



22 and 23 November 2016

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

The Australian, state and territory central authorities for intercountry adoption, together with the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) met on 22 and 23 March 2016. 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 development of an online assessment tool for clients of the Intercountry Adoption Australia (IAA) support service, as well as statistics on the number and types of enquiries that the service is receiving.

DFAT provided an overview of the work and achievements of their officers posted in China and South Korea since October 2015 in enhancing relationships with overseas intercountry adoption central authorities in the region. The officers plan to visit other regional countries with which Australia has a program, later this year.

AIHW noted it is undertaking several data development activities, including consultation with the Online Adoptions Data Development Working Group.

DIBP provided information about the different ways adoptees can become Australian Citizens. The Australian Passport Office (DFAT) informed attendees about recent changes to procedures for confirming the Australian citizenship of individuals applying for passports, including for individuals previously issued with Australian passports. These changes may affect intercountry adoptees — contact [Intercountry Adoption Australia](#) for more information (Ph: 1800 197 760).

State and territory central authorities also provided updates on key developments in each jurisdiction.

Roles and responsibilities

Attendees continued discussions from the last meeting in November 2015 on reviewing the *Commonwealth-State Agreement for the Continued Operation of Australia's Intercountry Adoption Program*. Work on the framework and development of the new intergovernmental agreement is ongoing.

Country Program update

Central authorities discussed the South Korea, Philippines, Thailand and Taiwan quotas, emphasising the importance of filling quotas within the required timeframes and across jurisdictions to ensure quota allocations are fully utilised. The Attorney-General's Department (AGD) provided updates on the South Africa, Philippines, Thailand, South Korea, China and India programs.



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Relative adoptions

The Intercountry relative adoption policy paper is under review. Attendees recognised the need for clarity around this complex area of adoptions, and agreed that the revised policy would aim to help state and territory central authorities and IAA to provide consistent advice to prospective adoptive parents.

Update from the International Social Service (ISS)

A representative from the ISS International Resource Centre in Geneva provided attendees with information about resources collected by ISS that central authorities and professionals working in the adoption area can access. These resources include publications such as fact sheets (either sourced from the specific country or produced by ISS) on a variety of subjects such as matching procedures in-country, country situation analyses, comparative studies and post-adoption searching services. ISS also provided updated information on a number of countries including Vietnam, the Philippines, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Bolivia, South Africa and Ethiopia.