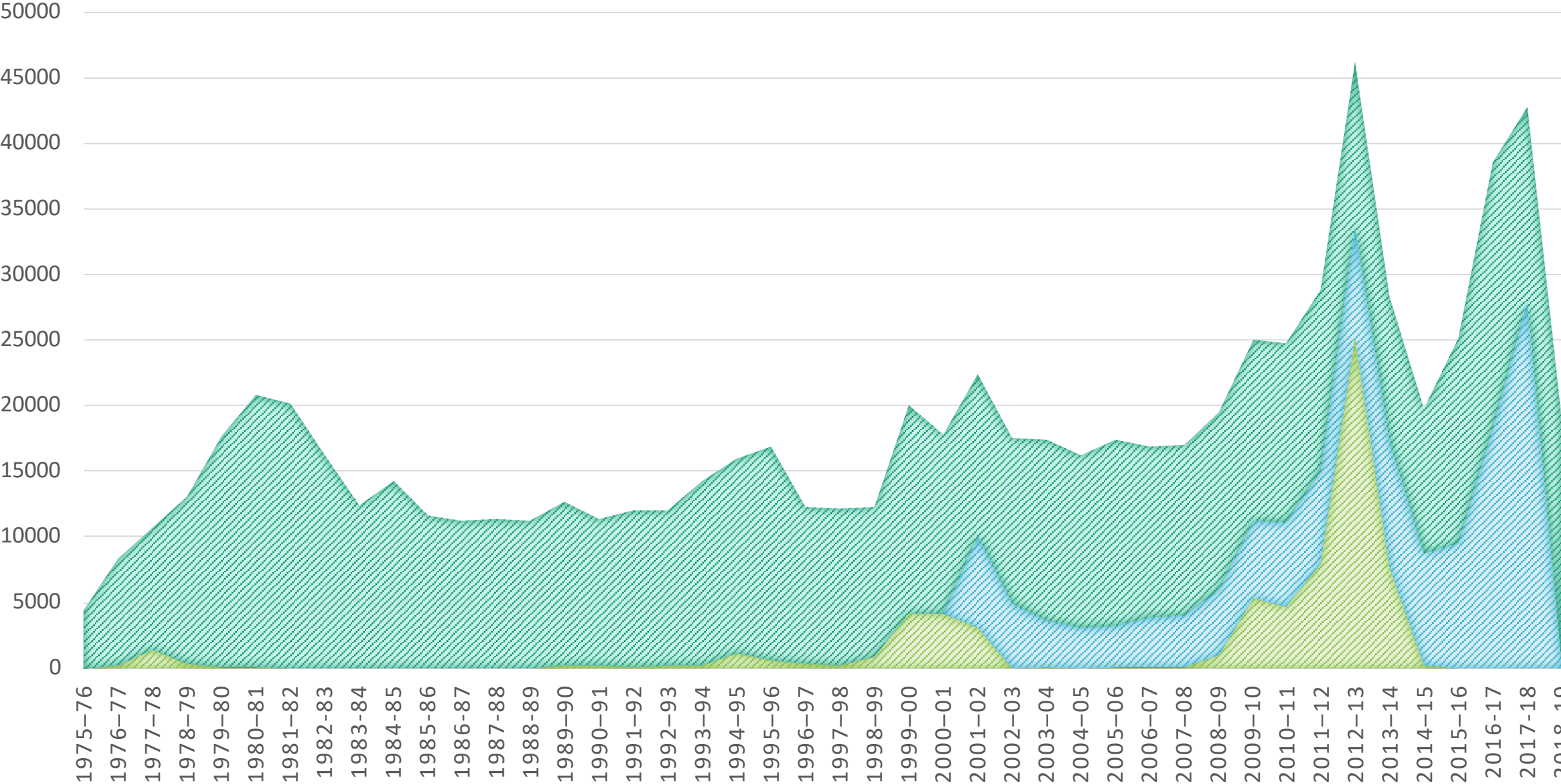
Air arrivals\*



'Illegal' /Unauthorised / Irregular Maritime Arrivals

# TOTAL ARRIVALS BY MODE OF ARRIVAL

Boat arrivals   Plane arrivals   Offshore program



# Onshore pathway

## Arrive with a valid visa

- Plane arrivals who clear immigration, have valid visa and claim asylum
  - Not subject to mandatory immigration detention
  - Eligible for permanent protection
  - Eligible for legal assistance
  - Stay on entry visa until it expires (may not have Medicare)



