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Migration and Temporary visa program quarterly report on processing times (2023-24 Q1)

Reduction in on-hand caseloads

The Department's on-hand visa applications and processing time remained steady during the first quarter of 2023-24, despite growing visa lodgements:

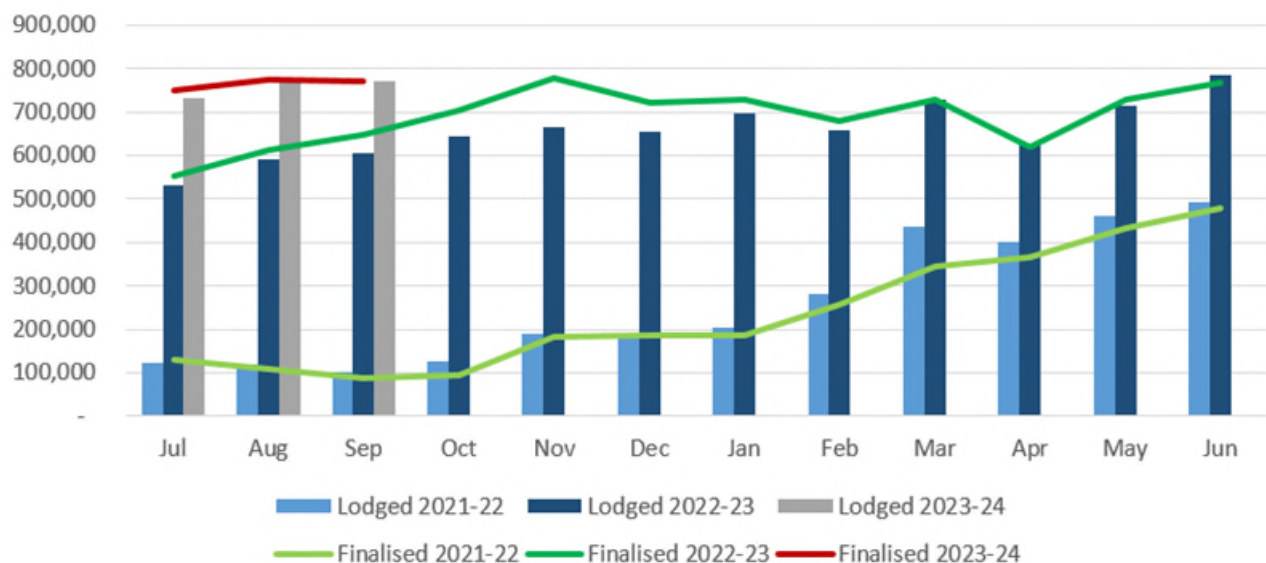
- This means the Department remains in a good position to deliver longer-term reforms.
- The Department finalised almost 2.3 million visas in the first quarter of 2023-24, 26 percent more than in the same period in 2022-23.
- On-hand temporary visa applications decreased by 61 percent from more than 496,000 on 30 September 2022 to just under 192,000 on 30 September 2023.
 - Visitor visas decreased by 50 percent
 - Temporary Skill Shortage visas decreased by nearly 52 percent
 - Student visas decreased by 57 percent
 - Temporary Resident (Other Employment) visas decreased by nearly 77 percent.
- Total on-hand applications, including permanent visas subject to migration program planning levels, are 33 percent lower than the nearly 872,000 on-hand in September 2022.

The volume of new visa applications continues to rise, with almost 2.3 million lodged in the first quarter of 2023-24.

- This is 32 percent more than the just over 1.7 million applications lodged in the first quarter of 2022-23.
- In the first quarter of 2023-24 application lodgements in some programs, including Student and Partner (First Stage), were particularly strong. New Student visa applications increased by nearly 19 percent and Partner (First Stage) by just over 17 percent compared to quarter one in 2022-23.
- Permanent Skilled visa applications were just over 44 percent lower than during the same period in 2022-23, noting the total number of new applications in 2022-23 was 26.8 percent higher than the previous record in 2016-17.

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Figure 1: *Migration and Temporary visa applications lodged and finalised 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 by month*



Processing times

Despite increased lodgements, visa applications are being processed faster. Outlined below are global median processing times - aggregate calculations by visa category - for the first quarter of 2023 compared with quarter one 2022:

- Visitor visas in less than one day (down from three days)
- Temporary Skill Shortage (TSS) visas in 18 days (down from 51 days)
- Student visas in 17 days (down from 52 days)
- Other Temporary visas in 18 days (down from 23 days)
- First stage Partner visas in seven months (down from 10 months)

While currently published processing times in some categories are longer, this is due to a focus on finalising older cases to clear the backlog. It does not reflect processing times for new applications.

There will continue to be some variability in processing times from month to month. This is because global processing times reflect the age of applications finalised in a specific time period. As such, when the Department focuses efforts on finalising older applications, the processing time will temporarily increase.

Visa application flow rates

Visa application flow rate measures the proportion of applications lodged in a period that have been finalised in either the same period or by a subsequent snapshot date. Any time period can be used as the lodgement period but this report focuses on latest quarter and the latest 12 months. In the fourth quarter of 2022-23 the Department finalised nearly 94 percent of temporary visas lodged in the same quarter, and over 98 percent that were lodged in the full program year have been finalised - *tables 1, 2 and 3 provides detail for key temporary visa categories.*

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Table 1: *Three month (quarter) snapshot of primary Temporary visa applications lodged between 1 July 2023 and 30 September 2023 by key visa categories*

Visa Category	2023-24 Quarter 1 (July to Sept 2023)		
	Lodged in last quarter	Lodged in last quarter and finalised	% lodged in last quarter and finalised
Crew and Transit	105,188	102,695	97.63%
Skilled (Temporary)	11,367	8,402	73.92%
Student	121,902	79,108	64.89%
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	113,894	87,844	77.13%
Visitor	1,275,871	1,208,600	94.73%
Working Holiday Maker	65,147	57,150	87.72%

Table 2 *Three month (quarter) comparison of primary Temporary visa applications lodged between 1 July 2022 and 30 September 2022 and 1 July 2023 and 30 September 2023 by key visa categories*

Visa Category	2022-23 Quarter 1 (July to Sept 2022)			
	Lodged in quarter 1 2022	Lodged in quarter 1 2022 and finalised	% lodged in quarter 1 2022 and finalised	% difference between lodged and finalised in quarter 1 2022 and quarter 1 2023
Crew and Transit	104,749	94,535	90.25%	+7.38%
Skilled (Temporary)	11,505	5,685	49.41%	+24.51%
Student	104,544	45,141	43.18%	+21.72%
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	72,746	27,463	37.75%	+39.38%
Visitor	908,301	786,057	86.54%	+8.19%
Working Holiday Maker	52,024	46,748	89.86%	-2.14%

Table3: *12 month snapshot of primary Temporary visa applications lodged between 1 October 2022 and 30 September 2023 by key visa categories*

Visa Category	Rolling 12 months (Oct 2022 to Sept 2023)		
	Lodged in last 12 months	Lodged in last 12 months and finalised	% lodged in last 12 months and finalised
Crew and Transit	436,674	434,149	99.42%
Skilled (Temporary)	47,219	43,553	92.24%
Student	539,721	494,353	91.59%
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	349,912	320,778	91.67%
Visitor	4,539,713	4,469,152	98.45%
Working Holiday Maker	234,969	226,615	96.44%