



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

8 April 2011

[REDACTED]
Inquiry Secretary
Standing Committee on Health and Ageing
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

①

Submission No. 138
(Overseas Trained Doctors)
Date: 18/04/2011

[REDACTED]

**SUBMISSION – INQUIRY INTO REGISTRATION PROCESSES AND SUPPORT
FOR OVERSEAS TRAINED DOCTORS**

Thank you for your letter of 21 March 2011 to Andrew Metcalfe, Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, seeking a submission to the Inquiry into Registration Processes and Support for Overseas Trained Doctors (OTDs) by 8 April 2011. The Department is pleased to provide input to the Inquiry and is available to provide further input as necessary.

This submission provides information in relation to the third term of reference for the inquiry:

Suggest ways to remove impediments and promote pathways for OTDs to achieve full Australian qualification, particularly in regional areas, without lowering the necessary standards required by colleges and regulatory bodies.

The Department's skilled migration program provides a number of temporary and permanent pathways for OTDs including;

- General Skilled Migration (GSM) (permanent)
- Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) (permanent)
- Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS) (permanent)
- Temporary Business (Long Stay) – Subclass 457

For the Inquiry's reference the Department provides the following figures on the number of visas granted to Medical Practitioners (ANZSCO Minor Group 253) over the past two program years as well as the year to date at 31 March 2011. The statistics are also available in a table at **Attachment A**.

people our business

Under the GSM program 450 Medical Practitioners were granted visas in the 2008-09 program year. In the 2009-10 program year, 1 070 Medical Practitioners were granted visas. In the program year to date at 31 March 2011, 420 Medical Practitioners have been granted visas.

Under the RSMS program 150 Medical Practitioners were granted visas in the 2008-09 program year. In the 2009-10 program year, 130 Medical Practitioners were granted visas. In the program year to date at 31 March 2011, 130 Medical Practitioners have been granted visas.

Under the ENS program 370 Medical Practitioners were granted visas in the 2008-09 program year. In the 2009-10 program year, 350 Medical Practitioners were granted visas. In the program year to date at 31 March 2011, 220 Medical Practitioners have been granted visas.

Under the Temporary Business (Subclass 457) program 3 310 Medical Practitioners were granted visas in the 2008-09 program year. In the 2009-10 program year 2 670 Medical Practitioners were granted visas. In the program year to date at 31 March 2011, 2 390 Medical Practitioners have been granted visas.

As evidenced by the above figures, OTDs have consistently accessed the various temporary and permanent skilled migration pathways to live and work in Australia. The Department welcomes the inquiry by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing, as it is seven months into the operation of a new national system of medical registration which was a major reform exercise.

The Department relies on expert advice from assessing authorities to establish whether an applicant has the necessary skills in their nominated occupation when they apply for skilled migration. These assessing authorities are independent bodies gazetted by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship based on advice from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

The process of skills assessment for OTDs is slightly different from other occupations. The Department accepts full (unconditional) registration or specialist (conditional) registration as a suitable skills assessment for migration purposes. This differs from the majority of occupations in that a formal skills assessment letter is not provided to the applicant by the assessing authority.

The Medical Board of Australia (MBA) is responsible for the registration and regulation of medical practitioners and the accreditation of their education and training, with the Australian Medical Council (AMC) responsible, inter alia, for assessing the qualifications of OTDs who wish to practice medicine in Australia. While the principal purpose of this process is to assess, accredit and register medical practitioners, the outcome also forms an important element in visa decisions to allow OTDs to remain in Australia.

At present, the outcome and process for the registration of OTDs is not easily accessible for departmental case officers making decisions on visa applications. The provision of reliable registration information in this area would result in a streamlining of the registration and immigration skills assessment processes, ensuring that OTDs are not inadvertently delayed by communication difficulties between government and professional bodies.

The Department would therefore submit that in any proposed improvements to the registration of OTDs, consideration be given to better access to registration information. This would ensure that OTDs are not unnecessarily required to present identical documentation and evidence for the purposes of registration and migration.

Attachment A

General Skilled Migration (GSM) primary applications granted where the nominated occupation was Medical Practitioner (ANZSCO Minor Group 253)

ANZSCO Nominated Occupation	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 to 31/03/11
Medical Practitioners	450	1070	420

Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) primary applications granted where the nominated occupation was Medical Practitioner (ANZSCO Minor Group 253)

ANZSCO Nominated Occupation	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 to 31/03/11
Medical Practitioners	150	130	130

Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS) primary applications granted where the nominated occupation was Medical Practitioner (ANZSCO Minor Group 253)

ANZSCO Nominated Occupation	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 to 31/03/11
Medical Practitioners	370	350	220

Subclass 457 primary applications granted where the nominated occupation was Medical Practitioner (ANZSCO Minor Group 253)

ANZSCO Nominated Occupation	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 to 31/03/11
Medical Practitioners	3 310	2 670	2 390

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011

Note 1: Figures rounded to the nearest 10.

Note 2: ANZSCO was introduced in DIAC on 1 July 2010. Applications lodged prior to that date using the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) 2nd Edition have been converted to an ANZSCO code using a standard DIAC mapping approved by the ABS.

Note 3: Figures for 2010-11 are provisional and subject to variation.