## Arrive without a valid visa

- Plane arrivals without valid visa/don't clear immigration OR boat arrivals without a valid visa
  - Subject to mandatory detention (whether or not they claim asylum)
  - (No asylum claim – 'turnarounds')
  - Long delays
  - Only eligible for temporary protection if successful protection claim
  - Not eligible for legal support





# Arrival dates – policy (boat arrivals)

- Before August 2012
  - Work rights, entitled to apply permanent protection (866)
  - If application not processed - retrospective application temporary visas (4/2015)
- 13 August 2012
  - *Expert panel report*
  - Path – held detention (usually <6m) -> community detention or bridging visa
  - **Processing halted (until 4/15)**, no work rights (until 1/2015)
  - Could be sent offshore (Manus, Nauru)
  - No family sponsorship (ongoing)
- 19 July 2013
  - Could be sent offshore, **explicit policy no settlement in Australia**
  - Prolonged held detention – **detention releases stopped** (until 12/2014 -1/2015)
  - *If stayed in Australia – included in ‘Legacy caseload’*
- 15 December 2014
  - Migration Act amended – Legacy caseload **by 5/2019 31,045 submitted, 22,060 finalised, ~70% positive**



Source: SBS News

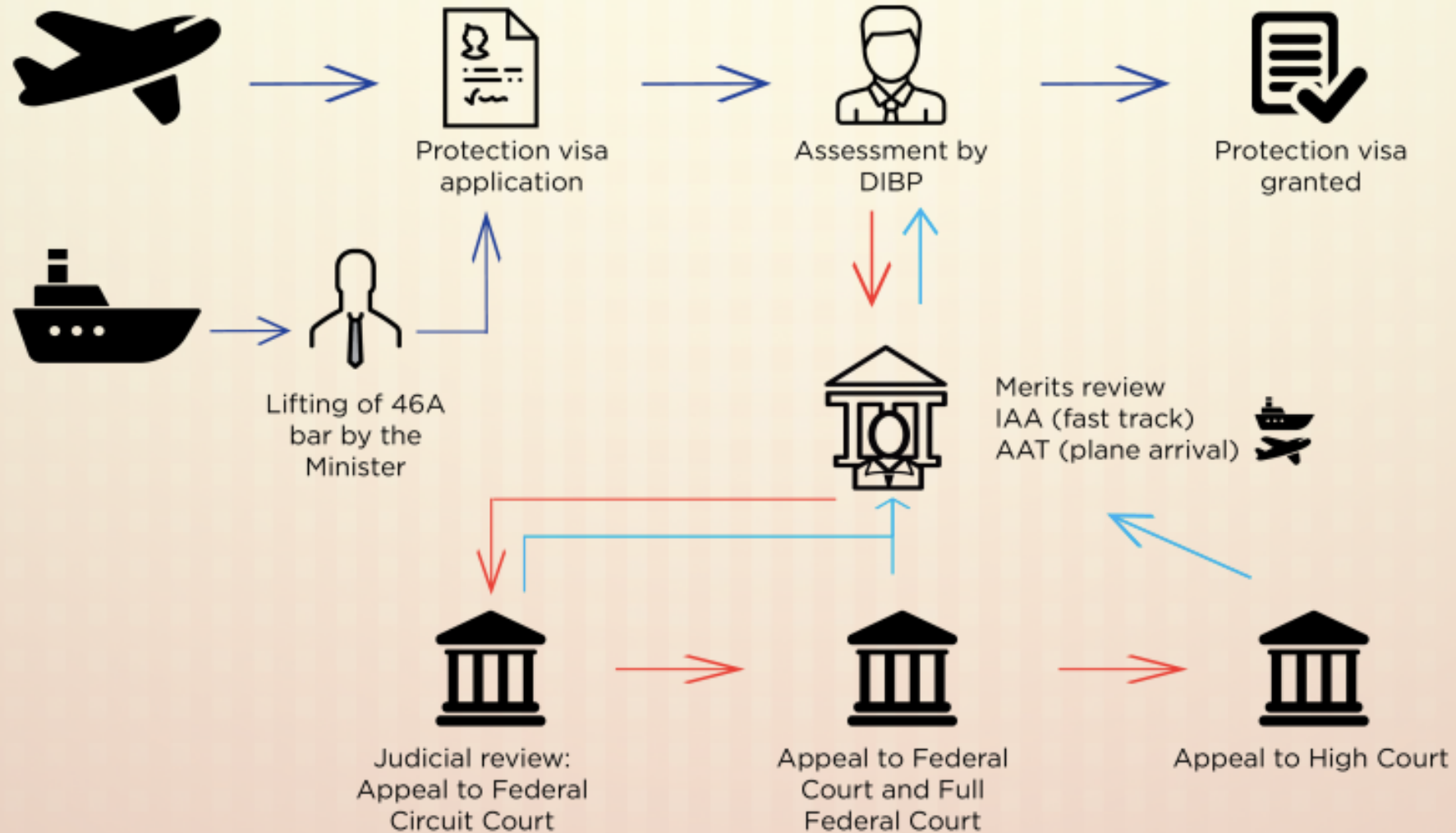
# Australian and Victorian numbers as of 7/2019

