



A Migration System for Australia's Future

Government of South Australia

Submission to the comprehensive review of
Australia's migration system

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Introduction

This submission was coordinated by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, with input from numerous South Australian Government agencies, including the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS), Defence SA, Department of the Treasury and Finance (DTF) and South Australian Tourism. Feedback has also been included from some community groups who will likely also make individual submissions. These agencies are thanked for their interest and involvement. The diverse natures of these agencies highlight how important migration is across a range of portfolios and the broader South Australian community and economy.

COVID 19 had a resounding impact on the movement of people broadly across the globe, with borders closed, South Australia, a State which relies primarily on international migration for its population growth, was heavily impacted. The recent experience of pandemic and geo-political instability highlighted the impacts and challenges for different cities and regions of Australia, which has further demonstrated the importance of differentiated consideration and responses to best support migration across our country.

This submission replies to key questions for the review as laid out in the discussion paper, *A migration system for Australia's future*, focused on delivering actionable reforms that would support a more streamlined, efficient migration which supports South Australia. The government is currently working both internally and with the Commonwealth on options that will better position South Australia as an attractive destination for skilled migrants and also temporary migrants, such as international students.

What challenges and opportunities does (South) Australia face in coming decades?

South Australia faces persistent challenges with population growth. Over the last 30 years, South Australia's share of the Australian population has reduced from 8.5 per cent in 1987 to 7.0 per cent in 2017.

South Australia's population growth rate is typically less than half the national rate. Combined with the older demographic structure of our population, this presents considerable challenges for the state to transform and grow its skilled workforce and economy. While population growth slowed nationally due to closed international borders, South Australia's low growth predates the COVID pandemic and is exacerbated by having the oldest population on the mainland.

Migration is the main driver of South Australia's population growth. Net overseas migration (NOM) contributes an average of 0.5 percentage points to South Australia's annual rate of population growth, a large share of the overall average annual population increase of 0.7 per cent. Even with population growth driven largely by overseas migration, South Australia's share of the national NOM intake has averaged about 5 per cent annually over the last 30 years, which is also consistent with

the South Australia's current share across the last few years. This is well below South Australia's share of the national population (7.0 per cent).

The Government of South Australia is determined to bridge the gap between our current population growth rate and that of the nation. Our commitment to ensuring South Australia is an attractive place to live, work and study is evinced in our recent sustained reversals of our net interstate migration losses, government funding of migrant settlement support and networking programs, and a sustained body of policy and program work delivered by the Population Strategy division within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

The need for a higher population growth rate and the role of migration in achieving population growth, is widely recognised by the wider business community in South Australia, Regional Development Australia Boards, and the regional and metropolitan councils.

South Australia's need for skilled workers

South Australia's relatively low population growth rate, combined with an ageing population, is placing considerable pressure on the state's ability to provide a skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers and enables businesses to expand and grow.

Analysis shows that in some occupations and industries, such as health and aged care and many of the trades, there will be insufficient supply in the local workforce to meet future demand. Combined with the existence of long-standing skill shortages in some industries and occupations, it is clear that skilled migration plays an important role in complementing the local workforce and filling skills gaps.

Skilled migration will help address South Australia's immediate skills shortage needs, but it will also help develop existing and growing high technology industries in the green energy, defence, space, artificial intelligence and machine learning areas, hospitality and tourism, health care, and agribusiness, agtech and food processing industries.

Shortages of suitably skilled workers are a constraint on major private investments and business expansion in South Australia.

How can migration contribute to these challenges and opportunities?

An accessible and well-functioning migration system is critical to support economic growth, liveable cities and regions, and a vision of a smarter, greener and more inclusive economy. The national migration program should be designed so that it can better facilitate:

- a general skilled migration program that is adequately structured to support economic development across Australia;
- a student visa program that enables the best and the brightest to be retained;
- a business migration program that supports innovation and delivers strong investment returns;
- an agile and responsive employer sponsored program with durable safeguards to protect skilled migrants; and
- a refugee and humanitarian intake that reflects Australia's international position and commitments.

As a priority issue, South Australia would like to see an increased role for states and territories within the national migration program, with strong support for state and territory nominated skilled and business programs and improved policies to address the difficulties faced by regional Australia in utilising the migration system.

The policy framework for Australia's skilled migration programs must adequately recognise the differing population trends, economic and labour market conditions across jurisdictions and between large metropolitan, urban, rural, and regional areas.

