



Travel Exemptions – request for information response

Question:

FA 21/05/01152

- 1) The total number of Australian citizens and permanent residents that have applied for a travel exemption to EXIT Australia from 20 March 2020 to 24 May 2021
 - a. The number ACCEPTED, broken down by;
 - i. Jurisdiction of origin
 - ii. Destination country
 - iii. Month of travel
 - iv. Reason for travel, being; Response to the COVID-19 outbreak, including the provision of aid; Travelling for business; Receiving urgent medical treatment that is not available in Australia; Urgent and unavoidable personal business; Compassionate and compelling grounds; Travel is in Australia's national interest, or; Travelling overseas for a compelling reason for at least three months
 - v. Whether travel was meant to be more than or less than 3 months
 - b. The number REJECTED, broken down by Points i to v as listed above.

FA 21/05/01153

- 1) The total number of people that applied for individual exemptions to travel into Australia from 20 March 2020 to 24 May 2021
 - a. The number ACCEPTED, broken down by;
 - i. Country of origin
 - ii. Month of travel
 - iii. Reason for exemption, being; foreign national invited to assist COVID-19 response; foreign national whose entry is in national interest; provision of crucial or specialist medical service, foreign national with critical skills, foreign national sponsored to work in occupation on PMSOL; military; person on vessel requiring safe port, student completing year 11 and 12.
 - iv. Whether travel was meant to be more than or less than 3 months
 - b. The number REJECTED, broken down by;
 - i. Points i to iv as listed above

Answer:

The attached monthly report shows travel exemption requests received, approved and refused for both inbound and outbound travel, broken down by month of finalisation and reporting category.

Notes:

- Reporting shows the month when the travel exemption was finalised. We cannot provide the month of travel without individual examination of traveller movement records, which would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.
- There were no outbound requests to exit Australia between 20 March and 25 March 2020, as these restrictions were not introduced until 25 March 2020.
- Requests for inwards exemption for persons on a vessel seeking safe haven are included in the attached report under Compassionate and Compelling. There have been 15 approved requests, and 9 refused requests.
- We are unable to disaggregate the following categories requested for inwards requests – but can advise that they are included in the broader categories below:
 - Foreign national sponsored to work in occupation on PMSOL – included in either critical skills – other or critical skills – medical
 - Military – included in national interest
 - Student completing year 11 and 12 – included in compassionate and compelling.
- Requests to travel to Australia do not record the intended departure date. Analysis of whether travel was intended for more or less than 3 months cannot be provided without individual examination of each request, which would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.
- The Travel Exemption Portal cannot calculate the intended travel duration automatically. Calculating whether the intended time offshore for approved requests is more or less than 3 months is not possible without extracting more than 200,000 records from the system for analysis, which would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.
 - Those approved or refused under the “travel for more than three months” category is provided in the attached report.
- Reporting is based on the number of travel exemption requests received or finalised. An individual may have made multiple requests.
- Remaining data cannot be provided prior to 1 August 2020, when processing of requests moved to the Travel Exemption Portal. The following tables show the additional data available from 1 August 2020.

Outwards travel exemptions approved and refused from 13 February¹ to 24 May 2021 – by state/territory of client provided address in Australia

Australian state/territory	Approved	Refused
ACT	890	618
NSW	12,230	12,537
NT	221	275
QLD	5,788	4,803
SA	1,539	1,530
TAS	352	254
VIC	10,553	11,420
WA	4,175	3,683
Unknown ²	549	692
Total	36,297	35,812

¹ Australian address details for requests to depart Australia was not regularly collected prior to 13 February 2021

² includes requests submitted on the request to travel to Australia form, or where this detail was otherwise not provide by the client

Outwards travel exemptions approved from 1 August 2020 to 24 May 2021 – top 10 destination countries

Destination Country	Requests
China	13,972
United Kingdom	12,224
India	11,716
United States of America	10,224
New Zealand	5,341
Pakistan	5,009
Singapore	3,911
Papua New Guinea	3,405
Canada	3,083
Indonesia	2,429
Other	59,559
Total	130,873

Outwards travel exemptions refused from 1 August 2020 to 24 May 2021 – top 10 destination countries

Destination Country	Requests
India	12,544
China	7,002
United States of America	5,691
United Kingdom	4,764
Pakistan	4,643
Lebanon	2,138
Singapore	1,876
New Zealand	1,705
Indonesia	1,421
Thailand	1,230
Other	31,555
Total	74,569

Inwards travel exemptions approved from 1 August 2020 to 24 May 2021 – top 10 countries of origin

Current Location	Approved
United Kingdom	4,023
United States of America	3,403
India	2,524
China	1,703
South Africa	1,545
Japan	1,422
Australia	1,267
Singapore	1,173
New Zealand	1,136
Canada	978
Other	15,749
Total	34,923

Inwards travel exemptions refused from 1 August 2020 to 24 May 2021 – top 10 countries of origin

Current Location	Refused
India	25,781
Australia	5,705
United Kingdom	5,515
China	5,161
Singapore	4,692
United States of America	4,619
Pakistan	4,532
Nepal	4,398
Saudi Arabia	2,821
Canada	2,805
Other	34,737
Total	100,766

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Monthly Travel Exemptions Processing Report

The below statistics are as at the end of May 2021. Data prior to 1 August 2020 is collated manually from multiple systems. Numbers for past months may differ from previous monthly reports due to small numbers of cases where outcomes changed after initial finalisation.