Category	Australia	Victoria
Offshore intake	13,760 in 2016-17 16,250 in 2017-18 18,750 for 2018-19	~ 4000/year  ~ 6000/year
Syrian/Iraqi offshore intake	12,000 (across 2016 -2017)	~ 40%
AS IMA BVE ever granted	36,880 (6/2019)	Not available
TPV/SHEV visa finalised grants	15,683 finalised grants (6/2019) <i>TPV – 5402, SHEV 10,281</i> 8511 on hand/at review <i>(=24,194 total finalised/on hand/at review)</i> 6806 refused (6/2019)	5,140 finalised grants (6/2019)  4,497 on hand/at review (6/2019) <i>(=9637 total finalised/on hand/at review)</i> No refusal numbers available
AS IMA in community on Bridging Visa E	14,507 (6/2019)	6,634 (6/2019)
Community detention	781 (6/2019)	236 (6/2019)
Held detention	1,352 (6/2019)	248 (6/2019, ~30% IMA)

# THE PROCESS OF SEEKING PROTECTION

# RACS

REFUGEE  
ADVICE &  
CASEWORK  
SERVICE

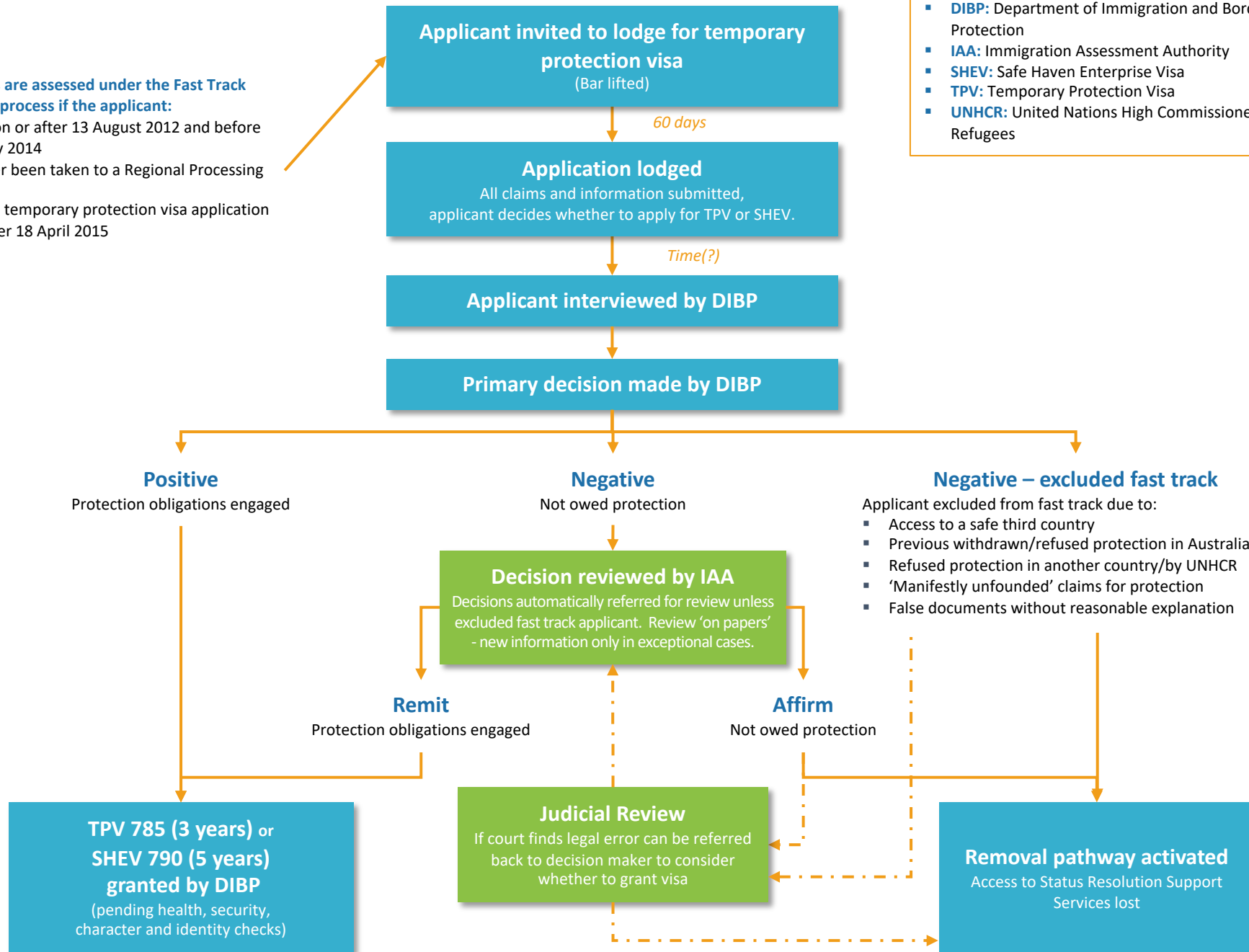


**Applications are assessed under the Fast Track Assessment process if the applicant:**

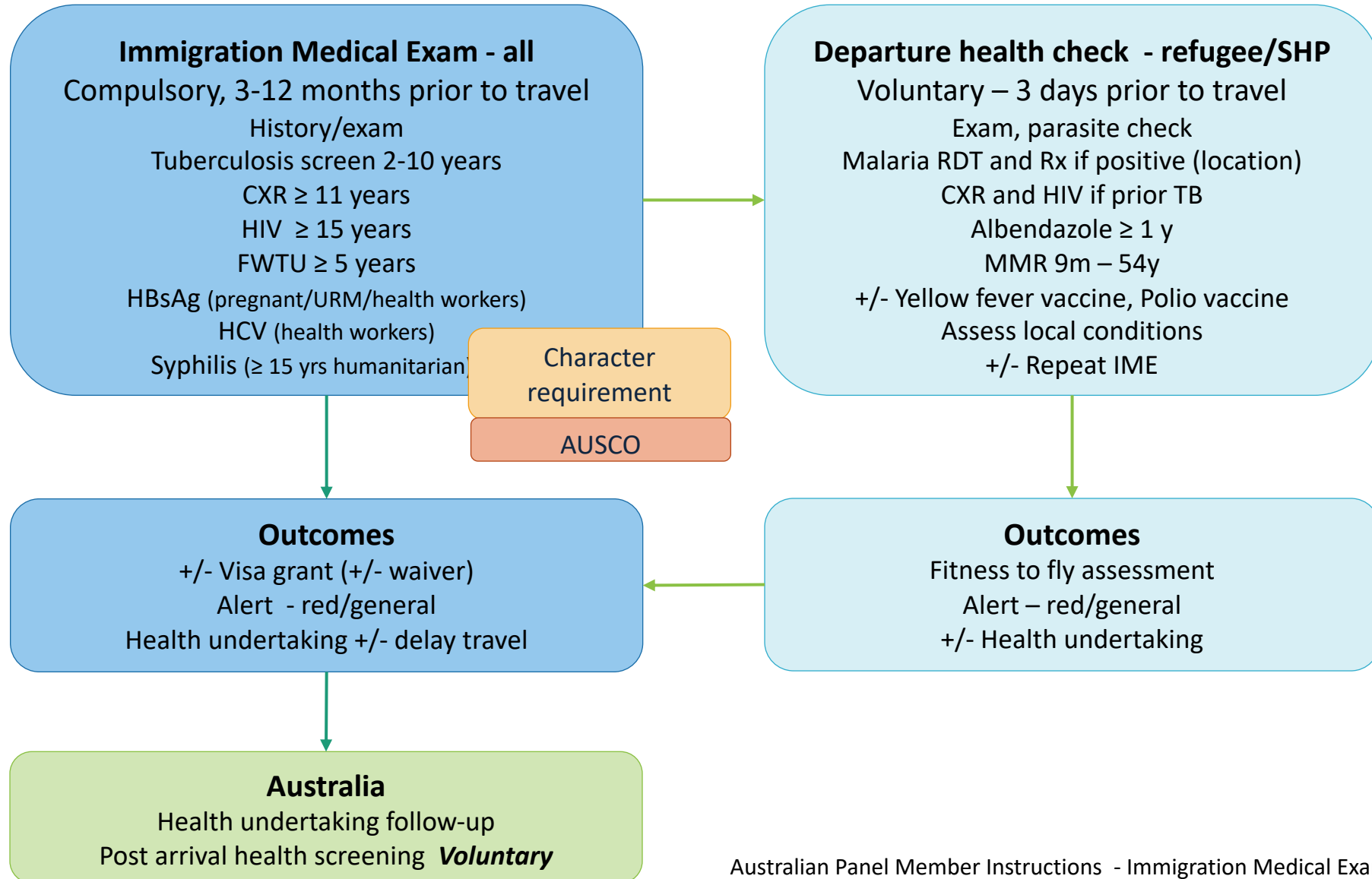
- Arrived on or after 13 August 2012 and before 1 January 2014
- Has never been taken to a Regional Processing Centre
- Lodged a temporary protection visa application on or after 18 April 2015

