



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

Submission

For information

PDMS Ref. Number: IS23-000044

Date of Clearance: 27/11/2023

To Minister for Home Affairs
Minister for Cyber Security

Subject Joint Standing Committee on Treaties (JSCOT) visit to India - Private Briefing

Timing For consideration by Friday 1 December, as agreed with the Minister's Office in order to meet JSCOT's deadline of Monday 4 December.

Recommendation

That you:

1. note the information at **Attachment A**, which will be provided to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, to support their visit to India in December 2023.

noted / please discuss

Minister's Comments

Minister for Home Affairs
Minister for Cyber Security

Signature.....

Date: 5/12/2023

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Key Issues

1. Four federal Members of Parliament/Senators from the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties (JSCOT) are visiting Kolkata and Delhi, India between 10 and 13 December 2023.
2. JSCOT has requested high-level information regarding two-way migration and mobility between Australia and India, with a particular focus on relevant details under the Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA), and bilateral aspirations for future migration and labour mobility. The Department's input is at **Attachment A**.

Background

3. The main purpose of the JSCOT visit is to support the work of the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (AI-ECTA) which entered into force late last year. In addition to supporting the facilitation of two-way mobility, JSCOT intends to progress AI-ECTA outcomes for Australian and Indian businesses, particularly in relation to food and beverage, promote bilateral agriculture cooperation and the newly ratified Australia-India Audio Visual Co-production Agreement, and share its treaty making expertise with Indian parliamentarians.

Consultation – internal/external

4. New Delhi Post

Consultation – Secretary / A/g Dep Sec Immigration / ABF Commissioner

5. The Secretary, A/g Deputy Security Immigration, and ABF Commissioner were not consulted.

Client service implications

6. Nil.

Risks and Sensitivities

- 7.

s. 33(a)(iii)

8. Australia is committed to implementing the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) as soon as possible, ensuring the program is thoughtfully designed to reflect our shared commitment to fairness, equity and diverse participation. We are conscious of India's interest in launching the program in the first quarter of 2024. Implementation of MATES will require regulation changes, to be considered by Parliament in the Autumn sitting period.

Financial/systems/legal/deregulation/media implications

9. Nil.

Attachments

- Attachment A** Department of Home Affairs input for the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties' visit to India in December 2023

Authorising Officer

Cleared by:

Joe Feld

A/g First Assistant Secretary

International Division

Date: 27 November 2023

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

Contact Officer: Steven Yates, Assistant Secretary, Asia Branch, Ph: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) / Mob: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

Department of Home Affairs input for the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties' visit to India in December

Joint Standing Committee on Treaties

23 November 2023

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Indian Migration to Australia

India is Australia's largest source country for skilled migrants; over 20,000 Indian nationals migrate to Australia each year. Across most visa programs, India consistently ranks first or second for country of nationality, including primary international student visa holders.

The forthcoming Migration Strategy is aimed at removing barriers in the system that prevent highly skilled migrant workers from coming to Australia. The Government is also considering further measures to strengthen integrity in the international education system as part of the Migration Strategy.

Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA)

On 23 May 2023, Australia and India entered into a Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA). The MMPA is a bilateral framework that supports and promotes two-way migration and mobility between our two countries while addressing issues pertaining to illegal and irregular migration.

The MMPA reaffirms the wide range of existing visa options that facilitate mobility and migration between our two countries, which have supported the development of our deep and mutually beneficial economic and people to people connections.

The Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme or 'MATES' is a new scheme, established under the MMPA, to enable the temporary mobility of Indian university graduates and early career professionals.

MATES aims to encourage mutually-beneficial skills and knowledge transfer between Australia and India in the fields of renewable energy, mining, engineering, Information Communications Technology, artificial intelligence, financial technology and agricultural technology.

MATES has not yet been implemented but the Department of Home Affairs is working with relevant Government agencies as well as the Government of India to progress this initiative. Further information on MATES can be found at **Attachment A**.

Post-study Mobility

The Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (AI-ECTA) was ratified by Parliament on 22 November 2022 and entered into force on 29 December 2022.

In connection with the signing of the AI-ECTA, the Post-Study Work visa outcome commits Australia to maintain opportunities for former Indian students to live and work in Australia temporarily upon completion of their studies.

The AI-ECTA also commits Australia to extending the post-study length of stay from two to three years, for Indian bachelor degree graduates with first class honours in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM), including information and communications technology (ICT) sectors.

Attachments

A. MATES Fact Sheet

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Attachment A – MATES Fact Sheet

Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES)

Who is eligible?

MATES will be open to Indian nationals who:

- are aged 30 or younger (inclusive) at the time of application;
- have not previously participated in MATES;
- have proficient English language skills (overall IELTS or equivalent score of at least 6, with a minimum score of 5 for each of the four parts);
- have graduated within 2 years from an eligible educational institution at the time of application; and
- hold a qualification (Bachelor's degree or higher) in one of the following: renewable energy, mining, engineering, Information Communications Technology (ICT), artificial intelligence (AI), financial technology (FinTech) or agricultural technology (AgriTech).

Is there Australian employer sponsorship requirement?

There will be no requirement for sponsorship by an Australian employer to be eligible to apply for a visa as part of MATES.

