

Visa appeal backlog unacceptable: FECCA

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) today labelled the 60,000 case backlog in visa appeals before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) as unacceptable.

The Australian today reported that the backlog of active cases before the AAT has grown from 17,480 cases to 62,476 since 2016 – a 257 per cent increase.

FECCA Chairperson Ms Mary Patetsos said the Government must commit more resources to clearing the backlog before the Tribunal.

“The AAT has stated that it has not been able to keep pace with the growth in demand for reviews because there has not been a corresponding increase in the resources available to the Tribunal,” she said.

“The number of cases being rejected has increased because the criteria the Federal Government applies to the assessment of visa applications has become more strict.

“If the Government is going to take that approach, which is driving the surge in appeal cases, it should also make more resources available to the Tribunal to avoid a blow out in wait times.

“There are currently people with legitimate cases, who may have their decisions overturned by the AAT, who now have to wait much longer for their case to be reviewed.

“VISA applicants often put their lives on hold while they wait for these decisions and may be separated from family and loved ones during this time, so it's important we don't create a situation where this already extended process takes prospective migrants even longer.”

FECCA is the peak, national body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. FECCA's role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of its constituency to government, business and the broader community.

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