**Glossary:**

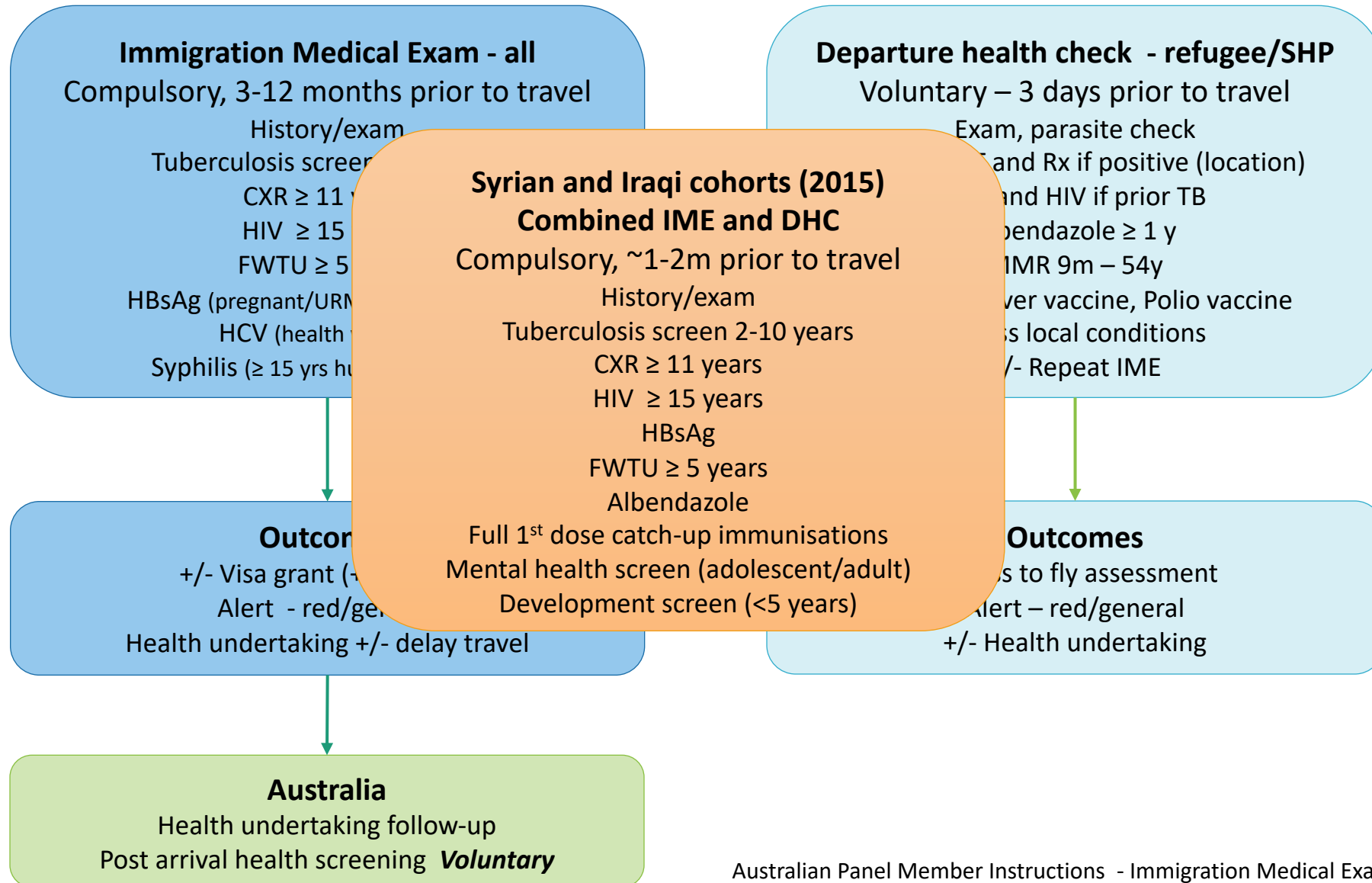
- **DIBP:** Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- **IAA:** Immigration Assessment Authority
- **SHEV:** Safe Haven Enterprise Visa
- **TPV:** Temporary Protection Visa
- **UNHCR:** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



