

**OFFICIAL**  
**HOME AFFAIRS**  
**QUESTION TIME BRIEF (QTB)**  
**MYANMAR**

FOI Request FA 21/05/00319  
Document #2

**QUESTION: Home Affairs' response to Myanmar coup**

**KEY TALKING POINTS:**

- On 5 May 2021, I [Minister Hawke], announced that Myanmar nationals, who are in Australia on temporary visas, may apply to extend their stay until it is safe for them to return home.
- These arrangements will support Myanmar nationals who are affected by the ongoing unrest in Myanmar, consistent with Australia's international obligations.
- The Department of Home Affairs has commenced writing to Myanmar nationals in Australia holding temporary visas, inviting them to apply for a new visa if their current visa is approaching expiry.
- Applicants will need to fulfill all relevant visa criteria including health, character and security requirements that apply to all Australian visas; each case will be considered on its individual merits.

***If asked: Is Australia providing additional places in the Offshore Humanitarian Program for Myanmar's refugees?***

- Australia has for many years provided an allocation of places for Myanmar in Thailand (and other countries) in the Offshore Humanitarian Program.
- Prior to the recent political crisis in Myanmar, refugees from the country featured heavily in Australia's Offshore Humanitarian Program.
  - More than 18,000 Myanmar (mostly ethnic Chin, Karen and Karenni) resettled in Australia over the past 10 years.
  - This year (1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021), more than 430 humanitarian visas have been granted to Myanmar.

***If asked: Is the Department Home Affairs (Home Affairs) investigating relatives of Myanmar military in Australia?***

- I / Home Affairs will not comment on individual cases.
- All non-citizens who wish to enter or remain in Australia must satisfy the requirements of the *Migration Act 1958* (the Act) and *Migration Regulations 1994*, including the character test at section 501 of the Act.
- Generally, there are no legal reasons that would otherwise prevent people with a lawful immigration status from being in Australia.

**OFFICIAL**

PDR No. QB21-000237

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

- If any members of the public have concerns about individuals breaking the law – whether that be immigration law or other criminal activity – they should pass on any information to the appropriate authority.

Government	Percentage
Current government	85%
Previous government	15%

© 2006 The Authors  
Journal compilation © 2006 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

Device Type	Percentage of Respondents
Smartphone	95%
Tablet	90%
Feature Phone	85%
Smartwatch	75%

5182

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: 02 s. 22(1)(a)(ii) Mob: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Action Officer: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
 Date last Updated: 7/05/2021 - 12:31 PM

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

PDR No. QB21-000237

**OFFICIAL**  
**HOME AFFAIRS**  
**QUESTION TIME BRIEF (QTB)**  
**MYANMAR**

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

**OFFICIAL**

**From:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**To:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** Sally PFEIFFER; s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** RE: Minister's announcement on Myanmar [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Wednesday, 5 May 2021 5:01:59 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

**OFFICIAL**

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Regards,  
s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director Revenue Management

External Budgets & Revenue Branch | Finance Division

Chief Operating Officer Group | Department of Home Affairs

**M:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) **P:** 02 s. 22(1)(a)(ii) **E:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) [homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)

signature



**OFFICIAL**

**From:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 5 May 2021 5:00 PM  
**To:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** Sally PFEIFFER; s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** RE: Minister's announcement on Myanmar [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**OFFICIAL**

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

s. 22(1)(a)(ii) (he/him)

Director | Student and Graduate Visas Section

Temporary Visa and Border Measures Branch | Immigration Programs Division

Immigration and Settlement Services Group | Department of Home Affairs

T: 02 6264 4025

E: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) [homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)

**OFFICIAL**

**From:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 5 May 2021 1:47 PM  
**To:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Sally PFEIFFER s. 22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au; s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

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

< s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii) ; s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
< s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
< s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>

**Subject:** RE: Minister's announcement on Myanmar [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**OFFICIAL**

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

- There is no new policy associated with this announcement (i.e. no change in visa criteria, eligibility, or conditions, such as extending visa validity period).
- Myanmar nationals will simply be provided with advice from the Department on how to "lawfully remain" in Australia, s. 22(1)(a)(ii) by applying for s. 22(1)(a)(ii) a visa they may be eligible for (based assessments from the VEVO website or a Migration Agent) etc
- s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Regards,

