

Immigration Advice and Rights Centre

Website Evaluation & Needs Analysis

May 2002

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Tables	5
Summary of Recommendations	7
Introduction	9
Background	9
IARC's current Website www.iarc.asn.au	10
The research.....	13
Research questions	13
Methodology	15
Research design	15
Results	17
Data considerations	17
Sample size & demographics.....	18
Research questions	23
Discussion & Recommendations	41
Target audiences.....	41
Information needs of users and potential users.....	43
Pathways.....	46
Coping with demand	50
Marshalling other resources – maximising the Website	51
Website standards.....	52
Conclusion	55
Appendices	57

Tables

Table 1.	Telephone survey language distribution.....	19
Table 2.	MRT language distribution.....	20
Table 3.	Individuals' Ages.....	20
Table 4.	IARC services used - individuals.....	21
Table 5.	E-mail survey worker categories.....	22
Table 6.	Service providers' ages.....	22
Table 7.	IARC services used – service providers.....	22
Table 8.	Preference of delivery method for <i>Immigration News</i>	23
Table 9.	Individual target groups using IARC's Website.....	24
Table 10.	Individual users of IARC's Website - Age.....	24
Table 11.	Individual users of IARC's Website - Sex.....	24
Table 12.	On-line survey B target audiences using Website.....	25
Table 13.	E-mail survey target audiences using Website.....	26
Table 14.	Service provider users of IARC's Website - Age.....	26
Table 15.	Service provider users of IARC's Website - Sex.....	26
Table 16.	Telephone survey Internet access points.....	27
Table 17.	MRT survey Internet access points.....	27
Table 18.	Service provider type and client use of computers.....	28
Table 19.	Barriers to accessing Internet.....	28
Table 20.	Telephone sample method of IARC discovery.....	29
Table 21.	On-line and telephone samples Website discovery.....	29
Table 22.	Potential users across sample types.....	29
Table 23.	Other Websites visited to answer immigration inquiries.....	30
Table 24.	Service providers – other Websites visited.....	30
Table 25.	On-line Survey A and Phone Survey – information sought.....	31
Table 26.	On-line survey B – information sought.....	32
Table 27.	Potential uses of the Website.....	34
Table 28.	Immigration problem across delivery methods.....	35
Table 29.	Assistance required by individual respondents.....	36
Table 30.	Other Website features sought.....	37

Summary of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1. That IARC continue to use its Website as a means of providing independent information on immigration issues. Given the high level of Internet usage amongst the potential user groups surveyed, the IARC Website could be an effective means of providing information to the centre's core target groups and referring people who are not part of core target groups. 41
- Recommendation 2. That IARC expand the existing information on the Website about the services they provide to include a detailed statement of the services that they do not provide. This statement should incorporate annotated links or referrals to the appropriate bodies to assist clients requiring these services. 43
- Recommendation 3. That IARC consider providing examples of forms and letters with helpful hints about what information should be included. 43
- Recommendation 4. That the Website include, on the home page, contact numbers for interpreter services in various community languages. 43
- Recommendation 5. That IARC gives priority to including plain language introductory information on procedures for applying for migration or change of visa. 44
- Recommendation 6. That IARC gives priority to including information about spouse visas, tourist/visitor visas and student visas, as well as conditions attached to them. 44
- Recommendation 7. That IARC includes an overview of the review and appeals process on its Website. 44
- Recommendation 8. That IARC compile a list answering frequently asked questions. Telephone advice and drop-in staff should update this biannually. IARC may also want to consider an e-mail FAQ facility to enable new questions to be posed and added to the list. 45
- Recommendation 9. That in the re-design of its Website, IARC considers adding a 'news' section that will alert users to important changes, issues and/or events. 45
- Recommendation 10. That IARC consider the addition of annotated links to non-immigration social service providers as well as immigration-focused links. 45
- Recommendation 11. That IARC provides printable fact sheets on the Website as PDF files. 46
- Recommendation 12. That IARC re-visit, with the MRT, the procedure for making applicants aware of IARC's services. For example, a colourful, plain-language brochure could be made available on the counter at the MRT and given to people when they approach staff. This brochure would display the Website address prominently. 46
- Recommendation 13. That IARC registers its Website with popular search engines. 47

Recommendation 14. That part of the re-design of the Website includes the addition of metadata to the web pages to improve findability.	47
Recommendation 15. That IARC attempt to negotiate an on-line link to IARC from the DIMIA Website.....	47
Recommendation 16. That IARC discusses with the MRT the possibility of an annotated, more prominent link to its Website.	47
Recommendation 17. That IARC designs a brochure to be sent out to service providers advertising its Website.....	48
Recommendation 18. That IARC enlists student volunteers to write articles for publishing in <i>Immigration News</i> and other industry-related newsletters and journals about IARC and its Website.....	48
Recommendation 19. That IARC work with LIAC and the State Library's Multicultural Consultant to discuss the best way to promote the IARC Website to NSW public libraries.	48
Recommendation 20. Select use of ethnic media may be worth considering for promotion of IARC's services and Website e.g. items in newspapers and radio, if this was within the IARC budget.....	49
Recommendation 21. That IARC list its web address in the next edition of the White and Yellow Pages.....	49
Recommendation 22. That IARC liaise with LIAC to provide posters about Internet access in public libraries to be hung at the MRT, migrant resource centres and other organisations working with ethnic communities. These posters could feature IARC's Website address. IARC offices could also display these posters.	50
Recommendation 23. That service providers be asked to inform IARC if they permit their clients to use Internet-connected computers so that the Centre can make their clients aware of this possible resource.	50
Recommendation 24. That IARC list service providers who permit clients to use their Internet-connected computers on the Website (if service providers agree).....	50
Recommendation 25. That IARC includes information on the Website about volunteer work at the Centre, including a facility to volunteer on-line.....	51
Recommendation 26. That IARC include on the Website all details about its products that are necessary to sell them.....	51
Recommendation 27. That the re-designers of the Website create an on-line ordering form for publications and courses.	52
Recommendation 28. That IARC consider making <i>Immigration News</i> available in electronic as well as in-print format.	52
Recommendation 29. That IARC develop and install a guided feedback form for users.	53

Introduction

This report documents the findings of an evaluation of the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre (IARC) Website, undertaken by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW. IARC commissioned this work as a preliminary stage to the re-design of its Website.

The aim of the project was to conduct an analysis of the needs of users and potential users of IARC's Website.

The recommendations generated by the evaluation will provide a basis for reassessing the content and structure of the Website to ensure that it meets user needs.

Background

IARC is a community legal centre specialising in Australian immigration law. IARC provides free immigration information, advice and assistance to individuals who have immigration questions or problems. The Centre deals with a range of immigration matters, including family, visitor, student visas and offshore refugee applications, as well as immigration issues such as the rights of illegal immigrants. There are some matters that are beyond the scope of IARC's core work, such as independent skilled visas, business visas and onshore refugee applications. People seeking advice about these matters are referred elsewhere by the Centre staff.

Experienced, registered migration agents staff IARC. In their work, they are supported by volunteers who are registered migration agents, students or members of the community.

The Centre has an office in Surry Hills that provides services to the whole of NSW, and beyond. On two evenings each week, IARC provides drop-in advice sessions. This in-person advice service is offered at the Surry Hills office on Monday evenings, and at the Migrant Resource Centre at Parramatta on Wednesday evenings. People with immigration problems can attend these sessions for personal advice without an appointment. On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, IARC runs a telephone advice line. These sessions are an opportunity for people in rural and remote regions, in particular, to access personalised immigration advice.

Beyond providing advice to their clients, IARC represents individuals whose immigration matters fall within its casework guidelines.

The Centre is involved in a number of law reform activities aimed at increasing the fairness and adequacy of migration legislation and practice. Among other activities, it submits reports to government bodies and other groups addressing immigration policy.

IARC displays a commitment to community and migration industry education. It runs regular workshops and seminars on migration law and policy for both individuals and service providers. IARC also runs accredited migration agent registration courses.

The Centre publishes the *Immigration Kit*, a comprehensive and detailed guide to immigration procedures in Australia. Copies of the book are available through Federation Press and for reference at libraries through the Legal Information Access Centre (LIAC). IARC also produces and distributes *Immigration News*, a newsletter that addresses changes to the law and immigration issues for service providers and individuals. These publications, along with other services provided by the Centre, are promoted on IARC's Website.

The Centre is funded by both the State and Federal governments, through the Community Legal Centre Funding Program, and is administered by the Legal Aid Commission of NSW. IARC also receives some funding from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and Indigenous Affairs through the Immigration Advice and Application Assistance Scheme (IAAAS). This institutional funding is supplemented by income from IARC's training and publication activities.