These differences are currently recognised by the Commonwealth Government in Australia's skilled migration program through the application of 'designated regional areas'¹. Yet the extent to which these categories are currently applied to national migration policy settings is significantly under-utilised and has in fact been eroded since 2019. Differentiated policy settings need to be applied to provide better incentives for migration into second cities and regional and rural areas.

The policy settings for the regional visas currently available, their relative appeal and proportion compared to the permanent visas must be rethought. A rebalanced weighting towards provisional-to-permanent visas (as proposed below) will support better distribution of skilled migrants and social cohesion by helping to align prospective skilled migrants such as temporary visa holders to places where they can access clearer pathways to permanency.

Allowing jurisdictions more scope to plan and execute their own migration programs, with robust oversight regarding skilled migrants' interests, that can target areas of future growth as well as current demand, will allow a more flexible and fair system for Australia.

Accordingly, the Government of South Australia asks the panel to consider:

- Creating a **greater role for state and territory governments** in the migration system, recognising our connectedness to local labour markets and role in delivering training and skills to meet skills shortages. Critical to this will be allowing state and territory governments to set their own occupation lists rather than selecting from a Commonwealth menu.
- **Addressing the imbalance between areas experiencing high and low population growth** that are both presently captured as regional.
- Reforming of the **employer sponsored visa pathways** to remove the skilled occupation list at higher skill levels, set fees relative to business size, make fees payable when the visa is granted, allow 12 month validity for labour market testing, and set income thresholds that recognise different labour market conditions outside of Australia's largest metropolitan cities.
- Reforming of the **general skills migration pathways** to ensure the relative appeal and distribution of migrants outside of Australia's largest metropolitan cities
- **Addressing the rigidity of skilled occupation lists** by applying 3-digit ANZSCO codes for occupations
- Providing greater **opportunities for international students to work in Australia** on completion of their qualifications
- Appropriate opportunities for an **increase in humanitarian entrants** to contribute skills and labour to the Australian economy
- **A continuum of settlement services** not dependent on visa category

South Australia continues to utilise its two Designated Area Migration Agreements (DAMAs), which are important tools to ensure that South Australian businesses, especially in regional and remote South Australia, can gain access to the workforce they need, including in niche and otherwise unsupported occupations. Seeing these Agreements continue, with enhanced flexibility for the employer, but also critically for the worker, is an important goal for South Australia.

¹ <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/working-in-australia/regional-migration/eligible-regional-areas>

What reforms are needed to ensure the migration system can meet the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead?

Designated regional areas

For Australia's skilled migration program to address the challenge of uneven population growth and economic development between urban and regional Australia, a robust, evidence-based, methodology must be applied to determining the Department of Home Affairs' designated regional area categories. The Government of South Australia supports the current framework of three regional area categories, which are necessary to adequately classify differing population trends and concentrations in Australia.

However, South Australia previously expressed disappointment that the regional migration definition was extended in November 2019 to high population growth areas. Major cities and metropolitan areas which have experienced strong population growth over a number of years should not be eligible for the same regional visas and incentives as growth ready regional areas.

This detracts from the ability of those visas and incentives to facilitate skilled migration in regional Australia and support population growth in low growth areas. South Australia contends that the definitions for designated regional areas should be based on Australian Bureau of Statistics population data to reflect relative population size and medium-to-long term localised population growth rates.

Addressing the current migration distribution pattern supports the labour and skilled workforce shortages of regional states and must be addressed not only by making regional migration products appealing, but through addressing their relative appeal against unrestricted independent migration products, such as the Skilled Independent (permanent) 189 visa, from which South Australia settles relatively few migrants.

Employer sponsored migration

Employers' ability to recruit according to their specific needs, and in a timely manner, facilitates productivity and unlocks enterprises potential to expand their economic activity. Where short-term skills gaps cannot be filled locally, it is important that employer sponsored visas provide adequate flexibility and responsiveness for all employers to access necessary overseas skilled workers.

The overarching challenge in designing Australia's employer sponsored visas is to do so in a way that provides equitable access to skilled migrants for employers of difference scales and who operate in differing labour market conditions across jurisdictions and between urban, rural, and regional areas.

In South Australia, DAMA's have become the employer sponsored visa product of choice due to the excessive barriers for regional employers under the current standard employer sponsored migration framework that result from inadequate recognition of regional and rural labour market conditions.