What are the permitted activities?

MATES participants will be able to live and work in Australia for up to 2 years. Whilst there is no strict requirement for visa holders to work in their nominated field of study, it is designed to support young professionals expand their skills and networks, particularly in the sectors listed above.

How many places are available?

MATES will commence as a pilot program with 3,000 places for primary applicants per program year.

Will MATES participants be able to bring their family to Australia?

Participants will be able to apply to bring dependants (spouses and dependent children). Dependants will have work rights in Australia, and will not count towards the annual cap.

How long can visa holders stay in Australia?

Visa holders will have 12 months to make their first entry into Australia, and may stay in Australia for 24 months from the date of first entry. The visa will allow multiple entries to Australia.

Will MATES visa holders be able to extend their stay?

Participants may extend their period of stay in Australia by applying for another visa permitting temporary or permanent residence, provided they meet all eligibility requirements for the visa.

MATES participants are not eligible to take part in the Scheme more than once.

How much will the visa cost?

More information about the visa subclass and associated application fees will be available soon.

There may be an additional fee to add subsequent dependent family members to the MATES application.

Applicants will be responsible for paying for other costs related to their application, including English language testing fees.

When will MATES commence?

We are working with Indian counterparts to ensure MATES is operational as soon as possible.



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TALKING POINTS

Subject	Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement
Date	25 May 2023
Type	Agency
Points of Contact: Home Affairs Media: 02 6264 2244 Home Affairs South Asia Section: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) @homeaffairs.gov.au	

ISSUE

On 23 May 2023, Australia and India entered into a Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA). The MMPA was co-signed by the High Commissioner for India in Australia, His Excellency Mr Manpreet Vohra, and the Australian High Commissioner to India, the Hon Barry O'Farrell AO.

The MMPA will further reinforce economic and people-to-people ties between Australia and India. It will also promote and support mobility of students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals while addressing issues pertaining to illegal and irregular migration.

TALKING POINTS OFFICIAL

The Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA)

- Australia and India have entered into a landmark Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA), which will see both countries benefit from enhanced cooperation on migration issues.
- The MMPA will support the Australian Government's migration priorities, including by:
 - o attracting some of India's best and brightest young talent to Australia
 - o providing a strong platform for Australia and India to cooperate to prevent and respond to irregular migration.
- The MMPA reaffirms the wide range of existing visa options that facilitate mobility and migration between our two countries, which have supported the development of our deep and mutually beneficial economic and people to people connections.
- In addition, the arrangement provides a new mobility pathway for Indian graduates and early career professionals with knowledge and skills in targeted fields of study to live and work in Australia for up to two years.
 - o Eligible fields include:

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- renewable energy
 - mining
 - engineering
 - information and communication technology (ICT)
 - artificial intelligence
 - financial technology
 - agricultural technology.
- The MMPA also increases visa validity from up to three years to up to five years for new subclass 600 business visitor stream visas, to support enhanced business ties between our two countries.
 - The MMPA will support practical cooperation on irregular migration by:
 - o setting out agreed principles and processes to support the expeditious and safe return to India of Indian nationals who do not have a lawful basis to stay in Australia.
 - o providing a platform for dialogue and cooperation to prevent and combat people smuggling in our region.

IF ASKED OFFICIAL

The Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA)***Why do we need a mobility arrangement when India is already the largest source of migrants to Australia?***

- The arrangement is a significant milestone in our bilateral relationship, reflecting growing strategic, economic and people-to-people ties between the two countries.
- In addition to supporting mobility between the two countries, the MMPA will also support enhanced, practical cooperation to prevent and respond to irregular migration.

Does the MMPA create new visa options for Indian nationals?

- The MMPA reaffirms the existing visa options that facilitate mobility and migration between our two countries, including pathways for visitors, students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals.
- In addition, it includes a new scheme – the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-Professionals Scheme (MATES) – which will provide a temporary mobility pathway for young Indian graduates and early-career professionals with university qualifications in select technical sectors.
- MATES will commence as a pilot program with 3,000 places for primary applicants per program year, who may bring dependants.
- The MMPA also increases visa validity from up to three years to up to five years for new subclass 600 business visitor stream visas, to support enhanced business ties between our two countries.

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What are financial implications of the MMPA for Australia?

- The MMPA will encourage and support travel to Australia by Indian visitors, students, working professionals, business people, academics and researchers.
- These categories of travellers make a significant contribution to Australia's economy and our vibrant multicultural society.
- Enhanced cooperation with India in relation to irregular migration will deliver significant savings to Australia in terms of reduced immigration detention and removal costs.

What is the impact of the Government's migration reform agenda on the MMPA?

- The arrangement will complement the Government's migration reform agenda by facilitating Australia's access to India's large talent pool in the context of global competition for skilled labour.
- The MMPA will also support the Government's commitment to restoring the integrity of Australia's migration system by enhancing our cooperation with India on irregular migration.

How will the mobility provisions in the MMPA impact Australia's international Trade obligations?

- The MMPA aims to leverage our bilateral relationship with India to drive Australia's economic and national security priorities. Our international obligations, including at the World Trade Organization and in relation to Free Trade Agreements, have been carefully considered in finalising the arrangement.

Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES)***When will MATES be implemented?***

- Australia and India will work expeditiously towards the implementation of MATES.
- There is no set timeframe for implementation.

How many Indian nationals will travel to Australia under MATES?

- The scheme will commence as a pilot program with an annual cap of 3,000 visas for primary applicants.
 - Primary applicants will be able to bring dependants, who will not be counted towards the annual cap.
- MATES will be subject to ongoing reviews through the MMPA Joint Working Group and the Mobility Sub-Group to ensure the program delivers high quality, mutually beneficial outcomes, and aligns with the overall intent of the MMPA.

How can Indian nationals apply to participate in MATES?

- Prior to the implementation of MATES, Australia and India will be working together to design an implementation protocol.
 - This protocol will be designed to ensure diversity, fairness and equity of access to the Scheme, while also supporting its integrity.
- Further information about MATES and how to apply will be available in due course.

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Who will be eligible to participate in MATES?

- The scheme will be open to Indian nationals under the age of 31 (at the time of application) who have recently graduated from an eligible Indian university with a degree in a specified area of study, such as renewable energy; mining; engineering; ICT and artificial intelligence; financial technology; or agricultural technology.

If pressed in relation to 'eligible universities':

- o As part of the development of the MATES implementation protocol, Australia and India will work together to identify eligible universities from across India that offer quality courses in the identified sectors.

How long will MATES participants be able to stay in Australia?

- MATES will allow for a multiple entry visa for a period not exceeding 24 months.
- It will be open to MATES participants to apply for further visa to remain in Australia beyond the period of their initial visa, subject to meeting eligibility criteria.

Will MATES participants be required to work in their nominated field of study?

- MATES creates a streamlined pathway for suitably qualified individuals to take up highly-skilled, high-wage positions in new and emerging tech sectors.
- While the scheme is designed to encourage and support talented young professionals to gain employment in these sectors, there is no strict requirement for MATES participants to secure employment in their nominated field of study.

Is MATES a reciprocal arrangement?

- The scheme is not reciprocal, but it is mutually beneficial.
 - o Australia will benefit by attracting some of India's best and brightest young graduates in fields of emerging skills demand.
 - o Indian participants will have the opportunity to live and work in Australia, and gain employment and valuable experience in their areas of expertise.

BACKGROUND NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

The MMPA is a key component of the Australia-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, announced in 2020. s. 33(a)(iii)

The MMPA reaffirms existing visa settings that facilitate permanent or temporary mobility outcomes for a growing number of Indian nationals.

- o In **FY2022-23 to 31/01/2023** a total of **454,608** Indian nationals were granted Australian visas (across all visa programs).

Australia's centrepiece mobility offer in the MMPA is the '*Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early Professionals Scheme*' (MATES). The scheme will provide a temporary mobility pathway for young Indian professionals with university qualifications in select technical sectors, with a cap of 3,000

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visas for primary applications per financial year. This cap does not include any dependent family members who will have unlimited work rights in Australia. MATES will commence as a one-year pilot and will be evaluated by the MPPA Joint Working Group on a bi-annual basis.

The MPPA also offers an extended visa validity period for Indian business travellers under the Visitor (subclass 600) business visitor stream (increased from up to three years to up to five years). This provision will support deepened business ties between Australia and India by making it easier for Indian business visitors to make multiple visits to Australia over a longer validity period without needing to apply for a new visa.

s. 33(a)(iii)



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Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

MEETING BRIEF

MINISTER: Clare O'Neil

ADVISER:

Meeting brief – Mr Philip Green, Australian High Commissioner-designate to India

Meeting commencement time: 3:30 pm

Date and Location: Thursday 3 August, Australian Parliament House, Canberra

Person/ Organisation

Mr Philip Green OAM, Australian High Commissioner-designate to India

Has the Minister met with this person/organisation in the past?

You have not previously met with Mr Green.

Purpose of Meeting

- s. 47E(d)

Key Messages

Migration and mobility

- **Note** levels of Indian migration to Australia have never been higher. India consistently ranks first or second for country of nationality across most visa programs.

- s. 33(a)(iii)

- **Highlight** Australia signed a Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA) with India on 23 May 2023.

- o s. 33(a)(iii)
- o

- The Department of Home Affairs (the Department) is actively exploring suitable pathways and subclasses and the necessary system and legislation changes for the implementation of MATES. This will ensure a rigorous program that delivers high quality outcomes for both partners.
- An initial draft protocol will be shared with India during the inaugural Joint Working Group, scheduled for 31 August, for both delegations to consider.
- o The MMPA is complementary to the Department's Global Skills Attraction (GSA) engagement activities, which are currently targeting skilled migrants from India under the Government's new Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement.

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- **Note** the Migration Review found the current Labour Market Testing (LMT) system is not working.
 - o Any reform to LMT will be consistent with Australia's international trade obligations.
 - o s. 33(a)(iii)

s. 33(a)(iii)

- **Emphasise** regular and timely engagement with Indian officials at the working-level is key to conveying consistent messaging and assurances.

s. 33(a)(iii)

Education cooperation

- **Highlight** support for high-quality student, researcher and academic mobility is a pillar of the MMPA.

o s. 33(a)(iii)

- **Mindful** to ensure any negotiated outcomes are consistent with the Migration Review agenda, and contribute to the robustness and integrity of our broader migration program.