IARC's current Website www.iarc.asn.au

Since 1998, IARC has maintained a plain English language Website that performs several important functions. From a promotional perspective, it alerts Internet users seeking immigration information to the existence of a free immigration-specialist Community Legal Centre and the services it provides, as well as the products available for purchase. The site provides on-line links and contact information for other agencies, thereby creating immigration information pathways. There is also substantive immigration information on the Website, which targets self-representing applicants to the Migration Review Tribunal (MRT).

In preparation for the Website's commencement, IARC conducted a survey of community workers. A questionnaire was sent out to 381 workers to establish rates of access to the Internet, and to better understand their information needs. Sixty-two workers responded and the information gathered contributed to the initial design of the Website.

IARC's current Website is structured in three basic tiers. The first promotes the Centre and the services it offers.

The second is an annotated contact list of other agencies and services that may be of use to people with immigration problems. Some agencies are hot-linked and can be accessed on-line, directly from IARC's site. Community legal centres (CLCs), Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) and other community contacts are listed on this tier of the site. There is a concentration on those agencies located in NSW, with peak bodies listed for other States and Territories.

All offices of the MRT and the NSW and Victorian offices for the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) are included, among other refugee-centred organisations. An on-line link to the Department of Immigration & Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) Website also features on this page. Other professional organisations listed include the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA), Law Societies and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC). IARC's Website is only available in

English, but contact details for translating and interpreting services are listed in this section.

The third tier of IARC's Website is the most extensive and is entitled 'Reviewing a Decision at the MRT'. This section provides a procedural guide through the MRT review process. It outlines the relevant criteria for a selection of visa types as well as the health requirements for visas.

IARC's target audiences for its Website

The Centre has identified a selection of target audiences for the Website.

- people needing immigration information and advice who are financially or otherwise disadvantaged, particularly
 - People from remote, rural and regional areas¹; and
 - Self-representing MRT applicants;
- community-based migration agents;
- community workers working with ethnic communities;
- people wanting to enrol in training courses;
- people wanting to purchase publications; and
- people wanting to volunteer their services to IARC.

Non-target audiences for IARC's Website

There are also some groups for whom IARC's services are not available. As a consequence, they are not considered as target audiences for the Website.

- Onshore refugee applicants
- Independent skilled and business visa applicants
- Fee-charging migration agents

Website objectives

The planned re-design of the IARC Website is intended to improve its capacity for:

- Promoting the Centre and its services;
- Providing plain English immigration information;
- Enhancing pathways to other sources of immigration information and advice;
- Selling IARC products (courses and publications); and

¹ For the purposes of this study, the definition of 'remote, rural and regional areas' is any suburb/area whose postcode is above 2400. This deliberately includes suburbs/cities outside NSW. IARC recognises this is an imperfect system, and where appropriate ad hoc decisions were made about particular areas that do not follow this formula. Overseas locations are not included in the definition.

- Registering feedback from its clients as a way of measuring the success of its service provision.

IARC does not wish to promote itself to the extent that the demand for its services exceeds its limited resources. Instead, it wants to maximise the Website as a resource for specific audiences targeted as having the greatest need.

The research

Research questions

The questions that this research sets out to answer can be grouped under 3 key research questions.

1. Who currently uses IARC's Website?

2. How can pathways to immigration information and advice be improved for target users?

Do they have Internet access?

What are the barriers to access?

How did users originally become aware of IARC/Website?

Who might potentially benefit from use of the site and how could they be directed there?

What additional links could be provided to improve pathways?

3. What are the information needs of users and potential users?

What information are users seeking?

Which pages, on the existing Website, are most frequently visited?

How do/will people use the information they find on the Website?

What are the on-line needs of users and potential users?

Methodology

Research design

The method chosen by the research team, in consultation with IARC, as the most suitable and effective way of collecting data was a series of questionnaires. As these instruments would be aimed at different groups of people, it was decided that the delivery method should vary according to the group and the research questions.

Each of the questionnaires was developed in consultation with IARC. The research team also initially met with the re-designers of the Website, to identify any questions they needed to ask of the potential users of the site, for the purposes of the re-design.

As far as possible, the research team piloted the questionnaires with potential respondents to test whether the questions were properly understood and whether or not they could answer the research questions². This process generated a number of changes that were largely centred around simplifying the language used, to prevent it from being too challenging for people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The research team wrote sets of interview instructions³ for the interviewers. These comprised a number of directions to achieve consistent and effective interview techniques. Interviewers were selected from IARC's non-legal volunteers.

Delivery Methods⁴

On-line survey

The research team decided that for the purposes of discovering who currently uses the Website, the most effective method was to develop and install an on-line survey on IARC's Website. There is potential for people using IARC's Website never to contact the Centre directly, with the result that IARC would not know to whom the site is providing information. It was difficult to know if the site was being used for its intended purpose. Two on-line questionnaires were designed, to accommodate individuals and services providers.

Telephone survey

In order to access potential/current users of the Website who live in rural/regional areas, the research team designed a questionnaire to be conducted as a telephone survey. The people contacted by this method were those who had previously used IARC's services, through its telephone advice line. This survey excluded service providers who were asked to complete an e-mail survey.

² The data collected during piloting was included in the results.

³ See Appendix F.

⁴ For a more detailed methodology, see Appendix H.

E-mail survey

The 'e-mail survey'⁵ essentially solicited the participation of service providers by way of an e-mail invitation. A questionnaire, not unlike the on-line survey for service providers, was installed on a discrete page on IARC's Website. Only those workers who had been e-mailed the address link for that page could access it.

MRT survey

The participants to the telephone survey were drawn from a database of individuals who had previously contacted IARC. However, the Centre also wanted to assess the needs of potential users, who were unknown to them. It was decided, in consultation with IARC, that an effective location for this kind of survey was the Migration Review Tribunal. There, the researchers would be able to access a pool of potential users that were also one of the site's target audiences. As a result, a face-to-face questionnaire was designed⁶, that could gather data on all three of the key research questions. This questionnaire was only offered to people who were not represented by a migration agent, who were also not waiting for a hearing or handing down of a decision.

⁵ See Appendix C.

⁶ See Appendix D.

Results

The results section of this report first flags some issues in relation to interpretation of the data collected. Then responses and an outline of the demographic data collected in each of the delivery methods are presented. Following that are the answers to the research questions. Except where it is unnecessary, data in relation to individuals and service providers is reported separately.

Data considerations

Representation and reliability

As the period allocated to data collection was brief⁷, small numbers of responses were received in all delivery methods. As a result, the data must be read cautiously. At best, the results are suggestive, not conclusive. Respondents cannot be viewed as representative of the current and potential users of IARC's Website.

Web statistics

It was hoped that the on-line results could be measured against web statistics that were recorded/reported on the frequency of visits to the Website, to establish a response rate. However, it became clear that these statistics require complex interpretation that ultimately produces unusable data⁸.

Data error

Minor changes to the MRT survey, after data collection had already commenced, produced an error, which led to the omission of 3 questions in 22 responses, before the error was recognised and corrected. As the other questions were answered validly in the faulty questionnaires, the data was still included in the sample, and the affected questions were treated as non-responses.

Language

The language people felt most comfortable reading is recorded below. It is important to note that the results of the surveys do not reveal reliable information about people's difficulties with English. In the on-line surveys, it can be assumed that only those with reasonable proficiency in English answered the questionnaires. In the MRT survey, the research team could not record the number of people who did not participate due to inadequate English language skills. Finally, the telephone survey participants were those who had already made contact with IARC and it can therefore be assumed that their English skills were such that they were not prevented from contacting IARC in the first instance.

⁷ The research team effectively had 13 working days for data collection. The actual time allocated was 3 weeks, however the Easter break coincided with this period.

⁸ <http://www.iarc.asn.au/analog/Report.html#refsite>; login is 'iarc' and the password is 'iastat44'.

Sample size & demographics

Individuals

On-line survey

The on-line survey yielded a low number of responses. Survey A⁹ received 12 responses over the three-week period of data collection. One of this number terminated the questionnaire after answering only one question. Another respondent expressed some colourful sentiments that were unrelated to immigration issues. These two responses have not been included in the results, leaving a total of 10 validly answered questionnaires. Four (40 per cent) participants were male; 6 (60 per cent) were female.

Five (50 per cent) of the 10 respondents lived in NSW, one in Queensland and another in Victoria. Three (30 per cent) respondents lived overseas¹⁰.

Eight (80 per cent) participants reported that they felt most comfortable reading English. Two people felt most at ease reading Chinese.

Fifty percent (5) of those who answered on-line survey A were aged under 35 and 90 per cent (9) were less than 45 (see Table 3. below). Only one respondent was older than 45.

Three respondents had used IARC's telephone advice service and 2 had attended the drop-in advice service (see Table 4. below).

