

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s47F  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 11 April 2017 8:06 AM  
**To:** s47E(d)  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** Re: your enquiry relating to OAD and NOM data [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dear Madam/Sir

The broad topic of the Phd is Australia's Immigration Policies Since 1990.

The specific use that I propose to make of this data is to model different levels of net migration from 1990 to estimate the demographic and economic impact.

I have discussed this with David Wilden and Jason Russo and committed to them that in exchange for assistance with relevant data, I will provide drafts chapters of the thesis to them progressively for comment before these are finalised.

In terms publication, i have no specific plans at this stage other than a general intention to submit the material to an academic journal.

Happy to provide more detail as needed.

Regards

Abul

----- Original message-----

**From:** s47E(d)  
**Date:** Mon, 10 Apr 2017 2:46 PM  
**To:** s47F  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** RE: your enquiry relating to OAD and NOM data [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Mr Rizvi,

Thank you for your quick response.

Can you please give us a little more detail regarding the topic of your PhD, and how the findings will be used or published?

Regards,

s47E(d)

Visa and Citizenship Statistics Section  
 Policy Research and Statistics Branch | Strategic Policy and Planning Division  
 Policy Group  
 Department of Immigration and Border Protection

UNCLASSIFIED

**From:** s47F [mailto:s47F]  
**Sent:** Monday, 10 April 2017 2:22 PM  
**To:** s47E(d)  
**Subject:** Re: your enquiry relating to OAD and NOM data [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Released by Department of Home Affairs  
 under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a student at Melbourne University undertaking a Phd under Professor s47F.

The purpose of seeking the data is for the Phd.

Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Regards

Abul Rizvi

----- Original message -----

**From:** s47E(d)

**Date:** Mon, 10 Apr 2017 2:00 PM

**To:** s47F

**Cc:**

**Subject:** your enquiry relating to OAD and NOM data [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Dear Mr Rizvi,

Thank you for your enquiry relating to OAD and NOM data received by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection on 19 December 2016. I apologise for the delay in responding.

In order to assist us in determining if it is appropriate to release this data to you, can you please let us know the capacity in which you are seeking this data, and the purpose for which you are seeking it?

Regards,

s47E(d)

Visa and Citizenship Statistics Section

Policy Research and Statistics Branch | Strategic Policy and Planning Division

Policy Group

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

**UNCLASSIFIED**

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:**

s47E(d)

**Sent:**

Monday, 26 June 2017 9:04 AM

**To:**

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s47E(d)

**Subject:**

RE: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

**For-Official-Use-Only**

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

BE11009 is cleared. There's no issue with sending the data to a gmail address.

Thanks.

*It is the responsibility of the area providing DIBP information externally to ensure that the disclosure is in accordance with the ABF Act, Australian Privacy Principles or other relevant legislation.*

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Statistics Strategy | Research and Statistics Branch  
 Strategic Policy and Planning Division  
 Department Of Immigration And Border Protection  
 P: 02 s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 E: s22(1)(a)(ii) [@border.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@border.gov.au)

**For-Official-Use-Only****From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)**Sent:** Friday, 23 June 2017 3:21 PM**To:** s47E(d) @border.gov.au>**Subject:** FW: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]**For-Official-Use-Only**

Hi team,

An update: I have saved the file as binary which reduces it to 54MB, and IT Support has informed me that with Director approval I can send files up to 60MB. So now the only issue re transmission is whether you're okay with sending the file to a gmail address.

I've replaced the version in s47E(d) with the binary version, so that you can check that my saving as binary has not broken the confidentialisation.

Regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Border Statistics  
 Visa and Citizenship Statistics Section  
 Policy Research and Statistics Branch | Strategic Policy and Planning Division  
 Policy Group  
 Department of Immigration and Border Protection  
 P: +61 2 [REDACTED] | +61 2 [REDACTED]  
 E: [REDACTED] [@border.gov.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@border.gov.au)

### For-Official-Use-Only

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 23 June 2017 11:39 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

### For-Official-Use-Only

Hi team,

Can you please clear BE11009? I've stored it in [REDACTED] because it is too large to attach to an email. Also, please let me know if you have any ideas about how we can transmit it to the requester (or any objection to a particular method).

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Source of request:</b>                      | Abul Rizvi, a PhD student at Melbourne University   |
| <b>Deadline:</b>                               | None  |
| <b>Data provided by:</b>                       | [REDACTED]  |
| <b>Data validation:</b>                        | <a href="http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3101.0Sep%202016?OpenDocument">http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3101.0Sep%202016?OpenDocument</a>   |
| <b>Caveats /Date stamps:</b>                   | This tailored Net Overseas Migration dataset provided by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) is for statistical and research purposes. The data provided is for use by your organisation and for the requested purpose only.<br>Release of this information to other parties would require prior permission from DIBP by contacting [REDACTED] <a href="mailto:[REDACTED]@border.gov.au">border.gov.au</a> |
| <b>Cleared by relevant reporting AS(s):</b>    | No  |
| <b>Cleared by relevant reporting Director:</b> | No  |
| <b>Additional information:</b>                 | [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED]  |

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 under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
|                 | s47E(d)       |
| <b>Contact:</b> | s22(1)(a)(ii) |

Regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Border Statistics  
 Visa and Citizenship Statistics Section  
 Policy Research and Statistics Branch | Strategic Policy and Planning Division  
 Policy Group  
 Department of Immigration and Border Protection  
 P: +61 2 s22(1)(a)(ii) | +61 2 s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 E: s47E(d) @border.gov.au

For-Official-Use-Only

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Friday, 23 June 2017 11:08 AM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) s47E(d) s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** RE: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For-Official-Use-Only

Please check with Data Clearance. We may need to check with IT Support and/or Security to see if we can lift the restriction on size or provide an alternative solution (i.e. disk). Another solution may be with our Overstayers Team. Please check in with s22(1)(a)(ii).

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Director – Visa Statistics Section (VSS)  
 Statistics and Information Governance Branch  
 Strategic Policy Division  
 Department of Immigration and Border Protection  
 (02) s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Section Email – s47E(d)

For-Official-Use-Only

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Friday, 23 June 2017 11:01 AM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@border.gov.au>  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@border.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@border.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@border.gov.au>; s47E(d) <s47E(d)@border.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@border.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@border.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

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For-Official-Use-Only

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

I have now confidentialised the data (thanks to s22(1)(a)(ii) genius). I tried to email it to data clearance but could not because it exceeded size limitations (it is almost 69MB). We can show it to data clearance by putting it on the S drive, but do you have any ideas about how we could get it to the requester, given that I am not allowed to copy anything to external media?

Regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Border Statistics  
 Visa and Citizenship Statistics Section  
 Policy Research and Statistics Branch | Strategic Policy and Planning Division  
 Policy Group  
 Department of Immigration and Border Protection  
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 E: s47E(d) @border.gov.au

For-Official-Use-Only

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**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Monday, 19 June 2017 12:03 PM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** RE: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For-Official-Use-Only

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii) please ask s22(1)(a)(ii). He will know or at least provide another name that can assist with this technical request. The final stages of this request will still require us to go through Data. Clearance.

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Director – Visa Statistics Section (VSS)  
 Statistics and Information Governance Branch  
 Strategic Policy Division  
 Department of Immigration and Border Protection  
 (02) s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Section Email – s47E(d)

For-Official-Use-Only

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**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 15 June 2017 5:12 PM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@border.gov.au>  
**Subject:** FW: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

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For-Official-Use-Only

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

This is the other NOM request I was talking about.

s22(1)(a)(ii) and I tried to create a confidentialised pivot as discussed below, but it didn't work because s22(1)(a)(ii) code only works for non-negative data, and NOM at low levels can be negative. The only way I can think of to create a confidentialised pivot is to ask someone who knows much more about Excel than me to do it, but I'm not sure who could be asked who would have enough available time.

Regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Border Statistics  
 Visa and Citizenship Statistics Section  
 Policy Research and Statistics Branch | Strategic Policy and Planning Division  
 Policy Group  
 Department of Immigration and Border Protection  
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 E: s47E(d) [s22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)@border.gov.au">@border.gov.au](mailto:<span style=)

For-Official-Use-Only

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**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Friday, 5 May 2017 11:45 AM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** RE: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For-Official-Use-Only

Thanks s22(1)(a)(ii) – greatly appreciated 😊

For-Official-Use-Only

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**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Friday, 5 May 2017 11:43 AM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** RE: For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For-Official-Use-Only

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Abul wants final NOM data, not forecast, so I don't think this request needs to wait for ministerial approval for the NOM (forecast) report. s42

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Anyway, I've set aside some time with <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup> on Monday to discuss how to put the final NOM data into a confidentialised pivot (like the OAD data on data.gov.au). Once this is done, we could use it a base to put the NOM data on data.gov.au if we want to in the future.

Regards,

<sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>

Border Statistics  
 Visa and Citizenship Statistics Section  
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 Department of Immigration and Border Protection  
 P: +61 2 <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup> | +61 2 <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  
 E: <sup>s47E(d)</sup> <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup> [@border.gov.au](mailto:<sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>@border.gov.au)

For-Official-Use-Only

---

**From:** <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  
**Sent:** Friday, 5 May 2017 11:33 AM  
**To:** <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  
**Cc:** <sup>s47E(d)</sup>  
**Subject:** For Action: Legal Opinion C29764 - Request for disclosure of Net Overseas Migration and Overseas Arrivals and Departures data [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For-Official-Use-Only

Hi <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>

Please start preparing the data for Mr Rizvi.