	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	Cumulative ¹											
Travel exemption requests received (a request may include more than one person)																											
Outwards	included in April numbers	13,628	18,517	27,686	32,125	24,566	25,370	27,160	23,059	19,502	20,939	22,441	26,598	23,713	26,426	331,772											
Inwards	8,227	11,720	18,043	24,830	24,852	22,071	22,013	23,646	22,909	22,213	20,392	20,639	22,389	20,933	22,508	307,343											
Outward travel exemption decisions²																											
Category	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³											
Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak	51	20	65	5	100	8	106	23	55	17	33	<5	11	<5	9	<5											
Critical industries and business	217	142	783	38	791	55	1,129	115	1,176	172	1,337	140	1,230	50	1,198	69											
Urgent medical treatment	40	25	41	15	138	60	220	52	167	68	103	38	74	35	61	18											
Travelling overseas for at least 3 months ²	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,202	836	7,303	1,544	13,699	138	11,717	59											
Urgent and unavoidable personal business	675	327	897	224	2,167	547	4,321	1,101	1,070	921	920	718	610	311	488	290											
Compassionate and compelling grounds	1,954	551	1,683	474	3,015	1,090	4,129	2,237	5,509	4,233	4,685	4,303	4,385	3,491	3,239	3,308											
National interest	<5	<5	38	<5	37	8	45	6	11	<5	17	<5	6	<5	<5	<5											
TOTALS	§ 11C(1)(a)		3,507	§ 11C(1)(a)	6,248	1,768	9,950	3,534	18,190	§ 11C(1)(a)	14,398	6,748	20,015	4,026	§ 11C(1)(a)	3,744											
Otherwise finalised ⁴	11,997																6,122	4,357	3,302	2,331	1,883	3,431	2,402	3,022	2,758	3,486	88,642
Total finalisations for outwards travel exemptions	25,481																30,562	25,503	27,343	22,791	18,593	21,026	23,129	26,670	23,017	25,233	329,180
On-hand at the end of the month	6,649																716	523	339	606	1,515	1,428	777	706	1,403	2,598	
Inward travel exemptions decisions²																											
Category	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³	Approved	Refused ³											
Compassionate and compelling	674	106	297	60	191	60	496	114	932	1,274	826	4,150	759	7,351	1,004	8,782											
Critical skills – Medical	116	<5	104	<5	45	<5	73	<5	201	<5	315	18	162	33	116	32											
Critical skills – other	47	<5	173	<5	271	25	438	21	1,093	25	2,318	191	2,828	1,511	3,179	3,037											
National interest (including diplomatic)	61	<5	13	<5	18	<5	77	<5	70	<5	119	<5	143	<5	228	<5											
Urgent Medical Treatment	<5	<5	10	<5	19	<5	24	<5	44	8	51	6	43	18	44	41											
Transit	785	<5	4,091	6	738	<5	1,339	<5	824	<5	<5	<5	-	-	-	-											
TOTALS	§ 11C(1)(a)		113	4,688	72	1,282	85	2,447	135	3,164	1,310	§ 11C(1)(a)	4,366	3,935	8,913	4,571											
Otherwise finalised ⁴	18,158																17,085	9,239	7,047	7,107	6,306	6,196	6,500	7,332	6,598	7,800	148,708
Total finalisations for inwards travel exemptions	22,632																25,080	22,087	23,510	22,703	21,425	19,933	21,002	23,120	20,053	20,840	302,232
On-hand at the end of the month	5,191																2,160	2,108	2,242	2,450	3,239	3,696	3,295	2,562	3,443	5,105	

¹ Cumulative figures are since 20 March 2020 for inwards exemptions and 25 March 2020 for outwards exemptions
² Prior to 30 September 2020, this category was included within "Urgent and unavoidable personal business". "For a compelling reason" was added on 8 January 2021.
³ Refused requests generally failed to support their claims or did not meet the guidelines for an exemption to be approved
⁴ Otherwise finalised includes persons found to meet an already exempt category, withdrawn requests and those that did not contain sufficient information for referral to a decision maker.

Authorising Officer: § 22(1)(a)(ii) Assistant Secretary, Temporary Visas and Border Measures
 Date: 1 June 2021

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Question:

FA 21/05/01153 (point 2)

2) The total number of Australians, permanent residents and their immediate family that travelled into Australia since March 20, 2020 to date and undertook hotel quarantine

- a. Broken down by how many stayed for less than or more than 3 months.

Answer:

The data below provides the number of Australian Citizens and Permanent Residents that entered Australia between the nominated dates. It then identifies the number that departed and breaks the departed number down into < or > than 90 days.

	Citizens & PR	Movements	Arrivals	Subsequent Departures	<= 90 days	> 90 days
20/03/2020 - 16/06/2021	429,378	581,423	434,478	67,110	39,885	27,225

Caveats:

- There is a number of travellers who arrived as citizens or permanent residents (and not crew) that departed as crew included in the counts.
- Since 21st March 2021, no one has arrived and departed after more than 90 days.
- A person who travelled multiple times in the period has been counted against their number of movements, not as a single entity. This has resulted in a slight, but measurable increase in the numbers recorded as 'Citizens & PRs'.