



17-18 August 2017

## **Intercountry Adoption Central Authorities Meeting** **Communiqué**

The Australian, state and territory Central Authorities for intercountry adoption, together with the Department of Social Services (DSS) met on 17 and 18 August 2017. Representatives from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), the International Social Service International Reference Centre (ISS/IRC), International Social Service Australia (ISS Australia), the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and the New Zealand Central Authority also attended parts of the meeting.

### **Australian Government updates**

DSS gave an update on the final stage of development of an online eligibility assessment tool for inclusion on the Intercountry Adoption Australia (IAA) website and provided statistics on the number and types of enquiries IAA is receiving.

DIBP and Central Authorities discussed citizenship, guardianship and expatriate adoption issues.

State and territory Central Authorities also provided updates on key developments in each jurisdiction.

### **Country program updates**

Attendees discussed a number of country program matters, with a focus on the Philippines and Taiwan. The India program (on hold) was also discussed.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

Attendees continued discussions about a new *Commonwealth-State Agreement for the Continued Operation of Australia's Intercountry Adoption Program* and the accompanying *National Strategic Plan*.

### **Ad hoc and Expatriate Adoptions**

Attendees recognised the need for further discussion around these complex issues. It was agreed that the Expatriate Adoption Working Group would be refreshed, with DSS to Chair.

### **Update from the ISS/IRC and ISS Australia**

ISS/IRC provided an update on intercountry adoption developments and adoption related projects that ISS is currently working on. ISS Australia reported on their adoption-related support services and provided statistics and case studies from the DSS-funded Intercountry Adoption Tracing and Reunification Service.

### **Update from AIHW**

AIHW informed the meeting of the outcomes of the Special Needs and Expatriate Adoption (SNEPA) Working Group and highlighted limitations on future data collection. AIHW also provided an overview of new work on carer adoptions and permanency for the 2016-17 National Adoption Collection.