

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

**EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT
FUNDED MOVEMENTS TO AUSTRALIA
(PROJECT CODE 470-CAU)**

July 2001



IOM International Organization for Migration

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Programme for Government Funded Movements to Australia is one of the important and on-going Programmes that the Organization has been implementing since its establishment in 1951. The total Government Funded movements to Australia has constituted an average of 0.83% of the total IOM movements during the last five years.

Similar to the services presented to the Governments of other resettlement countries, IOM provides a wide range of services, including but not limited to transportation and medical examination, to the Australian Government for refugees accepted for resettlement in Australia. The main focus of this evaluation report is on the transportation services that IOM provides – this being due to a forthcoming tender process by DIMA (Department of Immigration and Multi-Cultural Affairs of the Government of Australia) on the transportation component of the Programme.

Overall, the evaluation has found the Programme relevant to the mandate of the Organization, the requirement expressed by the Government of Australia, and the needs of the refugee population served. It has also shown that IOM has provided relatively efficient and cost-effective services to the Government of Australia under this on-going Programme; however, improvements should be made in the areas of financial planning and calculation of service fee. Furthermore, IOM can further reduce the costs by organizing a higher number of movements.

Since the dissemination of information to the refugees prior to their departure has not been officially assigned to IOM – yet is being done in one form or another by almost all IOM Missions – there is a need to prepare standardized information.

In the course of meetings and discussions with the officials from DIMA, the general satisfaction with IOM services have been expressed. It should be remembered that IOM will need to discuss some of the recommendations of this report with the Government of Australia and obtain their support in order to implement them. If accepted and carried out, the improvements recommended in this evaluation report should enable IOM to improve its services and to reduce its costs. Furthermore, and at a later stage, it should be possible to establish more rigorous indicators in order to assess the overall performance.

8. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions:

1. Overall, the services provided by IOM under this Programme are relevant to the mandate of the Organization, the requirements expressed by the Government of Australia, and the needs of the refugee population served.
2. IOM performs all the services required of it as per the Agreement.
3. IOM reporting and accountability comply with terms of the Agreement.
4. The material is being maintained according to the requirements of the Government of Australia.
5. The invoicing system by IOM is generally in compliance with the DIMA requirement; however, it is not always possible for IOM to present the previous month's expenditures in the following month.
6. IOM has met the insurance requirement as described in the Agreement.
7. IOM implementation costs can be better accounted for and maintained at a more stable level through two corrective measures:
 - 1) Separate reimbursement by DIMA of the staff and office costs of IOM Canberra and exclusion of those costs from the IOM monthly invoices;
 - 2) Calculation of a fixed service fee by IOM based on a minimum number of movements and geographical distribution of refugees which need to be established with the assistance of DIMA.
8. The survey performed shows that one criteria of efficiency can be considered as being met in that Programme resources are being devoted to activities within the Programme parameters.
9. The current communication systems between various IOM and DIMA offices work efficiently following certain improvements which have already been implemented on both sides. However, the dissemination of standardized information to the refugees prior to their departure has not been undertaken so far.
10. With three focal points for the Programme overview and management, and due to the fact that the Programme has no major deficits or operational lapses, the Programme is efficient in its management and oversight aspects.

11. IOM is a cost-effective provider of transportation and related services to the Government of Australia under this Programme. However, the costs can be further reduced if IOM can organize a higher number of movements.

Recommendations:

1. IOM, both at Headquarters and in the field, should endeavour to meet the one-month timeframe for invoicing. In the meantime, IOM Canberra should discuss with the DIMA officials the possibility of extending the timeframe for presentation of the costs of movements to three months after any movement has taken place. It should be noted however that a longer time lapse between IOM incurring the costs and DIMA reimbursing them exposes both parties to a higher currency fluctuation. Since the current system is based on reimbursement of costs rather than advanced payment to IOM in order to implement the Programme, IOM should consider the inclusion of a reasonable percentage of total costs in the future calculations of service fee in order to cover any currency fluctuation.
2. IOM Canberra should negotiate with DIMA on the subject of separate reporting for the staff and office costs of the IOM office in Canberra and the staff and office costs of the IOM Missions who are involved in the process of refugee movement to Australia.
3. IOM and DIMA should agree on a minimum number and a break-down of movements per year. Such figures can be used by IOM as the basis for the calculation of the service fee. IOM should then inform DIMA of its implementation costs for the given number of refugees. DIMA can use IOM cost estimates as the basis for its planning. The revision of the IOM service fee should be made annually and based on any changes in the number of movements and the quota per location. It should however be noted that in the event that the actual number of movements in any given year is much lower than the projected number, a mid-term review of the service fee should be considered.
4. IOM should prepare a proposal for an information package detailing IOM's experience, capacities and facilities for presentation of pre-departure information dissemination and cultural orientation courses. Such a proposal, including a cost estimate, should be presented to the Government of Australia for consideration.
5. In order for IOM to further reduce its implementation costs by organizing movements of other humanitarian entrants to Australia, and as was agreed by DIMA central office, IOM should provide DIMA with an updated leaflet on IOM services. Such a leaflet will then be distributed by DIMA overseas posts to visa grantees falling under various categories of humanitarian entries. MMD should continue to ensure that IOM fares remain competitive and that the IOM Missions are using the cheapest carrier with the shortest journey and the best services to the

passengers whenever possible. The next step would be for IOM (MMD, ACO and IOM Canberra) to work out a service fee based on the recommendations made in Section 5.3.

6. Once the necessary adjustments are made in the current Programme systems, IOM should conclude an agreement with DIMA on standards of service. Based on such an agreement, IOM can improve its systems of data collection, reporting and regular measurement of performance and areas requiring further improvements in IOM services. Once in place, this will serve to promote clear communication, adherence to standards, and improve services to the Government of Australia and the refugee population served.