



THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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14 June 2024

Dr James Popple
Chief Executive Officer
Law Council of Australia
PO Box 5350
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By email: adam.fletcher@lawcouncil.au

Dear Dr Popple,

Australia's Humanitarian Program 2024-25

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Law Council's submission to the Department of Home Affairs regarding the composition of Australia's Humanitarian Program 2024-25. The Law Society's Human Rights Committee has contributed to this submission.

The Law Society recognises the benefits of safe and lawful pathways to protection, and supports the analysis set out in the Law Council's submission on Australia's 2023-24 Humanitarian Program, dated 8 June 2023.

We continue to support expansion of the Humanitarian Program, recognising the significant demands arising from current global crises. While the increase in the humanitarian intake in recent years is welcome, we encourage commitments that appropriately respond to the scale of displacement globally. We note the Government's pre-election commitment to progressively increase the intake to 27,000 per year, but also note that the 2024-25 Federal Budget did not provide for increases within the Program, with a fixed ceiling of 20,000 places, and no additional provision for complementary pathways.

In our view, priority should be given to persons with the greatest resettlement need, as well as displaced persons. It is important that the administration of the program is characterised by transparency and accountability, where the Government works in collaboration with local communities and local community service and support organisations. In particular, there should be a fair, consistent and transparent approach to the way in which humanitarian intakes during emergencies are considered, whether this is in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Palestine, Myanmar or elsewhere.

Given the scale and scope of current crises, and the fact that demand will inevitably exceed available places, we note that Australia is best placed to assume a leadership role in the Indo-Pacific, to ensure durable solutions for humanitarian crises in our region.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Law Council's submission. Questions at first instance may be directed to Sophie Bathurst, Policy Lawyer, at (02) 9926 0285 or Sophie.Bathurst@lawsociety.com.au.

Yours sincerely,

Brett McGrath
President

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