

**HOME AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS**

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY SPOKEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade
Foreign Affairs and Aid Subcommittee
Inquiry into certain aspects of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Annual
Report 2019-20 - Myanmar

QoN Number: 07

Subject: Outline of the totality of the Government's response for the student visa cohort

Asked by: Tim Ayres

Question:

Senator AYRES: I appreciate you're not necessarily in a position to answer for the government on the totality of the government's response, but I would appreciate, perhaps on notice, a bit of an outline from one of you about what the total package of the government's response is and what the focus has been on this cohort. I appreciate the point about at large—and we might have different views about whether or not that approach has been satisfactory—but I would like, on notice, an outline of the totality of the government's response in terms of that cohort of 1,500 or thereabouts.

Answer:

On 5 May 2021, Minister Hawke announced that Myanmar nationals who are in Australia on temporary visas, can apply to extend their stay until it is safe for them to return home.

Myanmar nationals can access a range of visa options, both permanent and temporary, to extend their stay in Australia.

To support the announcement from Minister Hawke, the Department emailed Myanmar temporary visa holders in Australia, encouraging them to contact the Department regarding visa options for their specific situation.

This email included information on how Myanmar nationals can check their visa status and apply for a new visa to extend their stay in Australia.

The Department of Home Affairs does not provide or fund any support services to temporary visa holders. Emergency support for temporary visa holders is administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS).

The Government has allocated \$16.5 million to the Australian Red Cross (\$7 million in March 2020, \$6 million in August 2020 and a further \$3.5 million in December 2020), to provide emergency relief and counselling support to temporary visa holders. Temporary visa holders are also able to access emergency relief services, as part of the Community Support Package administered by DSS from other community organisations in receipt of \$200 million additional funding.

Education providers also provide welfare and support to their international students.