Refugee and humanitarian

s. 33(a)(iii)

s. 33(a)(iii)

Cyber and critical technology cooperation

- **Highlight** a key pillar of the upcoming 2023-2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy will focus on capacity building efforts to uplift cyber security, particularly in the Pacific and Southeast Asia.
- **Welcome** views on how Australia can collaborate more closely with India to champion an open, free, safe and secure cyberspace in the Indo-Pacific.

Background

s. 33(a)(iii)

Migration Review

- On 27 April 2023 you released *A Migration System for a More Secure and Prosperous Australia*, an Outline of the Government's Migration Strategy.
 - The Outline, informed by the Migration Review, will be used to facilitate consultation in the development of the Government's Migration Strategy – planned for release later in 2023.
- The Government also announced changes to expand access to permanent residence for temporary skilled sponsored (TSS) workers from 1 January 2024, providing more certainty to TSS holders and their employers about the permanent residence pathways available to them.
 - These changes will help to alleviate skills shortages by ensuring a permanent pathway is available for a wider range of occupations.
 - As at 30 June 2023, there were over 30,000 Indian national TSS visa holders residing in Australia (approximately 23% of the total cohort).

List of Attendees

- Mr Philip Green OAM, Australia's High Commissioner-designate to India
- Debbie McGowan, Acting Assistant Secretary Asia Branch, Department of Home Affairs (**note taken**)

Consultation

- Joint Agency Taskforce Operation Sovereign Borders
- Cyber and Critical Technology Coordination Centre
- Immigration Programs
- Multicultural Affairs Branch
- New Delhi Post
- Migration Review Taskforce

Clearance

Clearance officer:

Elizabeth White
Acting First Assistant Secretary
International Division
Phone: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)
Date: 3 August 2023

Contact officer:

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)
Acting Director South Asia
Division: International
Branch: Asia
Mobile Phone: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Attachments:

A: Biography of Mr Philip Green, Australian High Commissioner-designate to India

B: Community Snapshot – Australian Indian Diaspora – July 2023

C: Home Affairs staff at New Delhi Post (A based)

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Attachment A: Biography of Mr Philip Green, Australian High Commissioner-designate to India**Name:** Mr Philip Green**Title:** Incoming Australian High Commissioner to India**Organisation:** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**Brief work history:**

Mr Philip Green joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in 1984, and has been a member of DFAT's Senior Executive Service since 1997. Most recently, Mr Green held the position of Australian Ambassador to Germany, immediately prior to which he led the implementation of Australia's Indo Pacific Strategy.

He has undertaken postings to a number of countries, including as High Commissioner to Kenya, South Africa, and Singapore. In addition to his career as a diplomat, Mr Green held the role of International Adviser to then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (2009-2010) and as Chief of Staff when Dr Rudd was Foreign Minister (2010-2012).

Personal details:

He holds a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Sydney, and has been awarded honorary degrees from James Cook University and Murdoch University.

Mr Green is married to Professor Doctor Susan Marks, who holds the Chair in International Law at the London School of Economics.

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Attachment B: Community Snapshot – Australian Indian Diaspora – July 2023

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Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

Submission

For decision

PDMS Ref. Number: MS23-001178

Date of Clearance: 18/05/2023

To Minister for Home Affairs
Minister for Cyber Security

Subject Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA) Finalisation

Timing For consideration by 22 May 2023, in order to allow the MMPA to be signed and announced on 23 May 2023.

Recommendations

That you:

1. note the attached final text of the Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA) (Attachment A); and noted/please discuss
2. agree to the Department entering into the MMPA with India. agree/not agreed

Minister's Comments

Minister for Home Affairs
Minister for Cyber Security

Signature.....

Date: 19 May 2023

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Key Issues

1. During Prime Minister Albanese's visit to India from 8 to 11 March 2023, Prime Ministers Albanese and Modi "tasked the concerned officials on both sides to expedite the conclusion of an ambitious and balanced MMPA within the next three months".
2. Australia's and India's MMPA negotiation delegations have reached agreement on the final text of the Arrangement (Attachment A).
3. India's Cabinet approved the MMPA on Wednesday 17 May.
4. The Department is discussing options for the signing of the MMPA with your office and DFAT.
5. Subject to your final approval of the MMPA, the finalisation of the MMPA is expected to be discussed by Prime Ministers Albanese and Modi during their in-person bilateral meeting at Admiralty House, Sydney, on Tuesday 23 May.
6. Following this bilateral meeting, the MMPA is expected to be announced through a Prime Ministerial media release, which will cover the MMPA and several other bilateral outcomes.