Telephone survey

For the telephone survey, 175 calls were made during 8 sessions. These yielded 73 responses, a response rate of 42 per cent. Five people terminated the questionnaire before any valuable data was collected, leaving a total of 68 (39 per cent) validly answered questionnaires. Twenty-five (37 per cent) of these were men and 43 (63 per cent) were women.

Fifty-six (82 per cent) of the respondents reported that they resided in NSW, 4 in Queensland, 4 in Victoria, 2 in South Australia and 1 in the ACT. One respondent did not answer this question.

In the phone survey, 60 per cent (41) stated English as at least one¹¹ of the languages they felt most comfortable reading. The non-English responses were more varied than in on-line survey A (see Table 1.).

⁹ For individuals – see Appendix A.

¹⁰ Saudi Arabia, England and India.

¹¹ When respondents stated more than 1 language, if English was one of them, the research team eliminated the other response in the data analysis. Similarly, when there were multiple non-English responses, the first response was used for analysis purposes.

Table 1. Telephone survey language distribution

Language	Number of respondents	
No response	12	(18%)
Arabic	4	(6%)
Bosnian	1	(1.5%)
Croatian	1	(1.5%)
Divehi	1	(1.5%)
English	41	(60%)
Fijian	1	(1.5%)
Hebrew	1	(1.5%)
Hindi	1	(1.5%)
Spanish	4	(6%)
Urdu	1	(1.5%)
Total	68	(100%)

The average age of the telephone sample was older than for the on-line sample. In the phone sample, 60 per cent (41) of the respondents were aged less than 45 years (see Table 3.).

As this survey included only people who were on the IARC telephone contact list, most responded that they had used IARC's services, although 9 said they had not (see Table 4. below). The most frequent service used was telephone advice (84 per cent). Twenty-two per cent had used the drop-in service, 7 of whom had also used the telephone service. Sixteen (24 per cent) had used the Website, of whom all but 3 had also used the telephone or drop-in advice services. However, only 13 answered yes to another question, "Have you ever visited IARC's Website on the Internet?". Four who had said they had used IARC's Website said no to that question, and 1 who did not report using the IARC site at first answered yes to the second question. Therefore the responses must be treated with some caution.

MRT survey

There were 50 respondents to the MRT survey, during 9¹² sessions at the MRT. Two of the questionnaires were terminated because migration agents were assisting the MRT applicants, leaving a sample size of 48. Due to the nature of the procedure¹³, it was not possible to establish a response rate.

Males comprised 58 per cent (28) of respondents and females 40 per cent (19), with 1 person's sex not being recorded. All participants to this survey resided in NSW, with most living in metropolitan Sydney or the Western Suburbs.

¹² This figure does not include the single piloting session conducted by the research team, nor does it include 2 subsequent sessions that were required in an attempt to correct a questionnaire error.

¹³ See 'Delivery Methods', Appendix H.

Half of the sample recorded English as their most comfortable language to read. However, the MRT survey recorded the greatest number of non-English languages (see Table 2.).

Table 2. MRT language distribution

Language	Individuals	
Arabic	2	(4%)
Armenian	1	(2%)
Cantonese	2	(4%)
English	24	(50%)
French	1	(2%)
Indian	1	(2%)
Indonesian	2	(4%)
Japanese	1	(2%)
Korean	1	(2%)
Lebanese	1	(2%)
Mandarin	3	(6%)
Philippino	1	(2%)
Portuguese	1	(2%)
Russian	1	(2%)
Spanish	1	(2%)
Thai	2	(4%)
Tongan	1	(2%)
Turkish	1	(2%)
Vietnamese	1	(2%)
Total	48	(100%)

The interviewees in the MRT survey were younger than those in the telephone survey. Eighty-six percent were aged less than 45.

Of the MRT sample, three had used both the telephone and drop-in services and 1 had used the drop-in service only. One said he had used the IARC Website, although in the later question he was joined by 2 others who reported that they had visited the site. Nine said they had used none (of whom only 2 had heard of IARC) and the remaining 34 had not heard of IARC and were not asked the question.

Table 3. shows the ages of individuals in the three surveys.

Table 3. Individuals' Ages

Age	Survey method			
	On-line	Telephone	MRT	Total
15-24	2 (20%)	5 (7%)	12 (25%)	19 (15%)
25-34	3 (30%)	16 (24%)	20 (42%)	39 (31%)
35-44	4 (40%)	20 (29%)	9 (19%)	33 (26%)
45-54		16 (24%)	4 (8%)	20 (16%)
55-59	1 (10%)	6 (9%)	1 (2%)	8 (6%)
60 or over		4 (6%)	2 (4%)	6 (5%)
Missing		1 (1%)		1 (1%)
Total	10 (100%)	68 (100%)	48 (100%)	126 (100%)

Table 4. shows the distribution of IARC services used by respondents in the three services.

Table 4. IARC services used - individuals

	On-line A	MRT	Telephone	Total
Telephone advice	3	3	57	63
Drop-in advice service	2	4	15	21
Website used	NA	1	16	17
Information sheets	NA	NA	2	2
None	6	9	9	24
Not answered	1	34	0	35

Service providers

On-line survey

Survey B¹⁴ received 10 valid responses. Two were community workers working with ethnic communities and 2 were IARC volunteers. There were also 2 fee-charging migration agents who answered the survey, a student, a legal executive, a community legal centre worker, and one unidentified respondent. The sex ratio was 40:60, males to females.

All respondents were located in Sydney, bar 1 who was in Melbourne.

Eighty per cent (8) of service providers were younger than 45. One was in the 45-54 age bracket, and 1 in the 55-60 bracket (see Table 6. below).

Eight respondents had used IARC's services. Four had used the telephone advice service, of whom 1 had also used the drop-in advice service. Four had used training services, of whom three had also bought publications. One respondent commented

I've used a copy of the Immigration Kit, which is terrific. Staff or IARC have been of great assistance in the past with all my immigration queries.

E-mail survey

Three hundred and fifty e-mail invitations were sent out to service providers in community organisations, migrant resource centres and community legal centres. The survey yielded 21 valid responses over a three-week period. This represents a 6 per cent response rate.

The service providers who answered the e-mail survey were overwhelmingly female (90 per cent), with only 2 males.

Community legal centre workers were highly represented in the sample (see Table 5. below). Among the others, there was 1 IARC volunteer, 2 workers from ethnic community organisations, 2 from migrant resource centres and 3 fee-charging migration agents. Of the 6 workers in the 'other' category, 2 said that they worked in women's refuges¹⁵; one in a women's drop-in centre; another in a youth housing service; an Anglicare worker and finally, a worker in a 'social justice group'.

¹⁴ For service providers – see Appendix B.

¹⁵ One of these refuges caters specifically to Indo-Chinese women.

Table 5. E-mail survey worker categories

Worker category	Service providers	
IARC volunteer	1	(5%)
Ethnic community organisation	2	(10%)
Migrant resource centre	2	(10%)
Fee-charging migration agent	3	(14%)
Community legal centre	7	(33%)
Other	6	(29%)
Total	21	(100%)

Seventy-seven per cent of workers in the e-mail sample were aged younger than 45.

All except two reported that they had used IARC's services. Fifteen reported using the telephone service, 4 of whom had also used the drop-in service. Two had used the latter but not the telephone service. Five had taken training, 4 of whom had also bought publications. Another 3 had bought publications but not training. Six had used IARC for referral to other agencies and 4 reported referring clients to IARC. One respondent commented

Contacted IARC workers, outside advice sessions, to seek information/ advice on behalf of our clients.

Table 6. gives a breakdown of respondents' ages in the two survey samples of service providers.

Table 6. Service providers' ages

Age	Survey method		
	On-line	E-mail	Total
15-24	3 (30%)	2 (10%)	5 (16%)
25-34	3 (30%)	10 (48%)	13 (42%)
35-44	2 (20%)	4 (19%)	6 (19%)
45-54	1 (10%)	3 (14%)	4 (13%)
55-59	1 (10%)	1 (4.5%)	2 (6%)
60 or over		1 (4.5%)	1 (3%)
Total	10 (100%)	21 (100%)	31 (100%)

Table 7. shows the distribution of IARC services used by the two groups.

Table 7. IARC services used – service providers

	On-line B	E-mail	Total
Telephone advice	4	15	19
Drop-in advice service	1	6	7
Bought publications	3	7	10
Training	4	5	9
Referral to other agencies	NA	6	6
Referred clients to IARC	NA	4	4
Other	1	1	2
None	2	2	4
Not answered	1		1

Immigration News

Service providers were asked to express a preferred method for receiving *Immigration News*, assuming they cost the same amount. One on-line respondent did not answer this question. Of those who subscribed (50 per cent) to the newsletter, the preferences were fairly evenly split, with on-line respondents expressing a greater preference for an electronic version (see Table 8.).