If an employer sponsored framework is implemented that adequately reflects the differing labour market conditions across jurisdictions and between urban, rural, and regional areas, the future role and value of DAMAs could be focused to facilitate niche skillsets in regional and rural areas and chronic workforce shortages at lower skill levels. This could facilitate the negotiation of a single South Australian DAMA after the State's current agreements expire in 2024.

A reformed framework for employer sponsored visas that could satisfy this is outlined below.

Removal of skilled occupation lists and two stage process to permanent residency

We propose a two-stage process to permanent residency where employers have a greater role in selecting the skilled workers necessary to fill vacancies at the first stage, with Government's role more heavily weighted towards ensuring program integrity at the second stage, to ensure employer sponsored visas are sufficiently flexible and responsive.

Critical to this approach is the removal of skilled occupation lists for employer sponsored visas at high skills levels.

This could be delivered through a model where:

- Employers demonstrating a genuine need to fill a position that is commensurate to any ANZSCO Skill Level 1, 2 or 3, occupation.
- Applicants for ANZSCO Skill Level 1, 2 or 3 positions demonstrating that they:
 - Have an AQF Qualification and/or experience that meets the Skill Level as defined by ANZSCO and have at least one-year relevant work experience.
 - Have an overseas qualification or experience that satisfies the relevant Skill Level as defined by ANZSCO and have at least two-years relevant work experience.
 - Meet minimum English language ability.

Minimum income threshold

A national income threshold for all employer sponsored visas cannot be set at a level that adequately considers the varying labour market conditions across jurisdictions and between urban, regional and rural areas.

Accordingly, the panel could consider a two tier income threshold that differentiates between the largest metropolitan cities and the rest of the country, allowing more equitable access for employers outside of the largest metropolitan cities to access skilled migrants.

Another alternative is a minimum income threshold for higher skill levels - Alternatively, if a single national minimum income threshold is ultimately applied for employer sponsored migration, this should only be applied to high skill ANZSCO Skill Level 1 occupations. Employers seeking to sponsor skilled migrants in ANZSCO Skill Level 2 and 3 occupations, should be required to pay the Annual Market Salary Rate for the occupation.

The cost of sponsoring skilled migrants

The current requirement for up-front payment when making a nomination, combined with the uncertainty of the visa outcome, presents a barrier to greater uptake of employer nominated visas.

The size and scale of businesses must be adequately considered to ensure smaller employers have equitable access to sponsoring overseas skilled workers where necessary.

Accordingly, the panel could consider a tiered model with different fees reflecting the size and scale of employers. For example, employers with:

- Turnover above \$10m pay a full annual charge set by the Commonwealth to sponsor a skilled migrant.
- Turnover from \$5m to \$10m would be subject to a 33 per cent discount to this charge
- Turnover under \$5m would be subject to a 66 per cent discount to this charge.

A further discount for employers with a turnover of less than \$10m in Category 3 Designated Regional Areas, where acute and chronic skill shortages are well documented and more prominent, should be applied.

The cost of sponsoring a skilled migrant should be collected as a second application charge in the first-stage provisional visa application process, once all eligibility requirements have been satisfied and the visa is ready to be granted.

Labour Market Testing (LMT)

Flexibility for employers in areas and industries where well documented, persistent and acute workforce shortages are experienced is necessary to reflect these conditions.

A 12-month validity period should apply to LMT requirements in these circumstances.

Jobs and Skills Australia, the newly created statutory Commonwealth agency, would be best placed to determine which areas more flexible LMT requirements should apply to.

Intra-company transfers should be exempt from LMT in certain circumstances including for those priority workforce areas which can help build Australia's sovereign capabilities, such as Defence, Renewable Energy, Hi-Tech and Cyber security.

Where an employer sponsor visa holder changes to a role within the same ANZSCO Minor Group with the sponsoring employer, LMT should not be required.

General Skilled Migration

Challenges resulting from the Australia's skilled migration policy settings have hindered the desired distribution of skilled migrants across the country. In recent decades Australia's largest capital cities have been, on average, growing faster than the rest of the country. Between 2015 and 2019, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane received 68 per cent of national population growth during this period, while having only accounted for 49 per cent of Australia's population in 2015. Most of this population growth was accounted for by overseas migrants, with skilled migrants being the focus of Australia's Migration Program since the mid-1990s.

In contrast, South Australia received 3 per cent of national population growth during this period, while having accounted for 7 per cent of Australia's population in 2015.