The NOM report is still with the MO and consequently we cannot release the requested information until we have clearance. I note however from previous conversation were that this may take some time to produce.

Kind regards,

<sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>

A/g Director  
 Visa and Citizenship Statistics Section  
 Policy Research and Statistics Branch  
 Strategic Policy and Planning Division  
 Department of Immigration and Border Protection  
 Telephone: (02) <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  
 Email: <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup> [@border.gov.au](mailto:<sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>@border.gov.au)

For-Official-Use-Only

---

**From:** <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 12 April 2017 3:09 PM

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Isentia Daily Briefings  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 25 April 2018 6:22 AM  
**Subject:** Department of Home Affairs Briefing 25 April 2018

**WEDNESDAY, 25 APRIL 2018**

## Daily Briefing

A summary of Department of Home Affairs media coverage.



Prepared by Isentia for the Department of Home Affairs

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**ABC Radio Melbourne, Drive, 24/04/18, Rafael Epstein**

Interview with Abul Rizvi, Senior Official at the Department of Immigration, PhD student on Population and Immigration Policy, ANU. Rizvi says he is not really surprised that Melbourne is growing fast. He says the two powerhouse cities of Australia has always been Melbourne and Sydney. He notes that when the population increases the two cities tend to lead the way because of its economic strength. He states that it is not particularly good. He adds that if you are in the city where the population is particularly aged and has stagnated decline it is a much harder quality challenge to deal with than a fast population growth. He says planning where people should actually go is feasible. He thinks at an appropriate level of cooperation between Commonwealth and States Governments it is certainly possible. he explains that one of the reasons for the rapid population growth is the arrivals of overseas students. He also mentions young couples buying their first homes and migrants making their second move into an area where they can afford a house, are some of the reasons. He mentions the figures for Cranbourne is dominated by internal migration and not overseas migration. He notes that overseas students are an important part of migration system that a large number of migrants tend to be people coming to Australia as overseas students. He notes that congestion is a factor in making the commute to work difficult. He notes that cities such as Paris, Tokyo, New York, and London are much more densely populated than big Australian cities.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Saturday, 12 May 2018 6:25 AM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** FW: Department of Home Affairs Briefing 12 May 2018

**From:** Isentia Daily Briefings  
**Sent:** Saturday, 12 May 2018 6:20:44 AM (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney  
**Subject:** Department of Home Affairs Briefing 12 May 2018

**SATURDAY, 12 MAY 2018**

## Daily Briefing

A summary of Department of Home Affairs media coverage.



s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Small isn't necessarily beautiful**

[Inside Story, Other, 11/05/18, Abul Rizvi](#)

Is Australia's immigration policy based on a theory of perpetual economic growth fuelled by perpetual population growth? The Saturday Paper's Mike Secombe seems to think so.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Isentia Daily Briefings  
**Sent:** Friday, 25 May 2018 6:22 AM  
**Subject:** Australian Border Force Daily Briefing 25 May 2018  
**Attachments:** image003.jpg; image004.jpg

**FRIDAY, 25 MAY 2018**

## Daily Briefing

A summary of media coverage from ABF monitoring briefs.



s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**The cut to the migration program is more politics than policy**[Guardian Australia, Other, 24/05/18, Abul Rizvi](#)

Earlier this week, head of the home affairs department, Mike Pezzullo, confirmed Canberra's worst kept secret – the government will cut the 2017-18 migration program by around 20,000 from the "ceiling" of 190,000. On the basis of the data available, the bulk of the cut will be through the skill stream which makes up about two-thirds of the program.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Media Operations  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 13 June 2018 3:05 PM  
**To:** Media Operations  
**Subject:** Media monitoring: The Guardian | Australia's immigration rate to fall again as work visa approvals drop | 13 June 2018 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/jun/13/australias-immigration-rate-to-fall-again-as-work-visa-approvals-drop>

## Australia's immigration rate to fall again as work visa approvals drop

The Guardian | Ben Doherty

13 June 2018, 4:00AM

Australia's migrant intake will be substantially down this financial year – possibly 25,000 below the 190,000 planned figure – led by reductions in the number of skilled and sponsored working visas.

The migration program has been at 190,000 since 2012-13 but dropped to 183,000 last financial year and will fall further again this year. Figures disclosed at Senate estimates and visa statistics obtained by Guardian Australia under freedom of information reveal the number of visas granted in 2017-18 is likely to be 165,000 – the lowest level in seven years.

To 30 April this year the Australian government had granted 138,086 permanent visas divided broadly into two-thirds skilled, one-third family (and excluding humanitarian visas, which sit outside the migration program figure). "It's probably down on where we were this time last year," a first assistant secretary for the Department of Home Affairs department, Christine Dacey, told estimates last month.

Extrapolated to the full year ending 30 June, it appears likely about 165,000 migration visas will be granted. The figures obtained for the first six months of the 2017-18 financial year show a 15% drop in the number of permanent visas granted, from 92,477 to 78,190.

Comparing the first six months of the 2016-17 financial year with the first six months of the 2017-18 year, the figures show substantial falls across most visa categories, but most particularly among skilled independent and employer-sponsored work visas. The number of employer-sponsored visas fell from 22,843 to 16,047, driven largely by changes to the 457 visa regime.

Skilled independent visas officially fell from 24,289 to 20,989. This large headline fall masks a significant change in the makeup of the program. A deal struck between Canberra and Wellington now enables some New Zealanders who have lived and worked in Australia for five years to apply for permanent residency, and a pathway to citizenship.

These are likely to displace thousands of other skilled migrants who might otherwise have been granted a permanent visa in the migration intake. Figures released in April show more than 9,000 New Zealanders have applied to take up this option. Fewer migrants were sponsored by states, territories and regions, while business innovation and investment visas (for people starting a business in Australia) were largely unchanged.

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The planned migration program figure for the 2018-19 financial year is again 190,000, the seventh consecutive year at that level. But that figure has undergone a subtle but significant shift as debate has restarted about the size and shape of Australia's migration program and future population.

Previously, within the immigration department (which is now part of home affairs), the migration program figure was always referred to as a "target" or "planning level", never a "ceiling", a former immigration deputy secretary, Abul Rizvi, wrote in Inside Story.

But in May the secretary of the Department of Home Affairs, Mike Pezzullo, told estimates a change had taken place within government several years ago, "to ensure that the permanent program was managed, not as a target ... but to treat the program as a ceiling".

Media reports have suggested that cabinet this year discussed lowering the planned migration figure by 20,000 but that it was rejected. Ministers have variously denied that the figure was debated, or stated that debate over the size of Australia's migration program was part of regular discussions within government.

The home affairs minister, Peter Dutton, has said the government already had, and would reduce migrant numbers "where we believe it's in our national interest", citing traffic gridlock and unaffordable housing in cities. But he also said he supported immigration at its current levels.

While issues around choked roads, strains on schools, hospitals and other infrastructure, and house prices are politically sensitive for the government, migration adds an estimated 1% to Australia's gross domestic product every year, Treasury modelling indicates, because it counters Australia's ageing population (migrants tend to be younger than the average Australian).

There is significant backbench agitation for a reduction in permanent migrants coming to Australia. The former prime minister Tony Abbott has called for a reduction in migration levels to those seen under John Howard. But Australia's migration program boomed under Howard. The permanent migration intake increased from about 70,000 to 150,000 annually, and there was a dramatic rise in the number of temporary migrants, mainly skilled workers and international students.

A 2016 Productivity Commission report predicted the population would reach 40 million by 2060, and argued the future size of Australia would be largely determined by the country's migration policies. "In the absence of a formal population policy, Australia's immigration policy is its de facto population policy. As such, immigration has broad-ranging and enduring implications for the economy, society and the environment."

Since about 2005 migration has been a larger driver of population increase than babies being born in Australia. Migration now accounts for about 60% of Australia's population increase.

Kind Regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Media Operations**

Department of Home Affairs

Media line: 6264 2244

Email: [media@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:media@homeaffairs.gov.au)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Isentia Daily Briefings  
**Sent:** Friday, 22 June 2018 6:25 AM  
**Subject:** Department of Home Affairs Briefing 22 June 2018  
**Attachments:** image003.jpg; image004.jpg

FRIDAY, 22 JUNE 2018

## Daily Briefing

A summary of Department of Home Affairs media coverage.



s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Immigration roulette**[Inside Story, Other, 21/06/18, Abul Rizvi](#)

Peter Dutton is gambling with a longstanding pillar of Australia's economic and budgetary success. By making the biggest cut to permanent skilled migration since the recession of the early 1990s and throttling back skilled temporary migration, he will reduce net migration — and our population growth rate — significantly.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 1:53 PM  
**To:** s47E(d)  
**Subject:** RFI 21315 - RE: Independent Retiree Visa [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Categories:** Triage - s22(1)(a)(ii)

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Perfect – thanks

Cheers

s22(1)(a)(ii)

---

**From:** s47E(d)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 1:35 PM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii) HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU>  
**Cc:** s47E(d) @homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: Independent Retiree Visa [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Thanks for forwarding Abul's query onto us – we will action.

Regarding your question about public facing data, feel free to forward the attached **Publicly Available Statistics** in response to any external queries you may receive. This document, compiled by our Deputy Chief Statistician, lists a range of public data held by a number of departments and related to immigration.

Other publicly available information can be found on the Home Affairs website at:

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about/reports-publications/research-statistics/statistics>

Hope this assists.