Table 8. Preference of delivery method for *Immigration News*

Preference	E-mail	On-line B	Total
Electronic	5 (24%)	3 (33%)	8 (27%)
Print	6 (29%)	1 (11%)	7 (23%)
Don't subscribe	10 (48%)	5 (56%)	15 (50%)
Total	21 (100%)	9 (100%)	30 (100%)

Research questions

1. Who currently uses the Website?

The on-line surveys were designed to deliver profiles of the kind of individuals and service providers using the Website in its current format. This information can also be obtained by analysing the data collected in the other delivery methods by those who identified themselves as having used IARC's Website.

Target audiences - individuals

The individuals who may be considered the Website's target audiences are those who live in rural/regional areas, applying IARC's definition¹⁶, and/or are unrepresented MRT applicants.

The on-line survey A revealed that 2 of the respondents lived in rural/regional areas. Two people said that they were seeking information about review with the MRT, unassisted by a migration agent. One person featured in both groups, meaning that a total of 3 people (30 per cent) fell within the Website's target audiences for individuals (see Table 9.). These 3 target users all chose English as their preferred language for reading.

In the telephone survey, 13 (18 per cent) respondents said that they had visited IARC's Website. Of those users, 12 fitted into the target audiences (see Table 9.). All 12 of these were from rural/regional areas, there were no self-representing MRT applicants in this group.

The 48 respondents to the MRT face-to-face interview all qualify as a target audience, as only unrepresented applicants were interviewed. Only 3 (6 per cent) had visited the Website. None of them were residing in rural/regional areas (see Table 9.).

¹⁶ See note 1, above.

Table 9. Individual target groups using IARC's Website

Target group type (multiples allowed)	On-line survey A	Telephone survey	MRT survey
Rural/Regional	2	12	
Self-represented MRT applicants	2		3
Actual number target Website users	3	12	3
Non-target Website users	7	1	

User characteristics

Language

All 3 target users identified from on-line survey A said that they felt most comfortable reading English.

Of the 13 Website users in the telephone survey, 8 (61 per cent) chose English, 1 said English/Singhalese, and the remaining 4 did not respond to the question. Of the 9 target group users, 8 (89 per cent) had English as one of their choices and 1 did not record a language.

The 3 Website users in the MRT survey stated, variously, that they felt most comfortable reading Spanish, Indian and Bangla/English.

Age and sex

The age and sex of all individual Website users are set out, below, in Table 10. and Table 11.

Table 10. Individual users of IARC's Website - Age

AGE	Individuals (survey A)	Telephone survey	MRT survey	Total
15-24	2 (20%)	1 (10%)	1 (33.3%)	4 (15%)
25-34	3 (30%)	3 (30%)	1 (33.3%)	7 (27%)
35-44	4 (40%)	4 (40%)		8 (31%)
45-54		3 (30%)		3 (12%)
55-59	1 (10%)	1 (10%)		2 (7.5%)
60 or over		1 (10%)	1 (33.3%)	2 (7.5%)
Total	10 (100%)	13 (100%)	3 (100%)	26 (100%)

Table 11. Individual users of IARC's Website - Sex

Sex	Individuals (survey A)	Telephone survey	MRT survey	Total
Male	4 (40%)	6 (46%)	3 (100%)	13 (50%)
Female	6 (60%)	7 (54%)		13 (50%)
Total	10 (100%)	13 (100%)	3 (100%)	26 (100%)

Target audiences – service providers

Service providers come under the rubric of target audiences in 2 ways. They qualify if they identify themselves as: community workers, working with ethnic communities; community-based migration agents or IARC volunteers. They

will also fall into the Website's target audiences if they are potential purchasers of IARC's training or publications.

Of the 10 service provider workers who responded to the on-line survey B, 2 were community workers working with ethnic communities and 2 were IARC volunteers. No community-based migration agents participated in the survey.

One of the community workers had purchased publications and attended IARC training. One of the volunteers was also seeking information regarding IARC's training courses. Both fee-charging migration agents (20 per cent) had purchased publications and attended training. Of the two (20 per cent) 'other' respondents, the student said she was seeking information about training and the legal executive stated she subscribed to *Immigration News*.

Thus, a total of 8 of the 10 respondents to Online Survey B qualified as target audiences for the Website (see Table 12.). Only the community legal centre worker, and one unidentified respondent, did not meet the definition of at least one of the target audiences.

Table 12. On-line survey B target audiences using Website

Service used (Multiples allowed)	Seeking information about training [°]	Used training [°]	Purchased publications [°]	Total services used
Community worker working with ethnic communities* n=2		1	1	2
Community legal Centre n=1				0
IARC volunteer* n=2	1			1
Fee-charging migration agent n=2		2	2	4
Other n=2	1		1	2
Total n=9 (1 excluded)	2	3	4	9

* Work-defined target audience.
[°] Service-defined target audience.

Out of the 21 service providers who answered the e-mail survey, only 3 (14 per cent) had visited the Website on previous occasions. These three are distinguished from the other respondents because they were not only directed to the Website on the basis of IARC's invitation; they had used the site before, without being solicited to do so.

Each of these 3 met the criteria for a target audience. One was a fee-charging migration agent, and another an IARC volunteer, both of whom had purchased publications and training from IARC. The third was a migrant resource centre worker who had also attended IARC training courses (see Table 13.).

Table 13. E-mail survey target audiences using Website

(Multiple services allowed – actual number of workers = 3)	Used training [°]	Purchased publications [°]
Fee-charging migration agent	1	1
IARC volunteer*	1	1
Migrant resource centre worker*	1	
Total	3	2

* Work-defined target audience.
[°] Service-defined target audience.

User characteristics

Age and Sex

Service providers were also asked to indicate their age and sex in both surveys. These are indicated below in Table 14. and Table 15.

Table 14. Service provider users of IARC's Website - Age

AGE	Service providers (survey B)	E-mail survey	Total
15-24	3		3 (23%)
25-34	3	1	4 (31%)
35-44	2		2 (15%)
45-54	1	2	3 (23%)
55-59	1		1 (8%)
60 or over			
Total	10	3	13 (100%)

Table 15. Service provider users of IARC's Website - Sex

Sex	Service providers (survey B)	E-mail survey	Total
Male	4	1	5 (38%)
Female	6	2	8 (62%)
Total	10	3	13 (100%)

2. How can immigration pathways be improved?

a) Do they have Internet access?

Individuals' access

Clearly, the whole of the on-line survey A sample use the Internet, as they answered the survey on-line. Six of them answered the questionnaire from a home computer, 2 used a work computer, 1 a friend or family member's computer and 1 accessed the Net from an Internet café.

In the telephone and MRT surveys, individuals were asked, 'Do you use the Internet?' Answers to this question indicate whether the threshold combination of computer skills and Internet access has been met.

Of the telephone survey sample, 47 (69 per cent) participants said they used the Internet. Twenty people (29 per cent) responded negatively, and 1 (2 per

cent) person did not answer the question. Of the 47 Internet users, the majority used the Internet from their home computers (see Table 16.).

Table 16. Telephone survey Internet access points

Access point	Count (multiple responses allowed)	Responses	Cases
Home computer	39	58%	83%
Work computer	9	13%	19%
Friend/family computer	3	5%	6%
Community organisation computer	3	5%	6%
Library computer	8	12%	17%
Internet café	1	2%	2%
Other	4	6%	9%
Total responses	67	100%	143%
Actual number of people with Internet access	47		

Thirty-six (75 per cent) of the MRT sample said they used the Internet, and 12 (25 per cent) people said they did not. Internet users' points of access are shown in Table 17.

Table 17. MRT survey Internet access points

Access point	Count (multiple responses allowed)	Responses	Cases
Home computer	26	45%	72%
Work computer	8	14%	22%
Friend/family computer	6	10%	17%
Community organisation computer	1	2%	3%
Library computer	6	10%	17%
Internet café	5	9%	14%
Other	6	10%	17%
Total responses	58	100%	161%
Actual number of people with Internet access	36		

Service providers' access

In the on-line survey B sample, 5 (50 per cent) workers answered the survey from their workplace computers. Four (40 per cent) filled out the questionnaire from home computers, and 1 person indicated they were using the Internet from a community organisation. In the e-mail sample, all accessed the Net from work computers except 1 person who was operating a home computer.

Service providers were asked whether or not their clients were able to use their Internet-connected computers for their own research. The results of both surveys are plotted below (see Table 18.) against the type of worker. Two workers in the on-line survey did not answer this question leaving a total of 29.

Table 18. Service provider type and client use of computers

	Permitted clients to access computers	Clients not permitted access to computers	Total
IARC volunteer	1	1	2
Ethnic community organisation	1	3	4
Migrant resource centre		2	2
Fee-charging migration agent	2	3	5
Community legal centre	3	6	9
Community organisation	3	1	4
Other	1	2	3
Total	11	18	29

b) What are the barriers to access?