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director Revenue Management

External Budgets & Revenue Branch | Finance Division

Chief Operating Officer Group | Department of Home Affairs

**M:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) **P:** 02 s. 22(1)(a)(ii) **E:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au

signature



**OFFICIAL**

**From:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) < s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 5 May 2021 1:42 PM

**To:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) < s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>

**Cc:** Sally PFEIFFER <Sally.Pfeiffer@homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

< s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii) ; s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

< s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

< s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>

**Subject:** RE: Minister's announcement on Myanmar [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**OFFICIAL**

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

(he/him)

Director | Student and Graduate Visas Section

Temporary Visa and Border Measures Branch | Immigration Programs Division

Immigration and Settlement Services Group | Department of Home Affairs

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



T: 02 s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
E: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au

**OFFICIAL**

**From:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 5 May 2021 10:59 AM  
**To:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Sally PFEIFFER <Sally.Pfeiffer@homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>; s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: Minister's announcement on Myanmar [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**OFFICIAL**

Hi s. 22(1)(a),  
Thanks for the chat just now. As discussed, I've just spoken with Treasury to indicate that at this stage there doesn't appear to be any new policy (i.e. change in criteria, eligibility, or visa conditions, such as extending stay) associated with this announcement, and that Myanmar nationals will simply be provided with advice on how to "lawfully remain" in Australia.  
Grateful if you could please confirm this is the case s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Regards,  
s. 22(1)(a)(ii)  
Assistant Director Revenue Management  
External Budgets & Revenue Branch | Finance Division  
Chief Operating Officer Group | Department of Home Affairs  
**M:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) **P:** 02 s. 22(1)(a)(ii) **E:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au

signature



**OFFICIAL**

**From:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 5 May 2021 10:25 AM  
**To:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Cc:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii) <s. 22(1)(a)(ii) homeaffairs.gov.au>; Sally PFEIFFER <s. 22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Minister's announcement on Myanmar [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**OFFICIAL**

Hi s. 22(1)(a)

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

I indicated that my understanding is that visa holders are being encouraged to apply for another visa in order to remain lawful (i.e. a student who is likely to qualify for another student visa should apply for one) and that the established protection visa pathway is also an option but I am not sure that entirely answers those questions.

[Myanmar nationals in Australia to have visas extended following deadly military coup, federal government announces - ABC News](#)

Regards

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Director, Tourism and International Education Policy

Temporary Visas and Border Measures Branch | Immigration Programs Division

Immigration and Settlement Services Group

Department of Home Affairs

P: (02) s. 22(1)(a)(ii) | s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

E: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) [homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)

**OFFICIAL**

**From:** s. 47E(d)  
**To:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 47E(d); Sally PFEIFFER; Belinda GILL; Media Operations; s. 47E(d)  
**Cc:** Michael WILLARD; Sandra JEFFERY; Anna LUTZ; Jodie BJERREGAARD; s. 47E(d); s. 47E(d); s. 47E(d)  
**Subject:** RE: Minister Hawke - Myanmar media release - Visa arrangements to support Myanmar nationals in Australia [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Wednesday, 5 May 2021 1:09:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Visa arrangements to support Myanmar nationals - External TPs - Final.docx](#)

---

**OFFICIAL**

Hi all

To clarify these TPs have been cleared by AS Sandra Jeffery and FAS Michael Willard.

Attached is a word version should you require it.

Kind regards

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

(he/him)

Director | Student and Graduate Visas Section

Temporary Visa and Border Measures Branch | Immigration Programs Division

Immigration and Settlement Services Group | Department of Home Affairs

T: 02 s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

E: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) [@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:s. 22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au)

**OFFICIAL**

---

**From:** s. 47E(d)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 5 May 2021 12:51 PM  
**To:** s. 22(1)(a)(ii); s. 47E(d); Sally PFEIFFER; Belinda GILL; Media Operations; s. 47E(d); s. 47E(d); s. 47E(d)  
**Cc:** Michael WILLARD; Sandra JEFFERY; Anna LUTZ; Jodie BJERREGAARD; s. 47E(d); s. 47E(d); s. 47E(d)  
**Subject:** Minister Hawke - Myanmar media release - Visa arrangements to support Myanmar nationals in Australia [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Importance:** High

**OFFICIAL**

Hi all

Please find attached a set of approved talking points to support Minister Hawke's announcement on the visa arrangements to support Myanmar nationals in Australia.