Thanks and kind regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Statistical Development and Reporting Branch**  
 Data Division  
 Department of Home Affairs  
 E: s47E(d) @homeaffairs.gov.au

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

---

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 12:32 PM

To: <sup>s47E(d)</sup> [redacted] [@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:[redacted]@homeaffairs.gov.au)>  
Subject: Fwd: Independent Retiree Visa

Hi

Passing this one along - not sure if I've sent it to the correct email - let me know and I'll resend :-)

(Abul Rizvi's a former dep sec of the department, now acting as a immigration pundit)

More generally, I'd be interested to know where to point people asking for our public facing data - I get a number of requests.

I know we have some info at [data.gov.au](http://data.gov.au), and likely on our own site - just not sure of a full list.

Thanks

<sup>s22(1)(a)</sup>  
(ii) [redacted]

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Abul Rizvi <sup>s47F</sup> [redacted]  
**Subject:** Independent Retiree Visa  
**Date:** 20 June 2018 at 10:56:40 am AEST  
**To:** <sup>s22(1)(a)(ii)</sup> [redacted]

Hi <sup>s22(1)(a)</sup>  
(ii) [redacted]

I have been unable to find any statistics on this visa class which the Government announced it would be closing.

Do you know where I could find data on stock and grant stats for this visa class in recent years (sub-class 410 as I remember)?

Cheers

Abul

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Friday, 29 June 2018 9:14 AM  
**To:** s47E(d)  
**Subject:** RE: RFI 21315 - Fwd: Independent Retiree Visa [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Categories:** Waiting for Response, s22(1)(a)(ii)

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi,

Seeking clearance for external release of grant count and stock data for subclass 410 across a number of years to Abul Rizvi

## Grants:

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| 2014-15                  | 8  |
| 2015-16                  | 8  |
| 2016-17                  | 12 |
| 2017-18 to<br>31/05/2018 | 16 |

## Stock as at:

|            |      |
|------------|------|
| 2007-06-30 | 5796 |
| 2008-06-30 | 5527 |
| 2009-06-30 | 4962 |
| 2010-06-30 | 4509 |
| 2011-06-30 | 4014 |
| 2012-06-30 | 3608 |
| 2013-06-30 | 3323 |
| 2014-06-30 | 3120 |
| 2015-06-30 | 2972 |
| 2016-06-30 | 2928 |
| 2017-06-30 | 2828 |
| 2018-05-31 | 2483 |

thanks

s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Senior Adviser  
 Strategy and Capability Division  
 Department of Home Affairs  
 M: s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 E: s22(1)(a)(ii) [@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au)

UNCLASSIFIED

Released by Department of Home Affairs  
 under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

**From:** s47E(d)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 26 June 2018 2:36 PM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii) @HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU>  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii) @HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU>; s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 s47E(d) @HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU>; s47E(d)  
 s47E(d) @homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: RFI 21315 - Fwd: Independent Retiree Visa [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Happy for you to advise Abul.

You can source the grant data from the Historical BP0001 via the attached TRIM link. Please send to Data Clearance before any external release.

Thanks and kind regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Statistical Development and Reporting Branch**  
 Data Division  
 Department of Home Affairs  
 P: 02 s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 E: s47E(d) @homeaffairs.gov.au

UNCLASSIFIED

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Monday, 25 June 2018 6:18 PM  
**To:** s47E(d) @homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii) @HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU>; s22(1)(a)(ii)  
 @HOMEAFFAIRS.GOV.AU>  
**Subject:** Re: RFI 21315 - Fwd: Independent Retiree Visa [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Thanks for that.

Did you advise Abul? Or would you like me to do that?

What ever's the protocol, I'm comfortable.

thanks,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

On 25 Jun 2018, at 2:46 pm, s47E(d)  
 @homeaffairs.gov.au> wrote:

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi: s22(1)(a)  
(ii)

We do not publish any grants data as far as I am aware. We do however publish Temporary entrants in Australia quarterly which includes subclass 410, see below link;

<https://data.gov.au/dataset/temporary-entrants-visa-holders>

Regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

### Statistical Coordination

Statistics and Information Governance Branch

Data Division

Department of Home Affairs

E: s47E(d) @homeaffairs.gov.au

UNCLASSIFIED

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**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 12:32 PM  
**To:** s47E(d) @homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RFI 21315 - Fwd: Independent Retiree Visa

Hi

Passing this one along - not sure if I've sent it to the correct email - let me know and I'll resend :-)

(Abul Rizvi's a former dep sec of the department, now acting as a immigration pundit)

More generally, I'd be interested to know where to point people asking for our public facing data - I get a number of requests.

I know we have some info at [data.gov.au](https://data.gov.au), and likely on our own site - just not sure of a full list.

Thanks

s22(1)(a)  
(ii)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Abul Rizvi s47F  
**Subject:** Independent Retiree Visa  
**Date:** 20 June 2018 at 10:56:40 am AEST

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To: s22(1)(a)(ii)

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Do you know where I could find data on stock and grant stats for this visa class in recent years (sub-class 410 as I remember)?

Cheers

Abul

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Isentia Daily Briefings  
**Sent:** Monday, 16 July 2018 6:21 AM  
**Subject:** Department of Home Affairs Briefing 16 July 2018

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**MONDAY, 16 JULY 2018**

## Daily Briefing

A summary of Department of Home Affairs media coverage.



s22(1)(a)(ii)

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under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Tough talk****[Inside Story, Other, 15/07/18, Abul Rizvi](#)**

In an “exclusive” on the front page of Friday's Australian, Simon Benson reports that migrant numbers for 2017–18 were 28,000 below the announced ceiling of 190,000. The reason: tougher vetting of visa applications. The fall “has been attributed to new

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integrity measures applied to the system following the discovery of a high number of fraudulent claims being made every year," says Benson.

s22(1)(a)(ii)



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s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Monday, 16 July 2018 6:39 PM  
**To:** Media Operations  
**Subject:** Secretary request for articles. [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

**Categories:**

s22(1)  
(a)(ii)

For-Official-Use-Only

Hi Team,

Can someone please print off copies of each of the articles written by Abul Rizvi for Inside Story (available at this link: <http://insidestory.org.au/authors/abul-rizvi/>). Needs to be printed one-sided/colour.

Also, can each please be copied into a word doc. Title it 'Inside story – date – title.'

Can I also please have a summary of each in the body of an email:

**Inside Story (21 June 2018) [Immigration roulette](#)** – Will Peter Dutton's high-stakes gamble wrong-foot the government on tax cuts?

Need this by 3pm Tuesday, if possible.

Happy to chat if the above doesn't make sense.

Thanks,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

For-Official-Use-Only

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 19 July 2018 9:59 AM  
**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** s22(1)(a)(ii) Media Operations; s22(1)(a)(ii) ESU  
**Subject:** Executive Support Unit  
 For action: SEC 1405 - Media article: Inside Story - 'Tough talk' dated 15 July 2018  
 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Attachments:** DSE 450.pdf; s22(1)(a)(ii)

UNCLASSIFIED

ECD Support

Please find attached **SEC 1405** relating to a media article dated 15 July 2018 from the Inside Story titled 'Tough talk'. The Secretary has asked:

➔ *Has Rizvi published anything else since Dec 2017 – other than on Inside Story? MP 18/07/2018*

Please submit FAS cleared response directly to ESU with myself and Vanessa Pearce as cc (we will print a copy for a/DSE) by **COB Tuesday 24 July**. Please note, it is up to FAS ECD to decide whether Lachlan needs to clear.

Hard copy available for collection, if required.

**ESU** – please log tasking.

Kind regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Executive Assistant to acting Deputy Secretary Lachlan Colquhoun**  
**Executive Group**  
 Department of Home Affairs

**P:** 02 s22(1)(a)(ii) **M:** s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**E:** s22(1)(a)(ii) [@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au)

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## INSIDE STORY

Received

18 JUL 2018

In the Office of the  
Secretary Home Affairs  
Correspondence No: 1405

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

792 words

## Tough talk

ABUL RIZVI

15 JULY 2018

Has Rizvi published

anything else since

Dec 2017 - other than on  
Inside Story?

MP

18/07/2018

Has stricter vetting really  
reduced Australia's migrant  
intake?

Right:

No details: home affairs minister Peter Dutton.  
Mick Tsikas/AAP Image



In an "exclusive" on the front page of Friday's *Australian*, Simon Benson reports that migrant numbers for 2017–18 were 28,000 below the announced ceiling of 190,000. The reason: tougher vetting of visa applications. The fall "has been attributed to new integrity measures applied to the system following the discovery of a high number of fraudulent claims being made every year," says Benson. The measures resulted in "a 46 per cent increase in visas being refused and a further 17 per cent rise in applications being withdrawn due to greater scrutiny."

Home affairs minister Peter Dutton hasn't released any explanation of the fall in numbers on his own or his department's website, so we only have Benson's figures to go by. Requests to the department and the minister's office have so far elicited no response. But what we do know suggests that Benson has been taken for a ride, as have other journalists who picked up on his story.

The bigger of the two numbers — the 46 per cent increase in refusals — would make more sense if we knew which types of visas it applies to, how the figure was calculated and what the main reasons were. Refusal rates in the skill stream, for instance, are generally very low, so a small increase can seem very large in percentage terms. But even a 46 per cent increase in the refusal rate goes nowhere near explaining a 28,000 shortfall from the 190,000 ceiling.

It's also important to understand that the administrative process of reducing migrant numbers can itself lift the refusal rate. Each of the department's overseas posts and each regional office will have been allocated a reduced number of places in the program; once they run out, officials will focus on processing cases earmarked for refusal, letting the likely approvals bank up for the following year.

