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Migration and Temporary visa program quarterly report on processing times (2023-24 Q2)

Visa activities

Despite a growing increase in visa lodgements and an increase in on-hand applications the processing times of visa applications decided in the second quarter of 2023-24 have remained steady.

The volume of new visa applications has increased with nearly 4.8 million migration and temporary visas lodged in the 2023-24 year to date, of these 2.5 million have been received in the second quarter of 2023-24 (between 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023):

- This is 26 percent more than the almost 2 million applications lodged in the second quarter of the previous year (2022-23).
- Temporary visa programs have seen the strongest growth in applications lodgements, of over 30 percent in the second quarter 2023-24. This included Visitor visas increasing by 39 percent, Special Category visas increasing by over 27 percent, and Temporary Skilled increasing by 24 percent.
- Permanent Skilled visa applications lodgements have however reduced by almost 53 percent compared to the second quarter of the previous year (2022-23). In noting this though the total number of new applications in the previous program year (2022-23) was a record high for Permanent Skilled visas, 29 percent above the previous record high in 2016-17.

There were just under 650,000 migration and temporary visa applications on-hand as at 31 December 2023.

- This is 21,600 (or 3.4 percent) more temporary and migration visa applications on-hand, compared to 628,400 on-hand applications on 31 December 2022.
- Temporary visa applications on-hand have increased to just over 275,500 compared to just over 234,700 the same time last year.
- Of the just under 650,000 on-hand applications, 154,000 are in programs subject to capping and/or queuing. The cap is set annually in a legislative instrument based on Migration Program planning levels.

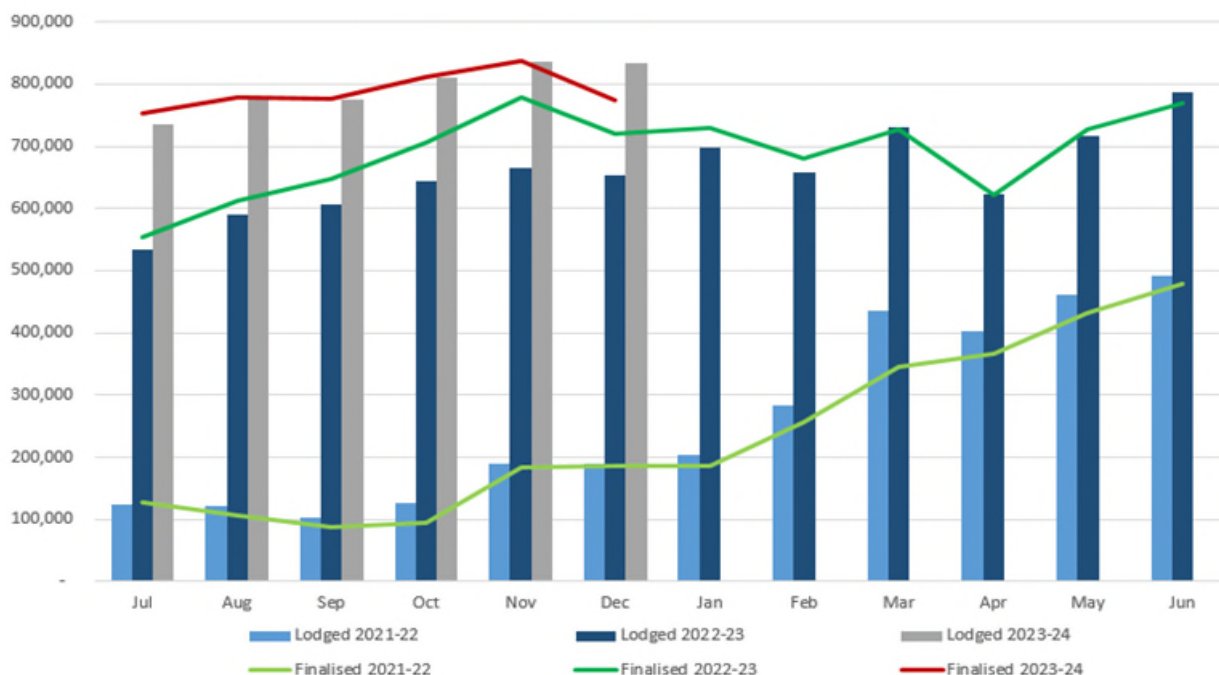
In this program year to date the Department has finalised over 4.7 million temporary and migration visa applications, with 2.4 million being in the second quarter (between 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023), 10 percent more than in the same period in 2022-23.