If individuals stated that they did not use the Internet, they were asked what stopped them from using it. The most frequent response, in both telephone and MRT samples, was that they did not have a computer (see Table 19.).

Table 19. Barriers to accessing Internet

Barrier (multiple responses allowed)	Telephone n=20	MRT n=12	Total n=32
No computer	12	10	22
Don't know how to use computer	6	2	8
Don't know how to use Internet	7		6
Don't want to	2		2
Don't read English well	2	5	7
Other	6	2	10
Total responses	35	19	54

In the telephone sample, those who chose an 'other' reason for not using the Internet stated variously that:

- Currently living as guest – could not impose on hosts.
- Could not afford Internet.
- Would like to learn but has had no opportunity.
- Little knowledge of computers and family is always on Internet.
- Partner does use Internet – but she had to leave Australia to make offshore application.

The 2 'other' responses in the MRT sample were from people who said they had no time.

c) How did users originally become aware of IARC/Website?

The telephone survey participants had all had prior contact with IARC, either through their drop-in or telephone advice services. They were asked how they first found out about IARC and reported a variety of sources (see Table 20.). The most reported method of discovery (34 per cent) was friends or family members telling them about the service.

Table 20. Telephone sample method of IARC discovery

Pathway	Frequency
Brochure/Leaflet	4 (6%)
Phone book	7 (10%)
Website	10 (15%)
Friend/family	23 (34%)
Another agency	18 (27%)
Other	5 (7%)
Total	67 (100%)

For the 'another agency' category (Table 20. above), DIMIA account for 7 out of the 18 responses. Other responses included three different migrant resource centres, the MRT, Legal Aid, Lifeline, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), Red Cross pregnancy help, and three community organisations. The 'other' sources included a local council, a solicitor and the DIMIA phone line.

Users of IARC's Website, from the on-line and telephone samples, originally discovered the Website from a variety of sources (see Table 21.).

Table 21. On-line and telephone samples Website discovery

Pathway	On-line	Telephone	Total
Link	1	2	3
Search engine	3	6	9
Friend/family	4	2	6
Organisation	1		1
DIMIA		2	2
IARC brochure		1	1
Don't remember	1		1
Total users of IARC's Website	10	13	23

d) Who might potentially benefit from use of the site and how could they be directed there?

Working from the data collected across delivery methods, potential users of the site can be identified as those who use the Internet, but have not visited IARC's Website (see Table 22.). Those who answered on-line surveys A and B are not counted, since they are current users of the Website.

Table 22. Potential users across sample types

	Telephone	MRT	E-mail
Internet users	47	36	21
Website users	13	3	3
Potential users	34	33	18

The question of 'how to direct potential users to the Website?' is addressed (below) in the Discussion & Recommendations section of this report.

e) What additional links could be provided to improve pathways?

Individual Internet users were asked what other sites they visited to answer their immigration inquiries (see Table 23.). The most frequent responses were DIMIA, the MRT and that they had visited no other sites on-line.

Table 23. Other Websites visited to answer immigration inquiries

Other Website (multiple responses allowed)	On-line	Telephone	MRT	Total
DIMIA	2	21	17	40
MRT		2	10	12
Private migration agent		1		1
Law firm		1		1
Local member		1		1
John Howard		1		1
International student Website (Macquarie Uni)			1	1
Cannot remember name(s)		3	1	4
None/no response	8	22	13	43
Total responses	10	52	42	104

Service providers were asked the same question (see Table 24.) and replied with more government organisation responses.

Table 24. Service providers – other Websites visited

Websites	On-line B	E-mail	Total
DIMIA	7	3	10
MRT	2		2
AUSTLII	2	2	4
Scaleplus	1	1	2
Department of Family & Community Services		1	1
Welfare Rights		1	1
Family Visas		1	1
Refugee Review Tribunal	2		2
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade	1		1
Health Services Australia	1		1
MARA	1		1

They were also asked to suggest sites that they thought *should* appear on IARC's Website. This question revealed similar answers to those in Table 24. as well as a number of more community service-oriented organisations. Among responses were: 'any non-government immigration assistance'; Red Cross Tracing Agency; Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS); Gay & Lesbian Immigration Taskforce; Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT); Society of St Vincent de Paul; social services; and on-line directories for CLCs and the Law Society. However, one worker commented that the "most important and useful links have been added".

3. What are the information needs of users and potential users?

a) What information are users seeking?

Individuals who had used the Website

Online survey A asked individuals what subject they were seeking information about. Multiple responses were accepted and the average number of responses was 2.4. One respondent, who described himself as an individual just browsing, did not answer this question. The other 9 respondents were individuals with an immigration problem or friends/family of such a person.

Table 25. shows the responses (answers to a similar question in the telephone survey are shown for comparative purposes). Seven respondents were seeking information about IARC's services (as well as other information) and of the 2 who did not say this, one was looking for a job and one was seeking information about health requirements for immigration.

Four were seeking information about an immigration application, 3 were seeking a migration agent, two were seeking MRT review and one person was looking for information about training/seminars and publications.

Table 25. On-line Survey A and Phone Survey – information sought

	On-line Survey A		Telephone survey	
	Number of responses	% of responses	Number of responses	% of responses
Immigration application	4	18%	47	48%
Seeking MRT review	2	9%	10	11%
Help from migration agent	3	14%	1	1%
IARC's advice services	7	32%	29	31%
Training/seminars	1	5%	1	1%
Looking for a job	1	5%		
Order publications	1	5%		
Other info	3	14%	6	9%
Total responses	22	100%	94	100%

In the telephone survey, 13 individuals had visited the IARC Website. Nine reported that they had found what they were looking for, 3 had not and one said he had forgotten. Those who had not found what they were looking for were apparently seeking general information. Two Website users reported having looked at the MRT pages on the site. The both stated that they had found the information they were looking for, generally. Their comments about the MRT pages specifically were as follows:

Can't remember, something about appealing when DIMIA says no.

Didn't go through all the info but printed a lot of it out. Hasn't read it all yet. Act is so complex, that layman has difficulty.

In the MRT survey, of the 8 respondents who had heard of IARC, only 3 had visited the Website. They reported that they had not found the information they were looking for. When asked what they would like to see on the Website their replies were:

1. More information about visas.

2. Information about how DIMIA operates, and what one can expect. Information about what to do when a visa is refused or cancelled.

3. A model letter - the correct form and parts to include ie. what is the MRT after?

The first respondent, above, was on a spouse (309) visa and had waited 2 years before it was granted, permitting him entry to Australia. The second and third respondents were here on student visas. Respondent 2 had lost his job and DIMIA were questioning his ability to continue to support himself.

Two of the 3 respondents who had looked at the Website said that they had looked at the MRT information on the Website. One made the following comment:

Well-organised, but not simple enough for people with English as a second language.

Service providers who had used the Website

On-line survey B was directed at service providers who were using the Website. Of the 10 respondents, 7 were seeking information about IARC's services, training/seminars or both. Two of these were also seeking information on how to order publications. Four respondents were seeking information on immigration applications and 2 were seeking information about MRT reviews (see Table 26.).

Table 26. On-line survey B – information sought

Information sought	Responses (multiples accepted)	% of responses
Immigration application	4	17%
Seeking MRT review	2	8%
IARC's services	6	25%
Training/seminars	6	25%
Order publications	2	8%
Other info	4	17%
Total responses	24	100%

Of the 4 who were seeking other information, 1 sought employment opportunities, and another was visiting the Website to prepare for volunteering at IARC.

A third who was a community organisation worker wrote she was looking for:

A permanent caseworker to give advice when required, especially in urgent cases would be much preferable. More training and seminars on different topics free of charge, as everyone else charges so much and most do not discount for community workers.

This person stated that:

The types of clients we get are diverse. I have had enquiries about student visas, spouse visa, refugee visa, tourist visa, business, and family reunion (where do you start?).

She reported that she had not found the information she was seeking.

The fourth, a community legal centre worker, was

Looking for information about compliance raids in Sydney - what rights do people have if they are raided? What powers do compliance have? Looking for information about the migration program, processing times, current events.

Five respondents reported that they had found the information they were seeking, including the community legal centre worker mentioned above. The 4 who had not found the information they were looking for were: 2 workers who were looking for paid work or volunteering; the community organisation worker (described above) with very broad needs, and a legal executive who was looking for information about how his client could apply for a spouse visa.

Of the 21 respondents to the e-mail survey, only 3 had used the Website in the past. They had found the information they were seeking. The others visited the Website to respond to the survey. Nine respondents¹⁷ said they had looked at the MRT pages on the site. Only 5 of them made comments about the pages. Four noted, variously, that the pages were informative, clear and comprehensive. The fifth person, who had used the site previously, made the following comment:

Very easy to use. I have used it to get a general understanding of different visa types rather than to find out about actually running an MRT matter. (E-mail survey)

b) Which pages, on the existing Website, are most frequently visited?