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And the 17 per cent increase in applications being withdrawn? This figure is more than likely the result of changes in visa rules — an increase in the pass mark for the skilled independent category, for instance — than a product of “greater scrutiny.” Once again, without the details it’s impossible to know.

When Scott Morrison was immigration minister, and even in 2015–16, the first full year in which Dutton was minister, the department boasted of coming very close to hitting the annual 190,000 target for the migration program. It reported 189,770 visas issued in 2015–16; 189,097 in 2014–15; and 190,000 in 2013–14. If the Labor government’s approach in earlier years was “tick and flick,” as Dutton has described it, then how would he characterise Scott Morrison’s stewardship, and his own, during that time?

In fact, protecting “visa integrity” really doesn’t have anything to do with the fall in numbers. From the outset, Peter Dutton planned to reduce the 2017–18 program by whatever means necessary. As manager of the migration program for more than a decade between 1995 and 2007, I can attest that the immigration department was always very conscious of visa integrity issues. Dutton and his departmental head, Mike Pezzullo, needed a rationale for the cut — especially after Treasury and Home Affairs issued a joint report earlier this year extolling the economic and budgetary benefits of the migration program. “Increased scrutiny” was the best excuse they could come up with.

Dutton’s unilateral decision to cut the intake risks wrong-footing federal and state government agencies as well as businesses and individuals. In this year’s federal budget, for example, Treasury has assumed population growth at around 1.6 per cent. A recent speech by a senior official in the Reserve Bank assumes that this rate of growth will continue. Dutton’s measures, including his changes to temporary entry visa processing, will reduce this figure significantly, possibly reducing the expected population by between 200,000 and 400,000 by 2021.

There is nothing wrong with reducing the level of immigration as long as the intention to do this is clearly signalled and honestly explained. The home affairs minister refuses to do either. As a result, the figures underlying the 2018–19 budget have been put into serious doubt. State planning agencies are working to a population growth forecast that is too high, as are businesses reliant on the demand effects of a faster rate of population growth. Peter Dutton needs to start explaining what he is doing and stop keeping government agencies, businesses and the Australian public in the dark.

Simon Benson’s report raises one other issue. Why were these figures released exclusively and unusually quickly to the *Australian*, with no press release or any other details provided to other media? In previous years, Peter Dutton has sat on information about the program for months and then released it in a very low-key way. Could this month’s by-election in Longman — and the possibility of attracting votes from Pauline Hanson’s One Nation — be a factor? •

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ABUL RIZVI

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Abul Rizvi was a senior official in the Department of Immigration from the early 1990s to 2007, when he left as Deputy Secretary.

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Australian Government  
Department of Home Affairs

Received

25 JUL 2018

In the Office of the  
Secretary Home Affairs  
Correspondence No: 1405

## Executive Group

Date: 25/07/2018

### Secretary Correspondence No: 1405

Has Abul Rizvi published anything else since December 2017, other than Inside Story?

### Response

Mr Rizvi has written two opinion pieces for The Guardian:

- 24 May 2018, [The cut to the migration program is more politics than policy](#)
- 21 February 2018, [Tony Abbott's speech on immigration contains flaws in logic](#)

In addition Mr Rizvi has written five articles for the website Pearls and Irritations (<https://johnmenadue.com/>)

Pearls and Irritations is self-described as "...influential and widely read, with outstanding authors writing about important current events. There are no sponsors and subscriptions are free. Our editors and authors are independent, dedicated and generous".

- 10 July 2018, [Business migration should focus on establishing businesses not passive investment](#)
- 2 July 2018, [Pezzullo's Dark World View is Paralyzing Australia's Immigration System.](#)
- 20 June 2018, [Will Dutton's high stakes gamble wrong-foot the Treasury?](#)
- 12 April 2018, [Inter-generational inequality, the fertility rate and population ageing.](#)
- 28 March 2018, [Is Bob Birrell Right on Australia's Skilled Migration Program?](#)

### Background

Inside story is an online news service and not related to the television program on the Nine Network. Inside Story focuses mostly on current affairs and culture in Australia but also discusses international issues.

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|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Author:             | s22(1)(a)(ii) A/g Assistant Secretary Media and Engagement Branch, s22(1)(a)(ii) (s22(1)(a)(ii))             |
| SES Clearance:      | Kylie Scholten, A/g First Assistant Secretary Executive Coordination Division, s22(1)(a)(ii) (s22(1)(a)(ii)) |
| Consultation:       | N/A  |
| Copied to:          | Deputy Secretary Executive, Rachel Noble PSM, Deputy Secretary Policy, Linda Geddes                          |
| <u>Attachment A</u> | Tough Talk – Secretary's comments  |
| <u>Attachment B</u> | Copies of articles referenced in the response  |

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## INSIDE STORY

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ABUL RIZVI

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## Tough talk | Inside Story

Abul Rizvi was a senior official in the Department of Immigration from the early 1990s to 2007, when he left as Deputy Secretary.

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# The Guardian

## The cut to the migration program is more politics than policy

*Abul Rizvi*

The reasons came from the law enforcement playbook, but we can only speculate who will take credit for the cuts

Thu 24 May 2018 15:58 AEST



**E**arlier this week, head of the home affairs department, Mike Pezzullo, confirmed Canberra's worst kept secret - the government will cut the 2017-18 migration program by around 20,000 from the "ceiling" of 190,000. On the basis of the data available, the bulk of the cut will be through the skill stream which makes up about two-thirds of the program.

It is remarkable for a Coalition government to cut skilled migration during an upswing in the economy. It's certainly not something Menzies or Holt ever did. The John Howard government significantly increased the skilled intake when the Australian economy surged from around 2001.

But more interesting are the different explanations for the cut and the question of who will be taking the credit.

Pezzullo tried to suggest at Senate estimates the shortfall may be due to more stringent visa checking using new linked systems and that such checking can cause additional delays.

Increased use of system alerts to identify visa applications and issues that require additional investigation has been a long-standing priority for Australia's immigration authorities. But from one year to the next, these lead to a tiny increase in the visa refusal rate, hardly 20,000. Linked systems will help to resolve issues more quickly as often as they lead to further delays.

In other words, Pezzullo was clutching at straws.

Under Pezzullo, visa processing service standards have already increased to over 12 months for most permanent visa types. For partner visas (eg people who are married to an Australian and for whom the law does not allow the

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government to limit the number of visas issued), visa processing times often exceed 30 months. How much further is he suggesting visa processing times will increase to explain a cut of 20,000 visas?

Australian immigration authorities are more than capable of delivering the program on target without any additional risk to visa integrity or national security. They would only deliver the program 20,000 below the "ceiling" if Dutton had instructed them to do so. The fact his department has been releasing places in the skilled independent category during 2017-18 at a rate significantly more slowly than the previous year proves this to be the case.

Pezzullo could not afford to admit delivering the program 20,000 below the 190,000 ceiling was the plan all along as that would risk demands he provide the money for the consequential hit to the budget. Scott Morrison has already warned us of this hit but has refrained from including it as a measure in the budget papers. Pezzullo and Morrison cannot say the cut would be beneficial to the economy and the budget because only a few weeks earlier, home affairs and treasury had issued a joint paper extolling the benefits of the program.

And he could not use Morrison's explanation that the program would only be delivered below the ceiling if there is a lack of demand. The pipeline of applications is more than enough to deliver the program at 190,000.

No, Pezzullo went to his standard law enforcement playbook for an explanation of the cut. That this explanation may help in his agenda of seeking an ever expanding range of powers and a bigger law enforcement budget would have made this explanation extra attractive.

So what is the real reason for the cut?

There is certainly no obvious policy reason. If there was, it would have been included in the recent treasury/home affairs joint report on the immigration intake. Indeed, that report warns of "far reaching effects" of lower economic growth if the current intake is not maintained.

No state/territory premier or chief minister is calling for a cut, and as usual the business community is supportive of maintaining the current program. Even the ACTU has come out in support.

The reason is more likely to be pure politics rather than policy - on this we can only speculate based on who is likely to take credit for the cut.

Surely it cannot be long before Tony Abbott and Pauline Hanson both come out with "I told you it was a good idea to cut immigration"? Could Hanson argue the government has cut immigration as part of her negotiations on the corporate tax cuts (but that the government has not gone far enough so she has withdrawn her support)?

Of course the real credit belongs to Peter Dutton. But how will he secure credit for something his own department says will be a negative for the economy and the budget? Perhaps talk to Ray Hadley's radio listeners, where some may not be following the debate too closely and will be happy with a cut to immigration irrespective of the explanation?

What we now need is for the prime minister to explain the cut. Will he also go to the Pezzullo law enforcement and national security playbook? Or will he devise some new reasons of his own, having previously insisted that cabinet never discussed any cuts to the 2017-18 migration program?

Abul Rizvi is a former deputy secretary of the immigration department

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Unlike many news organisations, we haven't put up a paywall - we want our journalism to remain free and open to everyone. Democracy depends on reliable access to information. By making our journalism publicly available, we're able to hold governments, companies and institutions to account, and offer our diverse, global readership a platform for debate and commentary. This encourages us all to challenge our opinions on what's happening in our world. By supporting The Guardian - and just giving what you can afford - you can help us ensure that everyone has access to critical information for years to come.