Grateful if you can please circulate to your networks for information. Any questions can be directed to s. 47E(d) [@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:s. 47E(d)@homeaffairs.gov.au).

Cheers

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

(he/him)

Director | Student and Graduate Visas Section



## VISA ARRANGEMENTS TO SUPPORT MYANMAR NATIONALS IN AUSTRALIA

5 May 2021

The Morrison Government today announced that owing to the ongoing unrest in Myanmar, Myanmar nationals currently in Australia on temporary visas may apply to extend their stay until it is safe to return home. The Australian Government will be writing to all Myanmar citizens temporarily in Australia with further advice on how to remain lawful in Australia.

The Government has expressed Australia's condemnation of the ongoing violence in Myanmar. Today's announcement of support is consistent with Australia's international obligations.

A range of options may be available to suit individual circumstances, including the grant of new visas

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs Alex Hawke MP said today's announcement would enable affected individuals to remain in Australia until the situation in Myanmar improves.

"This measure provides a means for Myanmar citizens in Australia to remain here until it is safe for them to return home," Minister Hawke said.

"These arrangements will support Myanmar nationals in Australia who are affected by the ongoing unrest in Myanmar, consistent with Australia's international obligations," he said.

"Australia continues to strongly urge the Myanmar security forces to exercise restraint and refrain from violence against civilians, release those detained arbitrarily and engage in dialogue," he said.

Australia provides protection to individuals consistent with its obligations set out in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol and other international human rights conventions.

The Department of Home Affairs can be contacted on 131 881 or via the Home Affairs website [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au).

**OFFICIAL**



**OFFICIAL: Sensitive**

## Visa arrangements to support Myanmar citizens in Australia

- The Australian Government is supporting Myanmar citizens who are currently in Australia on a temporary visa and wish to extend their stay.
- While the Australian Government is unable to extend timeframes on currently held visas, there are a range of visa options, both permanent and temporary, that Myanmar citizens in Australia may wish to consider.
- The Department has commenced writing to Myanmar citizens on a temporary visa in Australia, inviting them to submit a new visa application if their visa expires shortly.
- Myanmar citizens seeking to stay beyond the term of their current temporary visa can check their visa options using the Department's visa finder tool at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder>.
- Visa holders may also seek professional assistance from a migration agent registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (OMARA).
  - A list of registered migration agents is available at <https://portal.mara.gov.au/search-the-register-of-migration-agents/>.
- Visa holders can check their visa details and expiry through the Department's Visa Entitlement Verification Online system (VEVO) at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/already-have-a-visa/check-visa-details-and-conditions/check-conditions-online>.
- Myanmar citizens holding a temporary visa in Australia can also contact the Department of Home Affairs on 131 881 or via the Home Affairs website at [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au).
- The Department's Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) is available to assist those who may require support.
  - This credentialed and secure interpreting service is available in 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
  - Non-English speakers can access immediate telephone interpreters through TIS National by calling 131 450.
- Individuals applying for further visas will need to fulfil all relevant visa criteria including health, character and security requirements that apply to all Australian visas. Each case will be considered by the Department on its individual merits.

### Visa assessments

- Australia carefully takes into consideration international developments such as those in Myanmar when making operational decisions.

- All non-citizens who wish to enter or remain in Australia must satisfy the requirements of the Migration Act 1958 (the Act) and Migration Regulations 1994, including the character test at section 501 of the Act.
- There are a range of provisions under the Act that allow the Department of Home Affairs to cancel or refuse visas. Among other reasons, a visa may be cancelled or refused as a result of a non-citizen providing incorrect information, failing to abide by visa conditions, presenting a significant risk to the community or engaging in criminal conduct.

## **Background (not for public release)**

- As at 2 May 2021, there are 3,429 Myanmar citizens holding a temporary visa in Australia. A large majority of this cohort are International Students (1,508).
- A new email address has been established to manage this correspondence – [no.reply.myanmar@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:no.reply.myanmar@homeaffairs.gov.au).
- Scripts for the Department's call centre are in the process of being updated as a priority. The call centre is available on 131 881.