Of the visas finalised in the second quarter 2023-24 compared to second quarter 2022-23, there has been:

- 36,900 Family visas finalised, an increase of 41.3 percent,
- 1.4 million Visitor visas, an increase of 29.6 percent,
- 53,900 Skilled (Permanent), an increase of 27.1 percent, and
- 61,500 Working Holiday Maker, an increase of 6.2 percent.

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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

Visa processing times have remained steady in the second quarter of this year (2023-24), with some key programs seeing being processed faster when compared to the second quarter last year (2022-23). Global median processing times for the second quarter with comparison to previous year:

- Visitor visas in less than one day (consistent at less than one day)
- Temporary Skill Shortage (TSS) visas in 15 days (down from 34 days)
- Student visas in 18 days (down from 42 days)
- Other Temporary visas in 18 days (increased from 14 days)
- First Stage Partner visas in seven months (down from 9 months)

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. They may not reflect processing times for new applications.

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 second quarter of 2023-24 (01 October 2023 to 31 December 2023) the Department finalised 93 percent of temporary visas lodged in the same quarter, and 98 percent that were lodged in the past 12 months (01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023) have been finalised - **Tables 1, 2 and 3** provides detail of visa flow rates by key temporary visa categories.

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Table 1: *Three month (quarter) snapshot of primary Temporary visa applications lodged between 1 October 2023 and 31 December 2023 by key visa categories*

Visa Category	2023-24 Quarter 2 (Oct to Dec 2023)		
	Lodged in 2 nd quarter 2023	Lodged in 2 nd quarter 2023 and finalised	% lodged in 2 nd quarter 2023 and finalised
Crew and Transit	114,969	110,947	96.50%
Skilled (Temporary)	13,458	8,708	64.71%
Student	111,515	66,058	59.24%
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	82,081	61,499	74.92%
Visitor	1,399,713	1,316,442	94.05%
Working Holiday Maker	68,059	61,295	90.06%

Table 2: *Three month (quarter) snapshot of primary Temporary visa applications lodged between 1 October 2022 and 31 December 2022 and percentage comparison with 1 October 2023 and 31 December 2023 by key visa categories*

Visa Category	2022-23 Quarter 2 (Oct to Dec 2022)			
	Lodged in 2 nd quarter 2022	Lodged in 2 nd quarter 2022 and finalised	% lodged in 2 nd quarter 2022 and finalised	% variation between table 1 and table 2
Crew and Transit	117,101	110,512	94.37%	+2.13%
Skilled (Temporary)	11,356	7,412	65.27%	-0.56%
Student	114,608	82,523	72.00%	-12.77%
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	61,185	45,647	74.60%	+0.32%
Visitor	1,047,669	966,944	92.29%	+1.76%
Working Holiday Maker	58,797	50,292	85.53%	+4.53%

Table 3: *12 month snapshot of primary Temporary visa applications lodged between 1 January 2023 and 31 December 2023 by key visa categories*

Visa Category	Rolling 12 months (Jan 2023 to Dec 2023)		
	Lodged in last 12 months	Lodged in last 12 months and finalised	% lodged last 12 months and finalised
Crew and Transit	435,097	431,049	99.07%
Skilled (Temporary)	49,119	43,783	89.14%
Student	548,689	498,192	90.80%
Temporary Resident (Other Employment)	354,573	328,477	92.64%
Visitor	4,808,617	4,721,850	98.20%
Working Holiday Maker	241,557	232,632	96.31%