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Topics

- Migration

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# The Guardian

## Tony Abbott's speech on immigration contains flaws in logic

*Abul Rizvi*

A push to slash migration may well put pressure on Malcolm Turnbull but is likely to do little else

Wed 21 Feb 2018 11.57 AEDT



Following the lead of Donald Trump in the USA, Nigel Farage in the UK and various populist politicians in Europe, it was only a matter of time before Tony Abbott was going to ramp up the pressure on Malcolm Turnbull to slash immigration. And so it was in a speech to the Sydney Institute on Tuesday evening he called for a cut of 80,000 to Australia's migration intake. Using immigrants as a scapegoat for problems caused mainly by other factors is an age-old tactic that is now modern again.

Predictably, conservative commentator Andrew Bolt has come out supporting his good mate, Tony. We will no doubt soon hear Pauline Hanson complain Abbott has pinched her policies again.

Whether Abbott actually believes in what he says about immigration levels is irrelevant. After all, apart from "stopping the boats", which were always a tiny part of the migration intake, Abbott did nothing in a policy sense to reduce immigration levels while he was in office.

Abbott says when he was prime minister, net overseas migration fell by 30,000. And indeed it did fall from around 227,000 in 2012-13 to around 186,000 in 2013-14 and to around 178,000 in 2014-15. But around 19,000 of this decline was due to an increase in the net movement of Australian citizens (ie more Australian citizens left Australia to settle elsewhere) while the net movement of New Zealand citizens to Australia fell by around 30,000 due to the relative strength of the New Zealand economy.

The offshore humanitarian intake, the people Abbott is most critical of in his speech, actually increased during this period by over 3,000. While the net movement of skilled temporary entrants fell by around 15,000, that was not due to any policy change but rather the weak state of the labour market in those years. Net movement of overseas students, one of the key drivers of fluctuations in net overseas migration, increased during this period by over 36,000. In fact, if it wasn't for the increase in overseas students, net overseas migration during the Abbott years would have fallen by around 70,000 - indicative of an economy on the verge of recession.

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Another point Abbott makes is that per capita economic growth in the Howard years, when net overseas migration was lower, was significantly higher than in the decade afterwards, when net overseas migration was higher. But Abbott ignores two key points.

First, the Howard years coincided with the strongest part of Australia's "demographic dividend" phase (ie when the ratio of working age population to total population was growing most strongly). Since 2009, this ratio has been in decline in Australia (ie we have entered the early part of our "demographic burden" phase).

More importantly, however, Abbott conveniently ignores the global financial crisis. Per capita economic growth in every major developed nation since the GFC was lower than before the GFC. Indeed, Australia's per capita growth since the GFC has been well above the average of OECD countries, even though we have had a much higher rate of population growth.

### **Immigration and wages**

The immigration causes slow wages growth furphy is similar to the old immigration causes unemployment furphy. For a guy well versed in economics, it is surprising Abbott ignores the fact immigrants impact both the supply and demand side of the economy.

Yes, they add to labour supply and thereby put downward pressure on wages but they also add to aggregate demand both through the savings they bring to Australia (overseas students paying full fees for their courses, for example) and the money they spend setting up new households.

Skilled migrants in particular add much more to aggregate demand than to aggregate supply - this creates jobs and puts upwards pressure on wages. The re-design of Australia's immigration arrangements to focus on skilled migration are part of the explanation why real wages growth in Australia after the "recession we had to have" in the 1990s was so much faster than the OECD average and in particular faster than countries like Japan with their ageing population and minimal levels of immigration.

### **Immigration and house prices**

Abbott is right to point out that immigrants (permanent or temporary) increase demand for housing. Unless supply can respond adequately, this will drive up prices. But as Abbott would know, there are other factors also in play. If Abbott was right about immigration being the key culprit, why has growth in house prices slowed significantly during 2017 and the early part of 2018 given the 50,000 person surge in net overseas migration in 2016-17 - a surge that is likely to continue in 2017-18?

The other issue Abbott fails to mention is the impact of a significant cut to immigration for Australia's residential construction industry - an industry that employs over 600,000 Australians, particularly tradesmen and women. He suggests a large cut in immigration would lead to some of them being "inconvenienced" - like some sub-contractors going out of business because of a sudden drop in demand.

### **Implementation**

Abbott also forgets to mention that in his 2014 budget, he directly linked the size and composition of the intake to budget funding. As the overall intake delivers a budget positive result, Dutton's home affairs department would need to find the offsetting savings.

But the issue on which Abbott is most misleading, is in his arguments on how simple slashing immigration levels would be. He seems to forget that immigration rules were codified in legislation in 1989. Changing these to reduce demand for migration requires Senate support. On this, he may wish to ask his mentor John Howard on the difficulties he encountered in the Senate when he reduced immigration levels in 1996-98. Large swathes of amendments to immigration regulations were disallowed in the Senate. The amendments that would be required in 2018 would be even more controversial and divisive. They would cause Malcolm Turnbull no end of pain.

But perhaps that's what Abbott wants?

Abul Rizvi is a former deputy secretary of the immigration department

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## John Menadue – Pearls and Irritations

Pearls and Irritations

### ABUL RIZVI: Business migration should focus on establishing businesses not passive investment

10 July 2018

While Eryk Bagshaw's article of 8 July 2018 screams [Millionaires stream in](#), the Sun Herald's editorial of the same day is a bit more sanguine about the benefits and risks of the Business Innovation and Investment Programme that facilitates entry of business migrants and investors. This Programme and its predecessors, while superficially attractive, have a chequered history as recognised by the Productivity Commission in its 2016 Report on the Migrant Intake and Minister Alex Hawke's decision to initiate a review of the Programme.

The merits of the former Business Migration Program were being questioned as early as the 1980s when former Senator Don Grimes asked about "people who arrived here with \$250,000, \$500,000 or even more in the bank, which money went into their accounts just before they came to Australia, and suddenly disappeared out of their accounts just after their arrival."

Numerous allegations of the BMP effectively being outsourced to accredited agents (under former Minister Mick Young) led to a Joint Committee of Public Accounts recommendation in 1991 for the Program to be abolished. Immigration Minister Gerry Hand responded almost immediately to axe the Program and set out to establish a replacement scheme that focused on business skills and a commitment to establish a business in Australia more than the amount of capital held. In time, this included provisional visa arrangements that required the establishment of a business for a minimum period before permanent residence could be confirmed.

In recent years, the Business Innovation and Investment Programme has again focussed increasingly on investment through the Significant Investor Visa and the Premium Investor Visa. The Productivity Commission identified considerable risks with these elements of the Programme including:

- Lack of an English language requirement or an age threshold
- Limited residency requirements
- Perception visas are being "sold" to wealthy foreigners
- Possible pathway for investing "dirty money" in Australia.

Given these risks, the Productivity Commission recommended it would be best for these investment focussed elements of the Programme to be closed down to new applications.

Indeed, the Productivity Commission made the very strong point that "there is little robust evidence that Australia faces significant difficulties in attracting foreign investment for profitable activities. This is particularly true for vanilla investments, such as listed equities and bonds". Indeed, there is little evidence that our tax arrangements are a barrier to attracting investment or high wealth individuals.

Against this background, a return to focussing on business skills and establishment of new businesses in Australia would have merit.

Abul Rizvi was a senior official in the Department of Immigration from the early 1990s to 2007 when he left as Deputy Secretary. He was awarded the Public Service Medal and the Centenary Medal for services to development and implementation of immigration policy, including in particular the reshaping of Australia's intake to focus on skilled migration. He is currently doing a PhD on Australia's immigration policies.

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**John Menadue – Pearls and Irritations***Pearls and Irritations***ABUL RIZVI: Pezzullo's Dark World View is Paralyzing Australia's Immigration System.**2 July 2018

*In a recent speech to heads of international border agencies, Mike Pezzullo, head of Australia's new Home Affairs Department, again highlighted the dark world view that, together with the policies of Peter Dutton, is paralyzing our world class immigration system.*

Pezzullo says in this speech that “we need to recalibrate our analytical and policy settings to account for a darker (but regrettably more realistic) view of the global world order”. While he makes a minor concession to the more networked world being “a net positive for humanity, by a significant margin, and well worth the attendant risks of networked threats”, Pezzullo fails to achieve any balance in his speech with his Department's responsibilities for facilitating these networked benefits or for his Department's responsibilities for social cohesion or Australia's humanitarian obligations.

Don't get me wrong, terrorism and the various forms of criminality Pezzullo refers to are very real and need to be managed seriously. Our security agencies have shown over the years they are very good at managing these risks. Pezzullo's constant fear-mongering fails to acknowledge how well our security agencies have done their job – perhaps to justify bringing these agencies within his Minister's portfolio.

We all understand beating the national security drum can help a Government relying on its security credentials to win votes. Pezzullo may have just been beating this drum to support his Minister. It's also not unusual for a senior public servant to talk up risks to either win a bigger budget or be able to say I told you so when a security event does take place.

But Pezzullo's infatuation with darkness and evil is having serious negative consequences. Immigration staff responsible for making visa and citizenship decisions are very conscious of what their Secretary says in his speeches. Rather than being encouraged and assisted to make efficient and timely decisions that balance all relevant factors, Pezzullo's fear-mongering is driving decision-making paralysis. Together with Dutton's policies, this is creating massive application backlogs and blow-outs in processing times.

Visa applications for overseas-born partners of Australians now take 30 months to process compared to 6-9 months just a decade earlier. Employer sponsored visa applications now take more than 12 months. And citizenship applications now take 16 months compared to two months just a few years ago.

Moreover, there is every indication these backlogs and processing times will continue to blow out. Backlogs generate growing complaints from applicants and sponsors which take ever more resources to manage. Growing complaints demoralise staff, especially if they see no strategy from their leaders to reduce the backlogs.