Australia's General Skilled Migration (GSM) visas should be designed in a way that adequately supports the proportional distribution of skilled migrants to the areas they and their skills are needed. A GSM program that achieves this objective improves the livelihoods of all Australians through the easing of pressure on infrastructure, housing and cost of living in the large capital cities, while helping maintain and strengthen regional communities and services, and contributing to industry growth and regional economic development.

To achieve this, the policy settings for GSM visas should be aligned with the Department of Home Affairs' designated regional areas. Policy settings must consider:

- The quantities and ratios of these visas available relative to each other, and within the National Migration Program.
- The relative appeal of and interplay between the visas.
- The design of the skilled migration points test, with a view to:
 - Tailoring factors that enable skilled migrants to qualify for differing categories based on work or study undertaken in Australia.
 - Achieving some alignment of the relative pool of candidates to each category's size and needs to the extent possible.

Correct distribution of the different GSM visas available and nuanced incentives to work and study in regional areas are critical to supporting regional Australia's attractiveness to overseas workers and international students. This is particularly important, considering the recent erosion of regional Australia's advantage in post-study work rights for international graduates².

To this end, the basis for a framework for Australia's GSM visas is outlined below for the panel to consider:

Provisional visas (higher proportion available)

- Category 1 visas:
 - Allow skilled migrants to live and work in all designated regional areas for a minimum period (e.g. three years) before qualifying for permanent residency.
 - Points for relevant skilled employment in a category 1 designated regional area.
 - Points for relevant study in a category 1 designated regional area.
 - Potential access to select social services, after a longer waiting period
- Category 2 visas:
 - Allow skilled migrants to live and work in category 2 and 3 designated regional areas for a minimum period of three years before qualifying for permanent residency.
 - Higher points for relevant skilled employment in a category 2 designated regional area.
 - Higher points for relevant study in a category 2 designated regional area.
 - Access to select social services, potentially after a short waiting period.
- Category 3 visas
 - Allow skilled migrants to live and work in category 3 designated regional areas for a shorter minimum period of two years before qualifying for permanent residency.
 - Highest points for relevant skilled employment in a category 3 designated regional area.
 - Highest points for relevant study in a category 3 designated regional area.
 - Broader coverage and quicker access to social services.

Permanent visas (lower proportion available)

- Permanent visas can be structured in the same way as provisional visas in terms of core eligibility requirements, provided the quantity of these visas relative to the provisional visas available is considered sufficiently.
- Permanent visas should be positioned for highly skilled and experienced migrants, targeting critical skills needs and priority workforce areas such as Health, Defence, Renewable Energy, Hi-Tech and Cyber security.

² Post-study work rights for international students to boost skills | Ministers' Media Centre ([education.gov.au](https://www.education.gov.au))

State and Territory Agreements

The national standardisation of the migration programme can be a poor match for local economic conditions, and out of sync with state government policy motivations.

States must choose their occupations for state-nomination from a list set by the Commonwealth, with occupations that are in demand locally sometimes unavailable. The Designated Area Migration Agreements offer some flexibility to add additional occupations, but greater flexibility would allow for a more responsive system and better capacity to address labour market shortages.

States and territories can be at the mercy of decisions made at a national level which have a real effect on whether employers and overseas workers will use the migration system.

For states seeking to attract people, it is difficult to adequately monitor the success of migration in addressing our workforce and demographic challenges.

There is an opportunity for States and Territory governments to have a greater role in the migration system.

Establishing closer Commonwealth/jurisdictional partnerships in designing and administering state-territory nominated visa programs will reduce overlap and complexity in the two-stage process (nomination and visa grant) for GSM visas and help unlock state and territory migration programs to fully realise their objectives.

Canada's Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) is the most prominent example of successful federal and jurisdictional collaboration to achieve the settlement of skilled migrants where their skills are needed. The PNP was co-designed between the federal and provincial governments to increase the dispersion of migrants to lesser populated provinces. The PNP has successfully shifted the settlement of skilled workers from overseas beyond Canada's three largest cities.

A greater role for jurisdictions in state and territory nominated visas will fully unlock the decentralisation of Australia's skilled migration program, a challenge which the National Migration Program has struggled to overcome since the mid 1990's.

A key component of this should be for states and territories to determine, in consultation with the Commonwealth, the skilled occupation lists applicable to their jurisdictions.