Background

7. Australia's centrepiece visa offering under the MMPA has evolved from our original offering described in MS22-000898 (Attachment B).
8. Australia's Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-Professionals Scheme (MATES) will provide a temporary mobility pathway for young Indian professionals with university qualifications in select technical sectors. The scheme is not reciprocal.
9. MATES will commence as a pilot program with 3,000 places for primary applicants per program year, who may bring dependants.
10. Following the ratification of the MMPA, the Department will work with Indian counterparts to develop an implementation protocol for MATES, which will include measures to support the integrity of the Scheme, and an approach to ongoing evaluation of its performance.
 - a. While the Department will work expeditiously on the implementation protocol, there is no set timeframe to implement MATES and begin accepting applications.
11. The MMPA sets out an agreed emergency travel document issuance process for non-compliant Indian immigration detainees, which will enable involuntary removals to India when necessary. s. 33(a)(iii)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
12. The MMPA also creates a bi-annual senior official dialogue through which the participants can cooperate to combat irregular migration, people smuggling and human trafficking.
13. A MMPA Joint Working Group will review all elements of the MMPA on a bi-annual (i.e. twice yearly) basis, supported by sub-groups that will focus on the mobility, returns and countering irregular migration.

Consultation – internal/external

14. Immigration Programs Division has participated directly in MMPA negotiations, and led the design of the MATES visa offering.
15. JATF OSB and ABF National Removals have participated directly in MMPA negotiations in 2023 and contributed to the development of the MMPA text.
16. Legal Division has been consulted on the text of the MMPA.
17. DFAT has been consulted extensively in relation to the MMPA and has participated in or observed negotiations throughout 2023.

Consultation – Secretary / Associate Secretary

18. The Secretary was not consulted on this submission. However, International Division has kept the Secretary informed on the progress of MMPA negotiations, and he is aware of plans to sign the MMPA during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Australia.
19. The Associate Secretary was not consulted on the approach set out in this submission.

Client service implications

20. Implementation of MATES will be dependent on the finalisation of an Implementation Protocol through the MMPA Joint Working Group, and will require legislative and systems changes before clients can access the scheme.

Risks and Sensitivities

21. There is a risk that the bespoke visa offering provided to India through the MMPA may attract public criticism as inconsistent with the Government's broader direction on migration reform.
22. This criticism could be addressed by noting that MMPA negotiations pre-date the Government's reform of the Migration Program, and highlighting the benefits that the MMPA will provide Australia.

23.

s. 33(a)(iii)

Financial/systems/legal/deregulation/media implications

24. Once operationalised, MATES will result in additional Visa Application Charge (VAC) revenue.
25. Enhanced cooperation with India in relation to returns will deliver significant savings to Australia in the form of avoided or reduced immigration detention and removal costs.
26. The anticipated announcement of the MMPA during Indian Prime Minister Modi's visit to Australia in May is likely to attract media interest in both India and Australia.
27. Media and Communication Branch has been consulted in relation to the MMPA, and media talking points are being developed to manage anticipated media interest.
28. The draft Prime Ministerial media release which announces the MMPA's finalisation has been noted by your office.

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Attachments

Attachment A Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement Text

Attachment B MS22-000898

Authorising Officer
Cleared by:
<i>Electronically signed</i>
Mary Balzary First Assistant Secretary International Division
Date: 18 May 2023 Mob: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Contact Officer (minimum SES Band 1) Kath Marris, Ag Assistant Secretary, Asia Branch, Ph: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) / Mob: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

CC Secretary
Associate Secretary Immigration
DS Executive
CFO
GM Immigration Operations
FAS Immigration Programs
AS Skilled Visas
AS Temporary Visas
AS Migration Reform Taskforce
Deputy Commander JATF OSB
AC Detention and National Removals
Chief Superintendent National Removals
SD Status Resolution Network

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QUESTION TIME BRIEF (QTB)

**INDIA-AUSTRALIA MIGRATION AND MOBILITY PARTNERSHIP
ARRANGEMENT (MMPA)**

QUESTION: The MMPA provides opportunities for graduates from Indian universities. How can Australia ensure the integrity of these institutions?

KEY TALKING POINTS:

- As announced by Prime Minister Albanese on Wednesday 24 May 2023, Australia and India have entered into a Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA).
- The MMPA will further reinforce economic and people-to-people ties between Australia and India. It will also promote and support mobility of students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals while addressing issues pertaining to illegal and irregular migration.
- A joint working group will be formed to implement the MMPA and set eligibility requirements for the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) to ensure the integrity of the scheme.
- As part of the development of the MATES implementation protocol, Australia and India will work together to identify eligible universities from across India that offer quality courses in the identified sectors.

If asked: How will the mobility provisions in the MMPA impact Australia's international Trade obligations?

- The MMPA aims to leverage our bilateral relationship with India to drive Australia's economic and national security priorities. Our international obligations, including at the World Trade Organization and in relation to Free Trade Agreements, have been carefully considered in finalising the arrangement.

If asked: Why do we need a mobility arrangement when India is already the largest source of migrants to Australia?

- The arrangement is a significant milestone in our bilateral relationship, reflecting growing strategic, economic and people-to-people ties between the two countries.
- In addition to supporting mobility between the two countries, the MMPA will also support enhanced, practical cooperation to prevent and respond to irregular migration.

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HOME AFFAIRS

QUESTION TIME BRIEF (QTB)

**INDIA-AUSTRALIA MIGRATION AND MOBILITY PARTNERSHIP
ARRANGEMENT (MMPA)**

If asked: Does the MMPA create new visa options for Indian nationals?