# Pre-departure health screen (offshore)



# Pre-departure health screen (offshore)



# Post-arrival health screen

Refugee applicant

Offshore program



Humanitarian entrant

- 1) IME offshore (mandated)
- 2) DHC (voluntary)
- 3) Post-arrival (voluntary)

Onshore arrival



Asylum seeker

- 1) No offshore
- 2) Detention health
- 3) Post-release (voluntary)
- 4) IME at visa grant





## Initial assessment

### Health issues

Refugee or asylum seeker children and adolescents will have typical paediatric health problems, and may also have health issues specific to their background or forced migration experience. Common paediatric problems, e.g. iron deficiency anaemia, may have a more complicated aetiology in refugee children. **All refugees and asylum seekers should have a full health assessment after arrival in Australia, ideally within one month of arrival.**

Assessment of newly arrived refugee or asylum seeker children and adolescents should focus on:

- Parent (or self-identified) concerns
- Excluding acute illness
- Immunisation status and catch-up immunisation
- Tuberculosis screening
- Other infections, including hepatitis, parasites and malaria (depending on areas of origin and transit)
- Nutritional status and growth (including micronutrient and vitamin deficiencies)
- Oral health issues
- Concerns about development, disability, vision, or hearing, previous educational experience
- Mental health issues and trauma exposure
- Previous severe/chronic childhood illness or physical trauma
- Confirming the child's reported birthdate
- Issues arising after arrival in Australia.

All	FBE	
	HBsAg, HBsAb, HBcAb. Write: 'Query chronic hepatitis B?'	
	Strongyloides serology	
	HIV serology (≥15 years or unaccompanied minor)	
	TST or IGRA (depends on risk factors and local jurisdiction, check Medicare for IGRA rebates, TST preferred for children <5 years)	
	Varicella serology (≥14 years if no known history of disease)	
	Visual acuity and review for glaucoma in Africans >40 years and others >50 years	
	Dental review	
	Hearing review	
	Social and emotional wellbeing/mental health	
	Disability	
	Developmental delay or learning concerns (children and adolescents)	
	Preventive health as per RACGP, consider screening earlier for NCDs	
Catch-up immunisations		
Risk-based	Rubella serology (women childbearing age)	
	Ferritin (women and children, men where risk factors present)	
	Vitamin D (write risk factors e.g. dark skin, lack of sun exposure). Also check Ca, PO <sub>4</sub> and ALP in children.	
	Vitamin B12 (arrival <6 months, food insecurity, vegan, from: Bhutan, Afghanistan, Iran, Horn of Africa)	
	NAAT first pass urine or self-obtained low vaginal swabs for gonorrhoea or chlamydia) (risk of STIs)	
	Syphilis serology (risk of STIs, unaccompanied minor)	
	Helicobacter pylori stool antigen or breath test (gastric cancer family history, upper GI symptoms)	
	Stool microscopy (OCP) (no pre-departure albendazole or persisting eosinophilia after albendazole treatment)	
Country-based	Schistosoma serology	
	Malaria thick and thin films and RDT	
	Hepatitis C Ab (also screen if risk factors)	