Pezzullo provides no explanation for how the blowout in processing times for employer sponsored applications, for example, will help deliver the positive benefits of a networked world. And in terms of the growing backlog of visa applications from people who are already in Australia – which now number over 200,000 – he fails to explain the risks these create for exploitation of the immigration system by non-genuine applicants.

Minister Alan Tudge has suggested the blowout in citizenship processing times are due to a “higher national security threshold these days” and some “bureaucratic stuff ups”.

But citizenship applications are amongst the simplest types of applications for Immigration officers to process. Citizenship applicants are people who the Government has already checked for identity, character and national security when they were granted their permanent residence visa. While a small number of applications may raise additional national security concerns, to suggest the overall processing times would blow out by a multiple of eight as a result of national security concerns defies credulity.

It is time the Auditor-General was called in to investigate and ensure the Government is not extending citizenship application processing times as a means of administratively implementing its policy of a longer wait for citizenship. That would be the Government acting as it is above the law of the land.

No one denies the importance of checking applications for national security and character issues. This is something that has been ramped up since well before the events of 9/11. But Pezzullo provides no evidence the massive blowout in processing times in recent years is in any way justified by the extra checking he promulgates. Even worse, as the man responsible for Australia's immigration system, Pezzullo's unbalanced references to darkness and evil undermine Australia's social cohesion.

These encourage the public to view immigrants with suspicion and concern even though around 28% of us are born overseas and almost half of us have a parent who was born overseas. Undermining social cohesion does enormous harm to national security which Pezzullo again fails to acknowledge.

Pezzullo approach, with the support of his Minister Peter Dutton, is increasingly converting a world leading immigration system into one that is in crisis.

*Abul Rizvi was a senior official in the Department of Immigration from the early 1990s to 2007 when he left as Deputy Secretary. He was awarded the Public Service Medal and the Centenary Medal for services to development and implementation of immigration policy, including in particular the reshaping of Australia's intake to focus on skilled migration. He is currently doing a PhD on Australia's immigration policies.*

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LAURA TINGLE. Here's what Peter Dutton's Home Affairs super-department looks like.

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This article and the two following articles were part of a policy series that was posted in May/June last year and subsequently published in book form 'Fairness, Opportunity and Security'. This is a repost from 25/5/2015.

Peter Hughes, Arja Keski-Nummi and John Menadue. Part 1. Immigration Policy and Administration.

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**Peter Phillips** says:

3 July 2018 at 2:29 PM

One cannot help feeling, on the one hand, sympathy for Abul Rizvi as he agonises for what is left of the Department which he formerly served with finesse and distinction, and on the other, revulsion for Pezzullo and for his thuggish sorcerer Dutton as they sustain their distasteful competition for recognition as the inspiration for ingenues such as Italy's Matteo Salvini in the latest heat of the Global Inhumanity to Asylum-Seekers Stakes.

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## John Menadue – Pearls and Irritations

Pearls and Irritations

### ABUL RIZVI. Will Dutton's high stakes gamble wrong-foot the Treasury?

20 June 2018

*Peter Dutton is gambling with a long-standing pillar of Australia's economic and budget success. By making the biggest [cut to permanent skilled migration](#) since the recession of the early 1990s, combined with a [throttling of skilled temporary migration](#), Dutton will significantly reduce net migration and therefore our population growth rate. The 1.6% per annum population growth assumption in the recent Budget could be too high by between 12% and 25%.*

No government review or report has recommended the actions Dutton is taking. Indeed, a [joint Treasury/Home Affairs Report](#) in May 2018 lauded the contribution of skilled migration to Australia's economy and budget, as did a [2016 Productivity Commission report on Australia's migrant intake](#).

Despite [advice to the contrary from Scott Morrison](#), Peter Dutton has acted to significantly reduce immigration. But how far will net overseas migration fall and what does that mean for the rate of population growth and the economy more generally?

In Budget Paper No.3, Treasury says Australia's total fertility rate was 1.817 babies per woman in 2017 and that this will rise to 1.9 babies by 2020 and then remain constant. This may explain why Treasury expects natural increase will, after trending down for a decade, suddenly bounce up from 145,500 in 2016 to 186,600 by 2021.

[Australia's total fertility rate](#) has declined since the ABS made its population projections in 2012. Given strong female participation rates, the high costs of childcare, slow wages growth and record levels of household debt, it is difficult to see why Treasury has assumed our fertility rate will rebound to 1.9 babies per woman by 2020.

Over the forward estimates, a safer assumption would be that natural increase remains around 150,000 per annum or declines slightly below that level with the annual number of deaths increasing at a slightly faster rate than the annual number of births.

#### Net Migration

Treasury is on slightly safer ground with net migration which it assumes will decline from 242,600 in 2017 to 221,400 in 2021.

While declining net overseas migration when the economy is forecast to grow strongly is highly unusual, actions Peter Dutton has taken will indeed ensure a strong decline. The real question is whether Treasury has underestimated the rate of decline in net overseas migration.

#### Permanent Migration

Home Affairs has confirmed the 2017-18 migration program will be delivered significantly below the "ceiling" of 190,000 (possibly 20,000 less).

In addition, net migration will decline further due to the [new visas for New Zealand citizens](#) who have been in Australia for at least five years (i.e. people who have already been counted in net migration). These visas will be included in the skill stream of the migration program. With around 10,000 such visas expected to be issued in

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2017-18 (and most likely at this level or higher for a number of years to come), the effective cut to the program will be closer to 30,000.

The ceiling for the [humanitarian program has increased in 2018-19 to 18,350](#). This is not very different, however, to the level in recent years due to the one-off intake of an additional 12,000 Syrian refugees.

### Temporary Migration

The number of skilled temporary entrants (i.e. former [sub-class 457s](#)) in Australia has been in steady decline since it peaked at just over 200,000 in March 2014. By March 2018, this had fallen to just over 150,000. While a strengthening economy would usually lead to an increase in such visas, the changes Dutton has made, which took full effect from March 2018, will not only significantly reduce the contribution these visa holders make to net migration but will also have a flow-on impact for overseas students and working holiday makers.

The number of overseas students in Australia has surged since implementation of the [Knight Review](#) in 2012. But growth in offshore overseas student visas slowed in 2017-18 due to a range of factors including the [strong increase in fees](#) charged by Australian education institutions and the narrowing of opportunities to extend stay in Australia.

As on-shore student visa grants continued to increase strongly in 2017-18, the stock of overseas students will continue to grow in the short-term. But the major narrowing of opportunities to extend stay will result in a substantial increase in departures of students over the next few years.

The number of temporary graduates in Australia (currently over 50,000) will continue to grow as many of the 500,000 overseas students in Australia complete their degrees and apply for a temporary graduate visa. As the number of people whose temporary graduate visa expires will also grow, departures on this visa will rise as they now have fewer options to extend stay.

There will be a similar impact on working holiday makers whose contribution to net migration was already in decline since 2012-13. This downward trend will continue due to the narrowing of opportunities to extend stay in Australia.

The above will be offset by an increase in people arriving on visitor visas and then applying for long-term temporary or permanent stay. This group has been growing in recent years and is likely to accelerate due to the large backlog of family stream and a further increase in processing times for employer sponsored visas.

### New Zealand Citizens

When the New Zealand economy performs poorly, net movement of New Zealand citizens to Australia is a substantial part of net migration. As the New Zealand economy is forecast to remain strong, net movement of New Zealand citizens to Australia will continue to be subdued.

### Australian Citizens

A relatively weak Australian economy can drive up emigration of Australian citizens to take up opportunities overseas. This was evident in the period 2011-12 to 2014-15 when the net movement of Australian citizens increased from minus 6,480 to minus 26,170.

While Australia's stronger economy in 2016-18 may have attracted some of these expatriates back to Australia (and slowed departures), the stronger world economy would also be attractive to many ambitious young

Australians. Unless there is a sharp downturn in the global economy, a high level of emigration from Australia will continue.

## Overall Implications

Based on the above, there is little chance Australia's population growth rate will average 1.6 % per annum as assumed.

Net migration in 2016-17 will be a one-off peak. The policy changes implemented by Dutton will ensure it averages less than 200,000 per annum over the next four years. The key swing factors will be the extent to which overseas students and temporary graduates delay departure, noting their options are now very limited, and the relative strength of the Australian economy.

If Australia's economy does continue to strengthen over the next few years, net migration may only fall to around 200,000 per annum giving a population growth rate of around 1.4% per annum over the forward estimates.

But if Australia's economy weakens or at least does not strengthen compared to the world economy and the New Zealand economy in particular, then Dutton's gamble may drive net migration down further and along with it, Australia's population growth rate. Net migration over the next four years of less than 150,000 per annum and a population growth rate closer to 1.2 % per annum is quite possible.

This would have serious implications over the forward estimates for Treasury's assumptions for household consumption growth, GDP, jobs growth and tax revenue as these are significantly driven by the rate of population growth. Given the cuts target the skill stream and temporary entrants who themselves have high participation and employment rates, there will also be a negative impact on Treasury's assumptions for participation and productivity.

This is a gamble Dutton should be explaining to the Australian public; to state/territory governments and to the business community given the decisions they will be making on the basis of the 1.6 % population growth assumption in the Budget.

*Abul Rizvi was a senior official in the Department of Immigration from the early 1990s to 2007 when he left as Deputy Secretary. He was awarded the Public Service Medal and the Centenary Medal for services to development and implementation of immigration policy, including in particular the reshaping of Australia's intake to focus on skilled migration. He is currently doing a PhD on Australia's immigration policies.*



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Peter Hughes, Arja Keski-Nummi and John Menadue. Part 1: Immigration Policy and Administration.

