

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Cuban resettlement

- Since the early 2000s Australia has, from time to time, agreed to consider resettlement of refugees at the request of the US Government, including small numbers of Cubans and Haitians.
 - This represents a further example of Australia-US cooperation on global refugee and humanitarian issues.
- The US has requested Australia’s assistance to resettle 18 Cuban nationals currently detained at the Migrant Operations Center (Guantanamo Bay).
- Post Washington DC are considering the individuals for refugee and humanitarian visas in accordance with usual processes.

Background

Protection Transfer Arrangement

On 20 September 2016, at President Obama’s Leaders’ Summit on Refugees, Prime Minister Turnbull announced that Australia would participate in a US-led multilateral program to resettle refugees from Central America.

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In late 2016, the US Department of State requested that Australia consider resettling 18 Cubans intercepted by the US Coast Guard, who are currently detained at the Migrant Operations Center (Guantanamo Bay). On 20 March 2017, the Minister agreed that the Department could process visa applications for these individuals by the end of the financial year, subject to them meeting necessary health, character and security checks. Post interviewed the individuals in early May 2017, and is working towards visa grant by end of June 2017. Final health assessments are being undertaken prior to grant, with no criminal or character concerns identified.

In recent years, Australia has resettled small numbers of Cubans through the Offshore component of the Humanitarian Programme. No Cubans have been granted an Offshore Humanitarian visa in 2016-17 to date.

Offshore Humanitarian visa grants to Cubans, by programme year

Programme Year	Total
2009–10	<5
2011–12	20
2012–13	21
2015–16	8
Total	

Data Notes:

1. As information has been drawn from dynamic system environments the information provided may differ from previous or future reporting.
2. Data was extracted from Departmental systems on 04 July 2016.
3. The country of birth of principal visa applicants is applied to secondary visa applicants.

Additional Briefing Material

Attachment A – s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Attachment B – s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

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