The 'Web Server Statistics for IARC'¹⁸ report is somewhat illuminating in relation to the relative frequency of viewing particular pages on the Website. The report reveals that IARC's home page is the most frequently visited, followed by the help page and then the MRT pages. What this means is open to interpretation, however it does suggest that first and foremost, the current Website is used as a portal to IARC's advice services. The home page provides details about the Centre's services, including contact information and where and when its advice services are available.

c) How do/will people use the information they find on the Website?

Individuals

The data collected from the telephone survey tends to confirm that the Website is used in the ways the web statistics report (above) suggests. Of the 13 people who had visited IARC's Website in the sample, 10 of them went on to call IARC's telephone advice and 3¹⁹ visited IARC for drop-in advice. Two of the 13 only visited the Website and did not make use of IARC's other services.

Secondly, the Website is used for referral purposes. The help page provides links and contact information for other services. This might mean that the Website is to some extent fulfilling its diversionary role.

Thirdly, the web stats report indicates that the MRT pages are being used. The research results do not reflect this finding, however, since the sample numbers are so small they cannot be viewed as conclusive. Nevertheless, 1 of the 2 people in the telephone sample that had visited the Website but no

¹⁷ This included the 3 service providers who had used the Website in the past, plus 6 workers who visited the site to answer the questionnaires.

¹⁸ See note 8, above.

¹⁹ Two of the 3 had used IARC's phone advice and 1 had not.

other IARC services had looked at the MRT pages and reported that she had found what she was looking for.

Service providers

Service providers were asked in both the e-mail and on-line survey how they would be likely to use the Website. Their answers are given in Table 27. .

Table 27. Potential uses of the Website

	E-mail	On-line B	Total	%
Use to inform myself	15	6	21	28%
Print out for clients	18	7	25	33%
Refer clients to services/site	19	7	26	35%
Other use	2	1	3	4%
Total responses	54	21	75	100%

Other comments were:

To assist staff with researching client needs. Also to refer other youth housing services to your site.

To obtain information on important updates, eg. change of immigration forms and/or changes in the Family Reunion Program, Refugee Program. This is important for us because we still rely on the Butterworths updates which we receive about 4 weeks after changes are implemented.

To clarify tribunal procedure. To introduce clients to the processes.

d) What are the on-line needs of users and potential users?

In the on-line surveys A and B²⁰, and in the telephone and MRT surveys, respondents were asked to describe the immigration problem about which they were inquiring. Some responses related to particular kinds of visas, some to issues such as health criteria. Multiple categories have been used to code their responses and thus the totals (see Table 28.) do not correspond to the number of respondents in each survey delivery method. The most commonly reported immigration problems related to spouse, tourist and student visas.

²⁰ On-line survey B results are tabulated together with individual respondents for the purposes of comparison.

Table 28. Immigration problem across delivery methods

	Online survey A	MRT Survey	Telephone survey	Online survey B	TOTAL
Permanent residency – unspecified	3	4	10		17
Family visa – unspecified			2	2	2
Spouse visa	1	12	19	3	35
Fiancé visa		2	3		5
Interdependency visa		1			1
Child visa			2		2
Parent visa		1	6		7
Last remaining relative visa		2	1		3
Carer visa		2	3	1	6
Orphan relative visa		1			1
Skilled/Business visa	1	3	4	1	9
Refugee visa			3	2	5
Student visa	1	12	1	1	15
Resident Return visa	1				
Tourist/visitor visa		8	9	1	18
NZ Visa			1		1
Bridging visa			1		1
Overstay		1	1		2
Health criteria	1				1
Support/Social security			2	1	3
Domestic violence, abuse		1	1		2
DIMIA complaint		2	2		4
Migration agent Complaint			2		2
Review/Appeals		5	4	1	10
Detention			1		1
Process delay		3	2		5
Statistics				1	1

Respondents were also asked what kind of assistance would have been useful to them. Telephone and MRT survey respondents reported that visa advice and information were the areas of greatest need (see Table 29.). These were followed by concerns about representation and information regarding procedure and process.

Many respondents' needs were related to personal advice tailored to their situations:

Would have liked to know what his chances were of getting the visa. Would have liked to know more about the visa; someone to consult and talk to about the visa.

Others suggested information that could appear on the Website:

Clear expression of which visa type the information is dealing with/providing advice about.

Advice on course requirements for a student visa - nothing else apart from this, for me anyway, because that's the basis on which my visa was granted.

Information on how to become a permanent citizen.

She would love to have known more about conditions (no further stay) attached to visa.

Info on visitors visa (5 yrs multiple entry, how to extend without leaving Aus)

Some respondents' remarks were about links on the Website. One commented that the existing links to regulations were excellent. Others sought links to solicitors, community organisations, doctors for medical assessment and embassies.

Five people sought assistance in filling out forms or writing a letter to the MRT. These tended to be for individual assistance but they relate to other suggestions for help on the Website.

Some comments were about information on rights to appeal or options if the appeal failed.

Under language, two suggested simpler English on the Website, while three sought interpreters.

Six other comments concerned information about the time it would take for appeals to be processed. Other concerns related to MRT fees and information about whether representation was necessary. The English-language test and supporting evidence required were also topics of concern for respondents. Two suggestions were for information about similar cases, and one mentioned the need for updated information about immigration policy (see Table 29.)

Table 29. Assistance required by individual respondents

Assistance	MRT survey	Telephone survey	Total
Visa advice	12	14	26
Visa information	3	12	15
Representation	5	5	10
Procedure/Process information	7	2	9
Help with forms	4	1	5
Similar cases	1	1	2
Simple English	1	1	2
Annotated links	1	7	8
Interpreter	1	2	3
Support/social security	1		1
Free assistance	2	1	3
Priority/time limit information	3	3	6
Citizenship information		1	1
Managing expectations		2	2
1800 number		1	1

Respondents to all the surveys were asked what (else) they would like to see on the IARC Website (see Table 30.). Where a respondent made more than one comment, these have been recorded separately. Some offered comments on this issue in response to other questions. The themes of the

relevant replies are described below, together with some sample quotes on each theme.

Table 30. Other Website features sought.

	On-line A	MRT	Telephone	On-line B	E-mail	Total	
Procedures/Process	1	1	1	1	1	5	13%
Visa Information		1	1	1	1	4	10%
Updates					5	5	13%
FAQS			1	1	2	4	10%
Downloadable forms		1	1		1	3	8%
Visual				1	2	3	8%
Case law				1	1	2	5%
Language	2					2	5%
Statistics					1	1	3%
Links					2	2	5%
Other	2		5		1	8	21%
Total comments	5	3	9	5	17	39	100%

The most common suggestions were for more information on process/procedures (5) and visa information (4), suggestions by service providers for updates on immigration law and other changes (5).

Eight responses were not categorised, as they were one-off suggestions. These are described below.

Content - Individual respondents

Three individuals' suggested more information on procedures. These were:

Information about how DIMIA operates, and what one can expect. Information about what to do when a visa is refused or cancelled. (MRT survey)

A complete brochure where the procedures would be written and the way how I can apply (On line Survey A, in relation to applying to migrate).

Several respondents suggested they would like to have been warned about the complexity of the processes of application and appeal.

It would have been good to know that there might be such a long and expensive haul. (Telephone Survey)

Points on "what you're up against" and what's required for each visa. She'd like the system to be less confusing. She'd like an idea of how long visa processing takes. (Telephone Survey)

Individual respondents commonly suggested more information about visa types available, the eligibility rules for them, and the conditions attached to them. Examples from the telephone survey were:

Info on visitors visa (5 yrs multiple entry), how to extend without leaving Australia.

Would have liked to know what visa mother could apply for and still get Medicare.

Be good if there was something clearer about points.

A complete brochure where the procedures would be written and the way how I can apply (On line Survey A, in relation to applying to migrate).

Others suggested more referral information, such as migration offices/law firms with good reputation (updated), doctors who could provide medical checks and embassies. There were also suggestions about more links,

including embassies in foreign countries. A number of respondents praised the existing links:

Links to actual regulations on a Website is very helpful - links are excellent. (Telephone Survey)

Website is pretty well laid out. IARC/Website are helpful in averting getting 'bogged down'. IARC Website excellent because a log of information; contact details to talk to somebody. (Telephone Survey)

The uncategorised comments relating to content were:

Answering of queries thru E-mail. (on-line A)

More detailed information. (on-line A)

He only had a brief glimpse and felt the Website was adequate for his needs in getting in touch with IARC. Suggests point form list of what IARC does, who to get in touch with. (Telephone)

Sufficient now (Telephone)

List of migration offices/law firms with good reputation (updated) with basic information and success of service (Telephone)

Content – service providers

Service providers made similar suggestions to those of individual respondents, particularly about visa types, eligibility and conditions, and procedures, both for immigration itself and for MRT appeals.