- The MMPA reaffirms the existing visa options that facilitate mobility and migration between our two countries, including pathways for visitors, students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals.
- In addition, it includes a new scheme – the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-Professionals Scheme (MATES) – which will provide a temporary mobility pathway for young Indian graduates and early-career professionals with university qualifications in select technical sectors.
- MATES will commence as a pilot program with 3,000 places for primary applicants per program year, who may bring dependants.
- The MMPA also increases visa validity from up to three to up to five years for new subclass 600 business visitor stream visas, to support enhanced business ties between our two countries.

If asked: What is the impact of the Government's migration reform agenda on the MMPA?

- The arrangement will complement the Government's migration reform agenda by facilitating Australia's access to India's large talent pool in the context of global competition for skilled labour.
- The MMPA will also support the Government's commitment to restoring the integrity of Australia's migration system by enhancing our cooperation with India on irregular migration.

Lead Division

Contact: Mary Balzary

Division: International

Date first prepared: 25 May 2023

Originating Source: (MO)

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

Action Officer: Debbie McGowan

Date last Updated: 16/06/2023 - 3:42 PM

Contributing Division/s

Contact: Alison Garrod

Division: Immigration Programs

Date first prepared: 25 May 2023

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

Action Officer: (Drafting Officer)

Date last Updated: 16/06/2023 - 3:42 PM

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OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Number: SB23-000584****BACK POCKET BRIEF**

**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs
Budget Estimates Hearing – May 2023**

BACK POCKET BRIEF

Topic: May 2023 - DS Executive Estimates Back Pocket Brief - Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA)

Group: Executive

Division: International

- Australia and India have committed to concluding a Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA), which will see both countries benefit from enhanced cooperation on migration and mobility issues.
- The arrangement will:
 - o set out provisions for the mobility of students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals between the two countries.
 - o facilitate the return to India of Indian nationals who lack a legal basis to remain in Australia.
 - o establish a framework for ongoing bilateral dialogue and cooperation to combat irregular migration and people smuggling.
- We look forward to concluding the MMPA in the coming months.

If asked: Why do we need a mobility arrangement when India is already the largest source of migrants to Australia?

- The arrangement is a significant milestone in our bilateral relationship, reflecting growing strategic, economic and people-to-people ties between the two countries.
- In addition to facilitating mobility, the MMPA will also support collaboration with India to combat irregular migration.

If asked: What is the impact of the Government's Migration Strategy on the MMPA?

- The arrangement will complement the Government's migration strategy by facilitating Australia's access to India's large talent pool in the context of global competition for skilled labour.
- The MMPA will also support the Government's commitment to restoring the integrity of Australia's migration system by enhancing our cooperation with India on irregular migration.

OFFICIAL

Clearing Officer: Mary Balzary, First Assistant Secretary International

SB23-000584

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As at 15 May 2023

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If asked: What is the number of Indian nationals who will enter Australia each year under the mobility provisions in the MMPA?

- The mobility elements of the MMPA are currently under negotiation.

If asked: about the financial implications of the MMPA:

- The mobility elements of the MMPA are yet to be finalised and announced.
- However, noting the MMPA will promote the mobility of people between the two countries, this will naturally generate additional Visa Application Charge revenue.
- Enhanced cooperation with India in relation to irregular migration will deliver significant savings to Australia in the form of avoided immigration detention and removal costs.

Background

- The MMPA is a key component of the Australia-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, announced in 2020.
- During Prime Minister Albanese's visit to India from 8 to 11 March 2023, Prime Ministers Albanese and Modi *"tasked the concerned officials on both sides to expedite the conclusion of an ambitious and balanced MMPA within the next three months, which will promote and support the mobility of students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals now and into the future, while also enhancing cooperation on issues pertaining to irregular migration."*
- Australian and Indian MMPA delegations have held seven rounds of MMPA negotiations since mid-February 2023. The most recent round of negotiations was held in New Delhi, India on 26-27 April.
- Both sides are working towards signing the arrangement during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Australia for the Quad Leaders' Summit in May 2023.

Media

Joint Statement – 1st Australia-India Annual Summit, 11 March 2023

<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/joint-statement-1st-australia-india-annual-summit>

- Joint Statement from Prime Minister Albanese and Prime Minister Modi, issued following the inaugural Australia-India Annual Summit. Refers to the MMPA, and commits both Governments to concluding *'an ambitious and balanced MMPA within the next three months'*.

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Clearing Officer: Mary Balzary, First Assistant Secretary International

SB23-000584

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OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Number: SB23-000979**

**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing – October 2023**

DSE BACK POCKET BRIEF**Topic: Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA)****Group: Executive****Division: International**

Handling – suggest to call on FAS International to answer questions on the MMPA as she is the primary delegate for Home Affairs.

Key points

- On 23 May 2023, Australia and India entered into a landmark Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA), which will see both countries benefit from enhanced cooperation on migration and mobility issues.
- The MMPA supports:
 - o the bilateral mobility of students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals
 - o the return to India of Indian nationals who lack a legal basis to remain in Australia
 - o bilateral dialogue and cooperation to combat irregular migration and people smuggling.

