

From: Sandy Johnson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 20 April 2005 7:09 PM
To: Committee, FHS (REPS)
Subject: Points for Inquiry

SUBMISSION NO. 65

AUTHORISED: 25-05-05 *hulstik*

Point 1 Missing the boat.

Australia has an aging population and the serious implications for all Australians are obvious to us all.

There are many countries with the opposite problem and the serious implications for the people of countries are also obvious.

In Australia, there are hundreds of couples and individuals currently waiting on waiting list to adoption from overseas. They are waiting up to 6 years due to lack of children available to their state and country.

There are millions of destitute children around the world and for some (not all) of these children adoption would be the best option.

Other countries have been more pro-active in setting up these mutually beneficial relationships as they have been faster to recognise the opportunity and more professional in their approach. These mutually beneficial relationships also include helping the children who are not best served by adoption.

Point 2 Not all Australians have Equal Access

As adoption is handled on a state by state basis, not all Australians have the same access to intercountry adoption. Some Australians have chosen to move interstate to improve their chances. For example, there are over 600 applicants waiting to adopt in Queensland but these people have the second lowest chance of adopting. Please see the figures below.

2003 stats (pop 20,111,30) using June 2004 stats from ABS and 02/04 intercountry adoption stats from AIHW: Adoptions Australia 2003-04.

State & Pop. Intercountry adoptions One adoption per...

ACT	324000	26	12,461
SA	1534300	72	21,309
TAS	482100	22	21,913
NT	199900	5	39,980
WA	1982200	44	45,050
VIC	4972800	86	57,823
QLD	3882000	49	79,224
NSW	6731399	66	101,990

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/cws/aa03-04/aa03-04.pdf>

Point 3 Inconsistent Treatment of Children once in Australia

There are inconsistencies between the benefits and entitlements provided to families with their own birth children and those provided to families who have adopted children from overseas. Due to the age limit on the \$3,000 baby bonus most adopted children are excluded. This includes the most needy children, these are older children who often need additional care, tutoring and counselling. In Queensland, we are required to have one caregiver not work for the first year. Adoptive parents agree that this is in the best interest of the child but receive no assistance to do so.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Yours faithfully,

Sandy Johnson