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## John Menadue – Pearls and Irritations

Pearls and Irritations

### ABUL RIZVI. Inter-generational inequality, the fertility rate and population ageing.

12 April 2018

*Australia's fertility rate continued its steady decline in 2016-17 and fell to 1.732, close to the level when Peter Costello rang the alarm about low fertility accelerating our rate of population ageing. It is also a level well below that assumed in the 2015 Inter-generational Report (1.9) and in the ABS's 2012 population projections (1.8).*

As a retired baby boomer, I know how much we value our grandkids and for some of us, our great-grandkids. But the children of Australia's baby boomers continue to delay childbirth and are again having fewer children.

Last month, the [ABS released data on Australia's total fertility rate for 2016-17](#). It has now fallen steadily since 2011-12 – 2011-12: 1.926; 2012-13: 1.917; 2013-14: 1.851; 2014-15: 1.821; 2015-16: 1.809; 2016-17: 1.732 (note this is subject to revision as the fall is partly due to a delay in registration of some births in NSW).

At 1.732 children per woman, even after allowing for the partial delay in birth registrations in NSW, Australia's total fertility rate (i.e. the average number of children a woman has over her lifetime) is getting close to the level when Peter Costello first rang the alarm about the consequences of low fertility for population ageing.

The decline in our fertility rate has been significantly faster than assumed by the ABS in its [2012 population projections](#). The ABS had assumed Australia's fertility rate would fall very gradually from its 2011-12 level of 1.926 to around 1.8 by 2026 and then remain at that level. All other things being equal, the faster fall in fertility means Australia's population will grow more slowly than projected by the ABS and it will age more quickly. It also brings forward the year in which the number of deaths will exceed the number of births in Australia, possibly to as early as the 2060s, subject to the level of immigration as that adds to the overall number of women in the population (note that many countries in continental Europe and Japan have already passed this point).

Our 2016-17 fertility rate is also significantly lower than the 1.9 assumed in [Joe Hockey's 2015 Inter-generational Report](#).

So the crucial question is why has it fallen so much more quickly than either the ABS or the Treasury anticipated? Will the decline continue? And what does that mean for our population growth rate and the rate at which our population ages?

The modern history of Australia's fertility rate is that, after the 1990-91 recession, fertility fell steadily throughout the 1990s coinciding with relatively weak economic growth and women in Australia having their first child later in life.

In the period 2001 to 2008, Australia's total fertility rate increased from 1.73 to 1.96. This coincided with both stronger economic growth (including growth in real wages, cuts to personal income tax rates and continued growth in female part-time work) as well as a range of pro-natalist policies designed to boost the fertility rate. It also coincided with an increase in women having their first child in their 30s rather than in their 20s.

Research by [Parr and Guest \(2011\)](#) suggests Costello's 'baby bonus' had only a minor impact on the fertility rate. The impact of an increased child care rebate, higher family tax benefits and increased availability of paid

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maternity leave was greater but still not significant. Parr and Guest find the strongest impact was due to greater economic prosperity at the individual family level leading up to the Global Financial Crisis.

This suggests that, with the economy now growing more strongly, Australia's fertility rate could rise slightly or at least not fall significantly in 2017-18. However, this may be offset by continued weak real wages growth, record household debt levels as a portion of disposable income (and the potential impact of rising interest rates on these debt levels) and the high cost of housing and childcare.

If Australia is to avoid further acceleration in our rate of ageing due to a continuing decline in our fertility rate, much greater financial support and workplace flexibility for younger families will be needed. To offset the costs of any such measures, richer baby boomers may need to relinquish some of the largesse that was directed at us by the Howard Government (e.g. capital gains tax concessions, excessively generous superannuation for rich baby boomers rather than those closer to age pension levels of wealth, dividend imputation credits), especially as we baby boomers will be imposing increased costs of the health and aged care budgets.

If not, we will have only ourselves to blame if our children and their children continue to have fewer babies and we as population age more quickly, with all the negative consequences of that for our economy.

*Abul Rizvi was a senior official in the Department of Immigration from the early 1990s to 2007 when he left as Deputy Secretary. He was awarded the Public Service Medal and the Centenary Medal for services to development and implementation of immigration policy, including in particular the reshaping of Australia's intake to focus on skilled migration. He is currently doing a PhD on Australia's immigration policies.*

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The permanent skilled migration program should be cut by nearly half, from 128,000 (primary and secondary applicants) to around 70,000. This includes migrants granted visas under the points test and those sponsored by

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### One Response to **ABUL RIZVI. Inter-generational inequality, the fertility rate and population ageing.**

**Frank O'Connor** says:

12 April 2018 at 9:26 AM

Mmmm ... Housing 'booms', historically high prices and rentals, the gig economy and lack of secure salaried jobs on which banks will risk housing loans, local infrastructure strain and collapse, badly planned unresourced housing estates on the periphery of cities, our propensity to protect and encourage capital rather than people, and a host of other economic factors have mitigated against the younger generations' ability to settle down, establish a home, and have kids.

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It's no wonder that the birth rate continues to drop.

In short ... we have shot ourselves in the foot, time and time again.

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## John Menadue – Pearls and Irritations

Pearls and Irritations

### ABUL RIZVI. Is Bob Birrell Right on Australia's Skilled Migration Program?

28 March 2018

*Australia has tentatively begun a debate about immigration – both the size of the annual intake and whether the country is choosing the right migrants. It's a vital debate, but one that is open to misunderstanding, to producing more heat than light. With such a sensitive topic, the facts are critical.*

In his March 2018 report, [Australia's skilled migration program: scarce skills not required](#), former Monash University immigration expert Bob Birrell again provides a valuable contribution to the debate.

While I do not agree with all his conclusions, he does make a good case for a review of Australia's skilled migration visas to ensure these continue to support Australia's long-term needs. Two areas that deserve particular consideration are visas that directly skilled migrants to regional areas of Australia to ensure these people do indeed settle in those areas, and the clarity of pathways to permanent migration for long-term temporary entrants to ensure these pathways are in Australia's interests. Such a review should build on the excellent work of the Productivity Commission reviewing the migrant intake over the past decade.

Birrell correctly points out shortcomings in various visa categories, including the points tested categories and the state-sponsored categories. To those criticisms, I would add the ham-fisted changes announced in April 2017 to skilled temporary entry which add an extraordinary level of red tape and micro-management for no genuine purpose. It is no surprise that over the past year the Government has quietly been unwinding its own changes and is likely to continue to do so.

The core conclusion of Birrell's report is that "skilled" migrants from non-English speaking countries (NESC) who arrived after the 2011 Census were less likely to be employed in a skilled occupation at the time of the 2016 Census than were the Australian-born or migrants from mainly-English speaking countries with similar skills.

But as Birrell would know better than anyone, high-level Census data is a poor tool for making conclusions regarding the effectiveness of skilled migration visa categories. Migrants who put "skilled" in response to a Census question may have entered Australia under range circumstances, including via the Humanitarian Program, the Family Stream; or as secondary applicants in the Skill Stream (eg the spouse of a primary skilled migrant).

Unlike primary migrants in the Skill Stream, people in these other categories will generally have migrated without having their professional skills assessed by the relevant Australian skills assessment body. Most would have their skills assessed after migrating, perhaps requiring them to undertake bridging courses and/or sitting relevant exams. Others, such as those who enter as parents, may never even try to secure recognition of their skills.

This is where assessing their success in the workforce gets complicated. Take the example of a nurse who migrates as a spouse in the Family Stream or as a Humanitarian Program entrant. He or she may need to do bridging courses to get overseas qualifications recognised in Australia. While doing such courses, the nurse may be employed as an orderly in a hospital (ie an unskilled occupation). This does not mean he or she is not contributing to the economy or is not valued by an employer. In time, they may well get their skills recognised, leading to employment in a skilled occupation.

Primary migrants in the Skill Stream must also meet the relevant English language requirements before they migrate. Because this is not required of other migrants, "skilled" migrants in other visa categories may need to

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undertake additional English language classes after arrival. This will further delay their ability to secure employment in a skilled occupation.

Another issue with the comparison Birrell makes is that a significant portion of applicants in the Skill Stream will have obtained permanent residence after they graduate as overseas students from an Australian university. Comparing the early employment experience of this group with that of all similarly skilled Australian-born is comparing apples and oranges. These migrants may need to work initially in entry-level positions that are not recognised as a skilled occupation. It would be more appropriate to compare the early employment experience of this group with recent Australian-born graduates of Australian universities.

It is surprising Birrell makes no reference in his report to the Continuous Survey of Australia's Migrants (CSAM), which does survey primary migrants in the Skill Stream. The [2015 CSAM Report](#) says "at the six-month stage of settlement, almost nine-in-ten Skilled Migrants (ie primary migrants in the Skill Stream) were employed. More than three quarters were working in full-time jobs and more than six-in-ten were in highly skilled employment. On the basis of these measures, Skilled Migrants significantly outperformed Australia's general population. Skilled Migrants also had higher earnings on average than the Australian population, but unemployment was slightly worse than the national average." It should be noted these are outcomes only six months after arrival.

Birrell is right to highlight in his report that the bulk of benefits from migration flow to businesses, and to people who hold shares in businesses. But this raises the question of how the benefits of immigration are distributed rather than whether the benefits exist. There is certainly a case for Government to ensure the benefits of migration are more equitably distributed.