The Government of South Australia undertakes comprehensive labour market analysis to inform the policy settings, and distribution of planning levels, for its state-nominated GSM program. The methodology for this analysis considers the:

- The current demand for workers via the Commonwealth Government's internet job vacancy data.
- The projected demand for new workers for each occupation via the projected net job openings for each program year from employment growth and staff turnover.
- Data related to the past reliance on workers from overseas to complement the local training and labour markets to support industry demand for workers
- The latest data for education and training completions for VET and for domestic students in higher education.
- The estimated dependence on workers from overseas to fill job openings over the year to the date of the Census.

The South Australian Government is well equipped to assess and determine its medium to longer term strategic skills needs and would welcome the opportunity to determine its skilled occupation lists for state-nominated visas, demonstrating its evidence base and methodology to the Commonwealth.

Skilled occupation lists

While a suite of risk-based flexible and responsive employer sponsored policy settings is fundamental to supporting productivity and addressing short-term labour market needs, this component of Australia's skilled migration program must be complemented by the role of Government in addressing strategic priorities including the longer-term needs of the labour market and broader economy.

Skilled occupation lists have historically underpinned Australia's GSM visas, however, the applications of these lists to classify workers skills has been too restrictive and must be implemented in a broader and more flexible manner to adequately reflect the contemporary labour market and transferability of skills.

Skilled occupation lists determined at the three-digit ANZSCO level rather than the six-digit level, with skilled migrants' qualifications and experience assessed on this basis, will:

- Reduce the excessive rigidity and complexity that exist in current policy settings.
- Streamline the skills assessment process.
- Differentiate between skill levels.
- Sufficiently classify specialisations to support government priorities including workforce planning.
- Prevent individual occupations with a very high supply of candidates from blocking out other specialisations that have distinct labour market demands. For example, Accountants vs Human Resource and Training Professionals and Sales, Marketing and Public Relations Professionals, or Engineering Professionals vs Natural and Physical Science Professionals.

Certain situations may exist, whereby assessment of a migrant's skills should be undertaken at the 4-digit ANZSCO level. This should be determined in consultation with industry and relevant government agencies. The broadened classification of skilled migrants' occupation groupings will support a more efficient skilled migration program with the alignment of migrants' skills to the labour market adequately recognised.

International student and graduate visas

The South Australian Government strongly supports international education and providing the students who earn degrees in Australia the chance to stay and contribute to the productivity of our economy. The State Government noted the Commonwealth Government's announcement at the Jobs and Skills Summit in September 2022 that it will increase the duration of post study work rights of international students from two years to four years for select bachelor's degree graduates to strengthen the pipeline of skilled labour.

The Post-Study Work stream for international graduates is currently two years in duration. As a Designated Regional Area for migration, South Australia currently benefits from an extra year of post-study work rights for graduates of an Adelaide educational institution who have completed a higher education or postgraduate qualification and maintained residence in South Australia.

The South Australian Government awaits with interest the details of which degrees in areas of verified skill shortages the extended post study work rights will apply to. The regional post-study work rights incentive has been extremely beneficial for the attraction of international students to South Australia. An erosion of this benefit would be concerning and re-emphasises the need for the Commonwealth Government to implement further regional incentives within the migration system,

including in relation to international education, to distribute skilled migration more equally across Australia.

The South Australian Government welcomes the Commonwealth Government's current focus on the student visa backlog in support of the international education sector. The State Government is aware that some stakeholders are seeking greater consistency and transparency in applying the Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) requirement in student visa decision making by the Commonwealth Government. The rationale for the GTE requirement in relation to the operation of the national skilled migration program is clear but it is now potentially inconsistent with the Australian Strategy for International Education 2021-2030, which positions a stronger role for international education to help meet Australia's future skills needs.

Defence workforce

The defence workforce in South Australia is expected to increase significantly over the next decade. In September 2021, the Australian Government announced that South Australia is the intended location for the construction of a new fleet of nuclear-powered submarines for the Australian Defence Force.

Through partnerships with defence primes, supply chain firms, government, higher education and vocational education and training providers, South Australia is developing a pipeline of workers for critical defence related trade, operations, leadership and support roles. This ensures that South Australia can deliver the skilled workforce for the Osborne shipyard and within supply chain.

The skills needed for our State to deliver on major naval, aerospace and land projects include leadership; design; project management; combat systems engineering; trades and technicians; contract management; information technology/cyber security; work, health and safety; logistics; and marketing and communications. The supply of potential workforce for defence projects can be supplemented by overseas skilled migration including for niche skills that are globally scarce.