The Website is a useful portal for obtaining immigration assistance, but contains little in the way of immigration information itself. There seems to be a need for more information, but I understand this will be a challenge in light of the ever-changing regulations. (E-mail Survey)

Perhaps put summaries of all the types of visas that clients might be applying for, and general requirements for applications.

Service providers were also interested in updates on legislative changes and new policies (5), as well as case law (2) and statistics (1). Other suggestions were for frequently answered questions (3), downloadable forms and letters (1), and more visually based presentation.

A number asked for either links or information on recent case law, legislative changes, statistics and current issues. An E-mail survey respondent suggested:

Possibly more links to immigration law on the web plus services like Immigrant Women Speakout or other organisations with specialist type immigration information like AustFed or AIDS organisations.

One suggested a list of definitions of commonly used terms, such as "migration agent" and different visa categories.

In terms of links or contact details, service providers suggested social security information for migrants, Gay and Lesbian Immigration Taskforce, and NGOs such as the Red Cross tracing agency and St Vincent de Paul.

The E-mail survey asked for specific comments on the MRT information currently on the Website. Respondents said that they had found it comprehensive, easy to use, informative and clear. One said:

Very easy to use. I have used it to get a general understanding of different visa types rather than to find out about actually running a MRT matter.

Uncategorised comments from service providers were

A separate "definitions" section for terms such as "migration agent", the different visas, etc maybe helpful?? (e-mail)

Referral to other agencies? (e-mail)

Language and format

While a number of comments praised the plain English provided on the Website now, 3 individual respondents commented on the need for simpler English, one suggested other languages and one suggested referral to people to translate information.

One telephone survey respondent suggested:

Keep it simple and clear, must have phone numbers for explanation. Have links on first page.

Another made the following suggestion about tone:

Info on this or any other Website comes across as 'hard'- women under domestic violence go through a lot of emotional stress. We need support even reading something like "its not your fault" would make me feel better.

The service providers also suggested even plainer English. Although many liked the simple, easy to use lay-out, other comments from service providers were that the information is very "text-based". Examples were:

We would prefer to see more bullet points and more user-friendly information in a more visual context and less text-based. (E-mail survey)

Generally a more personable appearance. Perhaps photographs of clients will brighten it up. Maybe some flow charts, or diagrams showing how the immigration appeals system works. (On-line survey B)

The Website has most of the information needed by our service in terms of appointment times and telephone advice times. However the information on the site is reasonably dense and very text based. (E-mail survey)

General comments about IARC services

Respondents were asked for general comments about IARC or the Website. Those relating specifically to the Website have been described above.

A number of telephone and MRT survey respondents mentioned the need to increase awareness of IARC. These are discussed in the section on access above.

In terms of general impressions of IARC, a high proportion of respondents made very favourable comments. Examples of these are:

I think IARC is fantastic. I never knew I could get help for free. I am a pensioner and NESB so I need some help in appealing my wife's rejected visa. (MRT survey)

It is great that I and other staff of the organisation are aware of this wonderful Website. I think that is good enough for my first time visit to your site. We'll give comments when we have any. All the best for your good effort. (E-mail survey respondent who had not visited site before)

Website was definitely helpful with its information. IARC was definitely helpful/useful to his situation. The fact that advice was free was crucial. He couldn't afford a solicitor. (Telephone survey)

Think you are doing a fantastic service for people out there, especially for poor people. You are the initial stepping-stone for people. (Telephone survey)

Among the few criticisms made, most related to IARC's stretched resources and waiting times:

We often have many clients seeking assistance on immigration issues. I can't rely on DIMIA staff to give independent advice or know in depth of many issues without talking to at least a dozen people, but every time I contact IARC there's usually no-one available to answer queries. Left messages, sometimes get called back. I know how busy you all must be, this is not to criticise your organisation but to make a point about perhaps having more resources would greatly help organisations like us. (On-line survey B)

IARC telephone advice - had to wait too long - eventually gave up. Parramatta - very good advice - waiting time only problem. (MRT survey)

The timing of telephone advice and drop-in sessions and was a problem for some respondents. Examples of comments were:

Would like better phone assistance from DIMIA. Was very frustrated by electronic prompts. Was not happy with the times for the IARC drop-in service because she has a baby.

Its very hard for people like me to get advice without my husband finding out about it - so its not very helpful to me when there are limitations on what times and date I can call IARC - can this be changed?

Finally many respondents thanked IARC for its assistance and for efforts to improve the Website:

Congratulations - it is a great site - good on you for having the time to try and improve it! (On-line survey B)

It's good to try to provide clients with more helpful service than other services by re-designing the Website based on needs/survey. (Telephone survey)

Thanks for giving me free advice. (Telephone survey)

Discussion & Recommendations

This section of the report discusses the issues arising from the results of the research. Recommendations feature throughout the discussion.

Target audiences

As mentioned on page 8, in anticipation of the re-design of its Website, IARC defined a number of target audiences. Among individual users these included self-represented MRT applicants and people from rural and regional areas. The research revealed that 75 per cent²¹ of the MRT sample (all unrepresented) used the Internet and 67 per cent of telephone survey respondents who were classified as rural clients, used the Internet. This finding confirms the value of IARC's Website for the two groups identified as having a high level need for immigration information.

Recommendation 1. That IARC continue to use its Website as a means of providing independent information on immigration issues. Given the high level of Internet usage amongst the potential user groups surveyed, the IARC Website could be an effective means of providing information to the centre's core target groups and referring people who are not part of core target groups.

IARC itself has made reference to the need to target its scarce resources most effectively to meet the needs of its priority clients. Comments made by respondents about limited availability and waiting times for telephone and in person services reflect the fact that demand for help and potential demand greatly exceed IARC's current resources. If the Website is designed with the intention of being able to satisfy the needs of people who (a) have access to the Website and (b) need information or referral only, then it could reduce the pressure on more resource intensive services. Even for those who do need advice or representation, if they are better informed through a visit to the Website before contacting IARC they might be able to make better use of IARC's time in one-on-one services.

The role of the Website will continue to be supplementary to other services. Those who do not have access, computer or language skills will still need to obtain information from other sources. Those who need individual advice but are unable to access IARC's services because of distance (particularly rural and regional people), time constraints or other barriers remain a problem to reach. To meet their needs, even partially, requires creative alternatives such as training and information for alternative service providers or finding a way to offer them on-line advice.

²¹ National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE) reported that in 2001, the percentage of Australian persons 16 years and over with Internet access from any location was 72%. See http://www.noie.gov.au/Projects/information_economy/research&analysis/ie_stats/CSOP_April2002/CSOP_pages/access_vs_usage.htm

The aims of the Website, as far as substantive content is concerned, can be summarised as supplementing the Centre's services, thereby relieving demand on its resources. This can be achieved in three ways:

- Providing information to the Centre's target groups, who may be unable to access other IARC services;
- Providing information to people before or after they use the telephone or drop in advice services;
- Referral for people who are not the Centre's core target groups.

1. Providing information

It is necessary to rely on a working distinction between information and advice. For the purposes of this report, the researchers have distinguished generic information from personal advice. For example, providing information about the legal criteria for a particular kind of visa is generic information; applying those criteria to an individual's particular situation to determine if they meet the criteria, is personal advice.

Some people who were surveyed for this project made it clear they needed information only. Visiting IARC's Website and finding the information they require, then, will mean that they may not need to contact the Centre.

Others said that they wanted advice. If they have Internet access, the initial stage of an immigration inquiry is an appropriate time to consult the Website, to better understand or narrow down the particular advice required or questions they need answered. This can then be followed by consultation of IARC's phone advice service or drop-in advice, location permitting. In this way, clients' limited financial resources can be extended or preserved. The Centre will also benefit from the client's more informed position and require less time to provide personalised advice.

The MRT information provided on the existing Website is a good example of how this may work. The information is clear, concise and clarifies applicants' expectations about the process. Applicants may still require personalised advice, though after reading and digesting the on-line information, they will be in a better position to approach IARC.

2. Referral of non-target groups

There are a number of people to whom IARC's services do not cater. For example, the Centre does not provide advice to onshore refugees, skilled and business migrants or people seeking to hire a migration agent. IARC's existing Website includes some information about the types of assistance IARC is unable to provide. By expanding this to include annotated contact details or on-line links to organisations that are better positioned to assist non-target clients, IARC staff do not have to spend time on the phone or in person referring them to someone else. Additional information about the visa types available, including those IARC does not usually deal with, could assist people to decide the appropriate avenue for further inquiry.

Recommendation 2. That IARC expand the existing information on the Website about the services they provide to include a detailed statement of the services that they do not provide. This statement should incorporate annotated links or referrals to the appropriate bodies to assist clients requiring these services.

How to get IARC's target and non-target groups to visit the Website in the first instance is an issue of improving pathways (below).