## Baseline

- FBE and film
- Ferritin
- Hepatitis B - HBsAg, HBsAb, HBcAb
- Strongyloides serology
- Tuberculosis screening (TST ≤5 years, TST/IGRA older children)
- Faecal OCP (ideally fixed) varies pre-arrival albendazole

## Risk-based

- Vitamin B12
- Vitamin D, Ca, PO<sub>4</sub>, ALP
- Varicella
- Rubella
- STI screen – syphilis, gonorrhoea, chlamydia
- HIV
- Helicobacter pylori
- *(Other)*

## Country-based

- Schistosoma
- Malaria
- Hepatitis C

# Access to health care

Offshore Permanent Residency	TPV or SHEV Temporary Residency	Asylum seeker boat arrival on BVE, or plane arrivals on BVE	Community detention (now mostly offshore medical transfers)	Post claim (negative decision) or FDBVE
<p>Referred to GP on arrival +/- RHN</p> <p>Medicare eligible All services (inc. community health &amp; hospitals) FASSTT NDIS eligible</p>	<p>Most linked with GP No RHN</p> <p>Medicare eligible All services (inc. community health &amp; hospitals) FASSTT No NDIS eligibility NDIS – EI likely</p>	<p>Most linked with GP Usually no RHN</p> <p>Medicare eligible (~10% expired now) All services (inc. community health and hospitals) FASSTT No NDIS eligibility NDIS – EI likely</p>	<p>Allocated GP Usually no RHN</p> <p>Not Medicare eligible All services (inc. community health and hospitals) GP, meds, specialists and hospitals funded by IHMS FASSTT No NDIS eligibility NDIS – EI likely</p>	<p>GP access varies No RHN</p> <p>May have Medicare, may be short duration May rely on AS primary care services Hospitals – access if appealing decision No FASSTT No NDIS eligibility NDIS – EI unclear</p>
<p>Medications: Medicare – HCC rate</p>	<p>Medications: Medicare – HCC rate</p>	<p>Medications: Medicare – PBS rate HCC rate if SRSS(?)</p>	<p>Medications: through IHMS letter and selected pharmacies (or hospitals)</p>	<p>Medications: Medicare – PBS cost, otherwise full price</p>

# Community supports and settlement services

Offshore Permanent Residency	TPV or SHEV Temporary Residency	Asylum seeker boat arrival on BVE, plane arrivals on BVE	Community detention (now mostly offshore medical transfers)	Post claim (negative decision) or FDBVE
<p>Housing support Case Mx up to 18m (AMES) Tier system 1=min 2=?most 3=complex</p> <p>Centrelink – full access, inc HCC/Carers</p>	<p>No housing support Can have case Mx if complex (AMES) Employment support</p> <p>Centrelink – access, inc family/childcare Have HCC No Carers SHEV provisions (1.5/5 yrs welfare)</p>	<p>No housing support Band 5 complex case Mx, DHA case Mx Band 6 – min case Mx, no DHA case Mx <b>SRSS stopping</b> No funded legal</p> <p>No Centrelink 89% Newstart equiv Code conduct</p>	<p>Housing and utilities provided Fixed location Contracted case Mx DHA case Mx No funded legal</p> <p>60% Special Benefit equiv No Centrelink Code conduct</p>	<p>No housing support No caseworker No income support (loss SRSS) No funded legal</p> <p>No Centrelink Urgent Victorian support package available till 30 June 2018</p>
<p>Work rights Kinder Full access education, recently difficult Tertiary education</p>	<p>Work rights Kinder School to 18y Tertiary – Int student (no Austudy or Youth Allowance)</p>	<p>Most work rights from 2015 (if BVE valid) (none 2012-2014) Kinder School to 18y Tertiary – Int student</p>	<p>No work rights Kinder (2015) School to 18y</p>	<p>Work rights Kinder School to 18y</p>

Plane arrivals often retain conditions of their substantive entry visa (e.g. tourist/student), and remain eligible for permanent protection visas