Australian visa-related commitments under the MMPA

The MMPA:

- reaffirms existing visa settings that facilitate permanent or temporary mobility.
- provides an extended visa validity period for Indian business travellers under the Visitor (subclass 600) business visitor stream (increased from up to three, to up to five, years).
 - o To support strong business ties between Australia and India through enabling multiple visits to Australia over a longer validity period, without requiring a new visa.
- creates a new mobility pathway for Indian graduates and early career professionals with knowledge and skills in targeted fields of study to live and work in Australia for up to two years; the *Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES)*.
- eligible fields for MATES include:
 - o renewable energy, mining, engineering, information and communication technology (ICT), artificial intelligence, financial technology, agricultural technology.
- MATES will commence as a pilot program with 3,000 places for primary applicants per program year, who may bring dependants.
 - o Dependants will not be counted towards the annual cap, and will have full work rights.

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OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Number: SB23-000979**

If asked: *Why do we need an MMPA with India when India is already the largest source of migrants to Australia?*

- The arrangement reflects the growing strategic, economic and people-to-people ties between our two countries.
- The MMPA is not just about migration to Australia. It will also enhance the efficiency of Australian removals processes, and bilateral cooperation to combat people smuggling in our region.

If asked: *Will Australia's commitments under the MMPA be consistent with the new Migration Strategy?*

- The arrangement will complement Government's Migration Strategy by enabling some of India's best and brightest graduates and young professionals to come to Australia.
- The MMPA will also support the Government's commitment to restoring the integrity of Australia's migration system by enhancing cooperation on irregular migration.

If asked: *When will MATES be implemented?*

- There is no set timeframe for the commencement of MATES.
- Australian and Indian officials are currently developing a protocol to guide the implementation of the program.

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PDR Number: SQ23-001061

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
BUDGET ESTIMATES
MAY 2023**

**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs**

Program 2.1: Migration

BE23-XXX Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement - Full Text

Senator James Paterson asked:

On 24 May 2023 the Government announced the finalisation of the Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement.

a) Please provide the full text to the agreement.

Answer:

The full text of the Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA) is available at **Attachment A**.

By way of background, the MMPA reaffirms existing visa options already available to Indian nationals, including pathways for visitors, students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals.

The Arrangement establishes a new mobility pathway for Indian graduates and early career professionals known as the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES). The MMPA also increases visa validity from up to three years to up to five years for Indian applicants for subclass 600 (Business) Visitor visas.

The MMPA will support practical cooperation on irregular migration by setting out agreed processes to support swift and efficient removal of Indian nationals who do not have a legal right to remain in Australia, and by establishing a platform for dialogue on counter people smuggling cooperation.

Reporting Period:

Since last hearings: 1 January 2023 – 31 March 2023

Financial Year: 1 July 2022 – 31 March 2023

Responsible Officer: First Assistant Secretary International, Mary Balzary

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

Date Approved: Electronically approved 19/06/2023

SES Contact Officer: Debbie McGowan, A/g Assistant Secretary Asia Branch, s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Consultation: Immigration Programs Division			
Additional Clearance from: <i>(Highlight applicable)</i>	Legal	Finance	Statistics

PDR Number: SQ23-001063

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
BUDGET ESTIMATES
MAY 2023**

**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs**

Program 2.1: Migration

BE23-XXX Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement - Impact on Indian Student Visa Applications

Senator James Paterson asked:

Has any work been done about any potential impact on Indian student visa applications because of the measures in this agreement?

a. If yes please provide that work.

Answer:

The Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA) reaffirms the wide range of existing visa options that facilitate mobility and migration between Australia and India and does not provide any concessional arrangement to current student visa settings.

The Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) provides a new mobility pathway for Indian graduates and early career professionals with knowledge and skills in targeted fields of study to live and work in Australia for up to two years.

To be eligible, participants must have recently graduated from an eligible Indian university with a degree in a specified area of study. Holding an Australian Student (subclass 500) visa is not a requirement for MATES.

Reporting Period: Since last hearings: 1 January 2023 – 31 March 2023 Financial Year: 1 July 2022 – 31 March 2023			
Responsible Officer: Jodie Bjerregaard A/g FAS Immigration Programs Division Tel: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) Date Approved: 24/06/2023			
SES Contact Officer: Karin Maier, Assistant Secretary Skilled Visas Branch, s. 22(1)(a)(ii)			
Consultation: Nil			
Additional Clearance from: (Highlight applicable)	Legal	Finance	Statistics

PDR Number: SQ23-001064

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
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**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs**

Program 2.1: Migration

**BE23-236 - Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement -
Integrity of the Visa System**

Senator James Paterson asked:

What work will the Government undertake to ensure the integrity of the visa system given the government has admitted it is already concerned by fraudulent student visa applications from India?

Answer:

As part of the development of the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) Australia and India will be working together to design an implementation protocol. This includes identifying eligible universities from across India that offer quality courses in the eligible sectors to support integrity of MATES.

The Department continues to strengthen immigration risk, integrity and intelligence systems to enable visa decision makers to more efficiently identify high risk visa applicants. Management of fraud and/or non-genuineness concerns in a student visa application is prescribed in Australia's migration legislation. This applies universally to all applicants. Please see response to Senate Estimates QoN SQ23-001110 for details.