The Government of South Australia is committed to working in partnership with the Australian Government to progress security clearance issues and visa outcomes to assist with the National Naval Shipbuilding Enterprise.

South Australia is spearheading a major expansion of Australia's naval capabilities with current modelling projecting the Osborne Naval Shipyard's workforce demand is set to grow from 2,800 to 5,000 by 2027 and up to 10,000 in next decade. Whilst shipbuilding projects are some of the most significant in terms of scale, the state's strengths and opportunities are much broader than naval shipbuilding, with aerospace, information warfare, space, cyber and systems also major components of the state's defence industry.

It is imperative that South Australia has the skilled workforce in place to ensure major Defence projects are delivered whilst enriching adjacent industries and the broader community. While projects such as the nuclear-powered submarine build will require some specialist skills to be developed, the broad range of skills required across the sector are not tied to or dependent on a single project. Engineers, logisticians and project managers are all equipped with foundational skills that are transferrable across a range of projects in both the defence and space industries.

The Department of Defence has also acknowledged the importance of space by recognising space as a domain. South Australia is experiencing rapid growth across the space domain in the NewSpace sector which will require international expertise and skills as the state supports the Australian Space Agency's goal to create up to 20,000 new Australian jobs by 2030.

Intense competition for workers with shortages across Australia and the global economy are adversely impacting Defence Force recruiting and retention and limiting the manufacturing capacity of the defence industry both locally and internationally.

Through its previous policy work and substantial investment in education and training, the South Australian Government is in a strong position to attract skilled professionals to South Australia to support the growth of our defence industry workforce and benefit the space industry workforce where it has been identified that local workers cannot currently fill niche and highly technical roles.

Increased migration of defence industry professionals with at least 5 – 15 years' experience will not only fill identified gaps but will support the professional development of the existing workforce to support a stable and sustainable workforce to continue delivering defence and space projects for decades to come.

Research conducted in the United Kingdom by the state government shows a strong desire for foreign nationals to move to South Australia to work specifically in the defence industry however restrictions on Australian Citizenship and security clearances for these individuals prohibits them from migrating.

The Global Talent Visa Program was recently amended to include the defence industry however without an expedited process to permanent citizenship, these amendments are null and void. Whilst they provide the successful candidates with an expedited temporary visa, candidates are unable to apply for available defence industry roles and are therefore required to seek employment in other sectors, taking a break from their skilled profession. With successful candidates being forced to stop using their niche skills in Australia, their ability to re-enter the workforce when their permanency is granted, and they are eligible for employment, is significantly impacted.

The South Australian Government strongly supports a citizenship recognition program for defence and space industry skilled professionals for Five Eyes (FVEY) migrants. Where skills cannot be filled locally in niche roles, it is imperative that they can be recruited from FVEY nations for major projects, particularly where the Department of Defence has partnered with a country to deliver the project. The AUKUS trilateral partnership also presents a unique opportunity to develop a specific working visa for skilled migrants who can fill gaps, upskill the existing workforce and ensure the pipeline of work continues on time and on budget.

Refugee and humanitarian arrivals

The South Australian Government has strongly argued for an increase in the places in the migration program allocated to refugee and humanitarian arrivals. Refugees contribute richly to society and the economy when they are supported to do so.

Refugees have long supported Australia through periods of recovery and reconstruction. Refugees and humanitarian arrivals are often skilled, willing to work, and contribute and give something back to the nation that supported them.

An additional refugee intake is about more than labour needs, it is about demonstrating humanity and the strength of our democracy on a global scale.

Settlement support

Strong settlement outcomes for all arrivals are essential to retention of skilled workers, social harmony and stronger multicultural communities in Australia.

Settlement supports are currently provided by the Commonwealth government for refugee and humanitarian arrivals, recognising the higher needs of this population.

However, even within this cohort, the support needs differ. Support is also needed to ensure strong settlement outcomes across a range of other arrivals, including skilled migrants and their families, where not all arrivals may have the same language skills and cultural experience.

To address this, the Government of South Australia provides funding to some non-profit organisations to bridge the gap in providing culturally safe and appropriate settlement supports, including navigating governments services, work, education and caring.

Accordingly, we invite the panel to consider the provision of Commonwealth funded settlement support services determined on a needs basis, rather than visa category, considering factors such as English attainment, and addressing risks of isolation and assisting in the day to day aspects of establishing in a new country, such as accessing schools, medical services and housing.