Birrell also highlights the confused rationale the Government has been giving for current immigration policy settings. Its failure to properly explain the rationale of its approach (beyond stopping the boats and the vague comments from the Prime Minister about addressing skill shortages) is a serious problem.

[Treasurer Scott Morrison's comments in February](#) regarding the positive impact of skilled migration on the Budget were an exception. But Birrell's assertion that immigration may be a positive for the Commonwealth Budget but a negative for state budgets is not supported by the [Productivity Commission's 2016 Report on Australia's Migrant Intake](#) or by work done on this topic by Access Economics in the second half of the 1990s. And if migration was negative to state budgets, we would be hearing that loud and clear from current and former state premiers, not just Bob Carr.

It is of course a primary role of the Minister for Immigration to explain immigration policy. But [Peter Dutton's positive comments about skilled migration in his recent speech to the Press Club](#) contrasted with his earlier [comments on Radio 2GB to Ray Hadley](#) where he (misleadingly) boasted about reductions to net migration since Labor was in Office (even though in 2016-17 net migration increased by over 50,000) and was much more open to cutting immigration in the future.

At the Press Club, Dutton sounded more like a Minister reading a speech written for him rather than anything he actually believes.

His real views are perhaps better reflected in his decision to allow the [2016-17 Migration Program](#) to be delivered at around 6,400 visas below the announced target. It is very rare for immigration officials to miss the Migration Program target by more than a few hundred visas – indeed in many years, the program has been delivered right on target. My experience in the Department tells me Immigration officials would only miss the target by this degree if they were working to instructions to do so.

Does this mean Dutton deliberately disregarded Cabinet's decision on immigration levels by allowing the program to fall short by such a large degree? What are the chances he will ensure the Migration Program in 2017-18 and in 2018-19 will again fall well short of the announced target? Are we looking at a minister, in a government that is clearly divided on the issue, reducing immigration by stealth?

*Abul Rizvi was a senior official in the Department of Immigration from the early 1990s to 2007 when he left as Deputy Secretary. He was awarded the Public Service Medal and the Centenary Medal for services to development and implementation of immigration policy, including in particular the reshaping of Australia's intake to focus on skilled migration. He is currently doing a PhD on Australia's immigration policies.*



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#### Related

Peter Hughes, Arja Keski-Nummi and John Menadue. Part 1: Immigration Policy and Administration.

This article and the two following articles were part of a policy series that was posted in May/June last year and subsequently published in book form 'Fairness, Opportunity and Security'. This is a repost from 25/5/2015.

Peter Hughes, Arja Keski-Nummi and John Menadue. Part 1. Immigration Policy and Administration.

Fairness, Opportunity and Security Policy series edited by Michael Keating and John Menadue. Overview This paper sets out a broad design for Australia's immigration, refugee and settlement policies for the coming decades. The issues are

Jock Collins. Australia's shift from settler to temporary migration nation.

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Australian Government  
Department of Home Affairs

Received

25 JUL 2018

In the Office of the  
Secretary Home Affairs  
Correspondence No: 1405

## Executive Group

Thanks.

MP

Date: 25/07/2018

12/08/2018

Secretary Correspondence No: 1405

Has Abul Rizvi published anything else since December 2017, other than Inside Story?

### Response

Mr Rizvi has written two opinion pieces for The Guardian:

- 24 May 2018, [The cut to the migration program is more politics than policy](#)
- 21 February 2018, [Tony Abbott's speech on immigration contains flaws in logic](#)

In addition Mr Rizvi has written five articles for the website Pearls and Irritations  
(<https://johnmenadue.com/>)

Pearls and Irritations is self-described as "...influential and widely read, with outstanding authors writing about important current events. There are no sponsors and subscriptions are free. Our editors and authors are independent, dedicated and generous".

- 10 July 2018, [Business migration should focus on establishing businesses not passive investment](#)
- 2 July 2018, [Pezzullo's Dark World View is Paralyzing Australia's Immigration System.](#)
- 20 June 2018, [Will Dutton's high stakes gamble wrong-foot the Treasury?](#)
- 12 April 2018, [Inter-generational inequality, the fertility rate and population ageing.](#)
- 28 March 2018, [Is Bob Birrell Right on Australia's Skilled Migration Program?](#)

### Background

Inside story is an online news service and not related to the television program on the Nine Network. Inside Story focuses mostly on current affairs and culture in Australia but also discusses international issues.

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|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Author:             | s22(1)(a)(ii) , A/g Assistant Secretary Media and Engagement Branch, 02 s22(1)(a)(ii) (s22(1)(a)(ii) )           |
| SES Clearance:      | Kylie Scholten, A/g First Assistant Secretary Executive Coordination Division, 02 s22(1)(a)(ii) (s22(1)(a)(ii) ) |
| Consultation:       | N/A  |
| Copied to:          | Deputy Secretary Executive, Rachel Noble PSM, Deputy Secretary Policy, Linda Geddes                              |
| <u>Attachment A</u> | Tough Talk – Secretary's comments  |
| <u>Attachment B</u> | Copies of articles referenced in the response  |

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**From:** Isentia Daily Briefings s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 11 September 2018 5:57 AM  
**Subject:** Home Affairs Portfolio Daily Briefing 11 September 2018

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Home Affairs Portfolio Briefing  
Tuesday, 11 September 2018

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**The PM and the migration conundrum**[Inside Story, Online, 10/09/18, Abul Rizvi](#)

Prime minister Scott Morrison (centre) and newly appointed immigration minister David Coleman (right) talk to employee Mark McCormack during a factory visit in Sydney in late August.

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**From:** Isentia Daily Briefings  
**Sent:** Monday, 8 October 2018 5:51 AM  
**Subject:** Home Affairs Portfolio Daily Briefing 08 October 2018

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## Home Affairs Portfolio Briefing

### Monday, 8 October 2018

s22(1)(a)(ii)

#### Plans to outsource visa processing are scary, says former immigration official

[Guardian Australia, Other, 07/10/18, Paul Karp](#)

A Department of Home Affairs plan to outsource visa processing will lead to increased automation and “premium” services that could undermine the integrity of the system, a former senior immigration official has warned. Abul Rizvi, a former departmental deputy secretary, told Guardian Australia the potential for a private provider to create a fast and slow lane for processing had “frightening” long-term implications and the proposed use of applicants’ data for marketing purposes was “appalling”.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

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**Sent:** Thursday, 11 October 2018 5:52 AM  
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## Home Affairs Portfolio Briefing

Thursday, 11 October 2018

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**Privatising visa processing - the alarm bells are ringing**[The Mandarin, Other, 10/10/18, Abul Rizvi](#)

Privatisation of core government functions such as visa processing is high risk, especially when undertaken under the cloak of commercial-in-confidence secrecy. Major ICT transformation projects conducted "in partnership" with a big IT company are also high risk. Doing the two together multiplies the risk big time, but that's exactly what the Department of Home Affairs is doing.

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**From:** Media Operations  
**Sent:** Friday, 12 October 2018 8:51 AM  
**To:** Media Operations  
**Subject:** Department of Home Affairs MediaLink Report 11 October 2018  
[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

**Categories:**

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Good morning,

Please find the MediaLink report below.

s22(1)(a)(ii)



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>3) Article No:</b> 2570221   |  |
| <b>Language:</b> CHINESE  | <b>Media Type:</b> Printed Media       |
| <b>Publication:</b> Australian New Express Daily  | <b>Date of publication:</b> 11/10/2018 |
| <b>Title:</b> NUMBER OF REGIONAL SKILLED VISAS REDUCED BY FIFTY PERCENT   |  |
| <b>Summary:</b> Article reports on the number of regional skilled visas approved in 2016-17 while Malcolm Turnbull was in office according to the data from the Home Affairs Department and quotes former deputy secretary of the Immigration Department Abul Rizvi and others commenting on the issue. |  |

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Kind regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Media Operations**

Department of Home Affairs

P: 02 s22(1)(a)(ii)

Media line: 02 6264 2244

E: [media@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:media@homeaffairs.gov.au)

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**From:**  
**Sent:**  
**To:**

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Saturday, 3 November 2018 6:01 PM

s22(1)(a)(ii)

**Cc:**

**Subject:**

Media Monitoring - 3 November 2018

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Please find below media events generated over the last 24hrs.

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<http://www.johnmenadue.com/abul-rizvi-is-dutton-frustrated-by-the-success-of-turnback-policy/>

Kind Regards,

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**Subject:** Home Affairs Portfolio Daily Briefing 09 November 2018

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## Home Affairs Portfolio Briefing

Friday, 9 November 2018

Prepared by Isentia for the Home Affairs Portfolio

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**Policy on the run**[Inside Story, Online, 08/11/18, Abul Rizvi](#)

NSW premier Gladys Berejiklian says the state's economic success is attracting a "far greater" share of immigrants than in the past. She has set up a three-member panel to look at the options to reduce migration to the state. Like migration to Australia as a whole, net overseas migration to New South Wales has increased steadily this decade.

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**From:** Isentia Daily Briefings s22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 21 November 2018 6:00 AM  
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## Home Affairs Portfolio Briefing

Wednesday, 21 November 2018

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[Radio National, RN Drive, 20/11/18, Patricia Karvelas](#)

Interview with Abul Rizvi, Immigration Author, Inside Story. Karvelas says migration and population growth as shaping up as key things in the 2019 Federal Elections. She says they've been big things in the Victorian Election, which was set on Saturday in Melbourne. She says, in a speech last night, PM Scott Morrison has considered reducing the cap on permanent migration from 190,000 per year to 160,000. [...]

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