Reporting Period: Since last hearings: 1 January 2023 – 31 March 2023 Financial Year: 1 July 2022 – 31 March 2023			
Responsible Officer: Jodie Bjerregaard A/g FAS Immigration Programs Division Tel: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) Date Approved: 27 June 2023			
SES Contact Officer: Karin Maier, Assistant Secretary Skilled Visas Branch, s. 22(1)(a)(ii)			
Consultation: Nil			
Additional Clearance from: (Highlight applicable)	Legal	Finance	Statistics

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PDR Number: SQ23-001065

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
BUDGET ESTIMATES
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**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs**

Program 2.1: Migration

**BE23-XXX Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement -
Talented Early Professionals Scheme**

Senator James Paterson asked:

What work will the government undertake to ensure the credentials of successful applications of The Talented Early Professionals Scheme and ensure this scheme is not use by fraudulent applicants?

Answer:

As part of the development of the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) Australia and India will be working together to design an implementation protocol. This includes identifying eligible universities from across India that offer quality courses in the eligible sectors to support integrity of MATES.

The Department continues to strengthen immigration risk, integrity and intelligence systems to enable visa decision makers to more efficiently identify high risk visa applicants.

Reporting Period: Since last hearings: 1 January 2023 – 31 March 2023 Financial Year: 1 July 2022 – 31 March 2023			
Responsible Officer: Jodie Bjerregaard A/g FAS Immigration Programs Division Tel: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) Date Approved: 24/06/2023			
SES Contact Officer: Karin Maier, Assistant Secretary Skilled Visas Branch, s. 22(1)(a)(ii)			
Consultation: Nil			
Additional Clearance from: (Highlight applicable)			
	Legal	Finance	Statistics

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PDR Number: SQ23-001119

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
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**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs**

Program 2.2: Visas

**BE23-290 - International Students - management of fraudulent visas as part of the
Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement**

Senator James Paterson asked:

The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) reported “rejection rates for Indian applicants across all Australian universities have soared to their highest level in a decade, with one in four applications now being deemed as “fraudulent” or “non-genuine” by the Department of Home Affairs”. See: <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/universities-extend-indian-student-ban-amid-visa-fraud-concerns-20230522-p5da7t.html>

How will fraudulent visa concerns be managed as part of Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement?

Answer:

As part of the development of the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) Australia and India will be working together to design an implementation protocol. This includes identifying eligible universities from across India that offer quality courses in the eligible sectors to support integrity of MATES.

As MATES is for suitably qualified graduates, it is for a different cohort than those applying for a Student (subclass 500) visa - which is the focus of the referenced article.

The Department continues to strengthen immigration risk, integrity and intelligence systems to enable visa decision makers to more efficiently identify high risk visa applicants. Visa applications will continue to be subject to assessment and to meet the requirements outlined in the Migration Regulations.

Reporting Period: Since last hearings: 1 January 2023 – 31 March 2023 Financial Year: 1 July 2022 – 31 March 2023			
Responsible Officer: Karin Maier A/g FAS Immigration Programs Division Tel: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) Date Approved: 10 July 2023			
SES Contact Officer: Patrick Bryson, A/g Assistant Secretary Skilled Visas Branch, s. 22(1)(a)(ii) s. 22(1)(a)(ii)			
Consultation: Nil			
Additional Clearance from: (Highlight applicable) Legal Finance Statistics			

PDR Number: SQ23-001062

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
BUDGET ESTIMATES
MAY 2023**

**Home Affairs Portfolio
Department of Home Affairs**

Program 2.1: Migration

**BE23-XXX Australia-India Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement - Impact
on the Net Overseas Migration Rate**

Senator James Paterson asked:

Has any work been done about any potential impact on the net overseas migration rate because of the measures in this agreement?

a. If yes please provide that work.

Answer:

The Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA) reaffirms the existing visa options that facilitate mobility and migration between India and Australia, including pathways for visitors, students, graduates, academic researchers, business people and other professionals.

In addition, it includes a new scheme – the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-Professionals Scheme (MATES) – which will provide a temporary mobility pathway for young Indian graduates and early-career professionals with university qualifications in select technical sectors.

MATES will commence as a pilot program with 3,000 places for primary applicants per program year. Participants will be able to bring dependants (spouses and dependent children).

Participants will have 12 months to make their first entry into Australia, and may stay in Australia for 24 months from the date of first entry.

Participants may apply for another visa permitting temporary or permanent residence, provided they meet all eligibility requirements for the visa.

MATES participants may be counted towards Net Overseas Migration (NOM) when they arrive if they spend 12 out of 16 months (cumulatively) in Australia, and will be deducted from NOM once they leave Australia at the end of their stay.

Reporting Period: Since last hearings: 1 January 2023 – 31 March 2023 Financial Year: 1 July 2022 – 31 March 2023			
Responsible Officer: Jodie Bjerregaard A/g FAS Immigration Programs Division Tel: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) Date Approved:			
SES Contact Officer: Karin Maier, Assistant Secretary Skilled Visas Branch, s. 22(1)(a)(ii)			
Consultation: Chief Economist			
Additional Clearance from: <i>(Highlight applicable)</i>			
	Legal	Finance	Statistics