Information needs of users and potential users

This discussion on Website content is based on the idea that a Website is effective at providing information but somewhat more limited in providing advice tailored to individual circumstances.

It is important to take into account the very favourable comments about the information that is already on the Website and the easy to use lay-out.

In considering how to respond to the information topics suggested by survey respondents there are a number of constraints.

Some respondents were seeking information or made suggestions that went well beyond the scope of IARC's role, and that are more appropriately provided by DIMIA or the MRT. However, to the extent that these agencies do not currently provide such information, it is a matter for IARC to decide which of such suggestions it could or might wish to take up. There is a potential disadvantage of complexity in providing too much information. Many respondents made comments applauding the simplicity of the site. Similarly, the more information provided on-line, the more onerous the task of keeping that information up-to-date.

With regard to the suggestions for downloadable forms, this would seem to be a role for DIMIA. However, the respondents who wanted assistance in filling out forms could benefit from model or annotated forms with plain language help on what information is required.

Recommendation 3. That IARC consider providing examples of forms and letters with helpful hints about what information should be included.

Some suggestions, in particular providing the information in a number of community languages, would be useful but at a cost exceeding IARC's capacity. A partial solution is to provide, in different languages, contact phone numbers for services that might be able to interpret the Website material for people who are unable to read English. It is probable that many people who do not read English at all will not be able to access the Website. Some with limited English might do so but be unable to understand the detailed information provided there.

Recommendation 4. That the Website include, on the home page, contact numbers for interpreter services in various community languages.

Other suggestions depend on the availability of existing text that could be included on the Website. An example of text that is not currently available,

but would be extremely useful, is a plain English guide to social security rules affecting newly arrived residents.

Although most people found that the existing information on the MRT process was very useful, it is clear from the responses that similar plain language information is needed on how to apply for immigration, or apply for a change/extension of visa, and the rules governing eligibility and conditions for all visa types (including those that IARC does not specialise in). These were sought not only by individuals overseas wishing to migrate to Australia but also on-shore applicants and service providers, friends, relatives and partners of people wishing to migrate.

Recommendation 5. That IARC gives priority to including plain language introductory information on procedures for applying for migration or change of visa.

The types of responses given to the question on “what immigration problem do you have?” (see Table 28.) indicated that there is a high level of need for 3 visa types: spouse visas, tourist/visitor visas and student visas. There were also a number of inquiries in relation to skilled/business visas and parent visas. While the former is not within IARC’s core target group, brief description and referral information might be sufficient to divert those seeking work-related visas away from IARC’s advice services. Many respondents were also seeking information and guidance about the review/appeals process.

IARC’s Website already includes extensive information about appeals in the MRT. Nevertheless, it may assist Website users if an overview of the review and appeals process was included on the site.

Recommendation 6. That IARC gives priority to including information about spouse visas, tourist/visitor visas and student visas, as well as conditions attached to them.

Recommendation 7. That IARC includes an overview of the review and appeals process on its Website.

The kinds of assistance individuals were seeking (see Table 29.) were mainly visa advice and information. However, many respondents also required assistance in relation to: the need for representation and how to get quality representation; information about processes and procedures; how to get permanent residency status; referrals and priority/time limit information. Some respondents suggested a frequently asked questions (FAQ) list, which seems an effective way of dealing with a variety of these issues. This could be particularly useful in targeting the information to people who would otherwise seek it from the direct contact services, or who might have similar needs but be unable to attend those services.

An FAQ list could initially be assembled on the basis of the areas of identified need emanating from this research. That list could then be supplemented by frequently asked questions of telephone advice and drop-in services staff. While assembling the list would take some staff time, it might ultimately be cost-effective if it relieves pressure on IARC’s services. Once an initial list was compiled, the process could be added to or refined at regular intervals, say six-monthly, to ensure it is meeting current needs.

There can also be a facility on an FAQ page where people can e-mail a new question. This could be achieved by designing a form to guide people in formulating questions, so that it focuses on information needs and does not become a de facto request line for extensive personal advice.

Recommendation 8. That IARC compile a list answering frequently asked questions. Telephone advice and drop-in staff should update this biannually. IARC may also want to consider an e-mail FAQ facility to enable new questions to be posed and added to the list.

Service provider needs

A number of service providers sought general information on latest case law developments, legislative changes, current issues, immigration statistics and events. This need might be more complex to meet. If IARC is in a position to provide it, the information should also be provided to service providers who do not use the Internet. One strategy might be to consider such requests in the context of *Immigration News*.

However, one of the clear advantages of publishing information on a Website is the immediacy of information dissemination. If IARC's resources cannot be stretched to give detailed information about, for example, how newly amended legislation will affect DIMIA decision-making, it may nevertheless be able to have a 'news' section in a panel on the screen which briefly alerts service providers and individuals to the existence of a change.

Recommendation 9. That in the re-design of its Website, IARC considers adding a 'news' section that will alert users to important changes, issues and/or events.

Like individual respondents, service providers expressed interest in having more detailed information about common visa types, visa criteria and procedures. They also wanted more annotated links and referral information, both for immigration law and other services. This suggestion confirms the capacity for the Website to act as a net-widening mechanism that improves pathways to other relevant, though non-immigration, services. For example, some individual respondents indicated there were domestic violence and abuse issues in relation to their immigration problem. Therefore, it may be appropriate to provide contact details for services such as the Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (DVAS).

Recommendation 10. That IARC consider the addition of annotated links to non-immigration social service providers as well as immigration-focused links.

Service providers also indicated in both the e-mail and on-line surveys that they use the Website, fairly equally, as a way of informing themselves about immigration information, to print out materials for their clients and to refer their clients to IARC services and/or Website. This places pressure on IARC, as the author of the site, to make it accessible for all these purposes. The provision of visa information and referral mechanisms have already been addressed in this report. However, print-friendly information is clearly a vital part of the provision of information to people who do not use the Internet and

rely on service providers to act as intermediaries. It also assists in creating pathways to IARC's services. .

In order to ensure accessibility, consistency in style as well as an easily printable format, Portable Document Format (PDF) files are a good option for fact sheets on immigration. IARC would need to purchase²² Adobe Acrobat 5.0 to produce PDF files for web publishing. The advantage of PDF files is that the Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded for free, so that if a service provider does not already have the program, they can get it relatively easily. A link to download the program can be placed next to the fact sheets on-line.

The other benefit of purchasing the program is that if IARC decides to publish *Immigration News* electronically, a PDF file would be a user-friendly method of doing so.

Recommendation 11. That IARC provides printable fact sheets on the Website as PDF files.

Pathways

The single most surprising result from the research was the lack of knowledge of IARC from the MRT applicants surveyed. The MRT has information sheets that notify people making contact with it about the free assistance available from IARC. It remains unclear whether applicants are sent this information after an initial inquiry for forms, after their application has been lodged, or whether they are given the contact sheets at the Tribunal in person.

Whichever method the MRT employs, the research showed that it is unsuccessful, as only 8 (17 per cent) applicants interviewed were aware that IARC existed.

Recommendation 12. That IARC re-visit, with the MRT, the procedure for making applicants aware of IARC's services. For example, a colourful, plain-language brochure could be made available on the counter at the MRT and given to people when they approach staff. This brochure would display the Website address prominently.

Pathways to IARC's Website

The promotion of IARC services to individuals, service providers and volunteers is another objective of the Website. Its capacity to do this is dependent upon people finding the site.

There were two main ways in which respondents found IARC's Website – through the web and via intermediaries. The following section discusses strategies for increasing knowledge of the IARC Website through these two channels.

²² Adobe Acrobat 5.0 can be purchased on-line for \$249. See <http://www.adobe.com/store/main.html>.

Web

Search engines

The web statistics report²³ revealed that the search engines most frequently used were: Google and Ninemsn.com. Others used included Yahoo, Altavista and Webwombat. The research team have tested some of these engines and discovered that IARC is featured quite low down in the list of links.

There are two ways to increase the chance of discovery through search engines. The first is by registering the site with search engines. This is a simple process and can be achieved by visiting different search engines on-line and going through their procedures. Some search engines now charge for this service, but many are free.

The second way to enhance findability is by adding metadata to web pages. Metadata is hidden, descriptive information arranged in different fields (such as author, title, availability etc) that helps to describe a resource, a bit like a cataloguing record in a Library catalogue. Search engines often use metadata to match key words in a search. The use of *Justice Sector Metadata*, in particular, will ensure that IARC pages are found by the NSW legal portal - LawAccess Online²⁴. This is a highly specified search engine that lists sites that provide plain legal information.

Recommendation 13. That IARC registers its Website with popular search engines.

Recommendation 14. That part of the re-design of the Website includes the addition of metadata to the web pages to improve findability.

Links from other sites

The main other sites used by respondents were DIMIA and the MRT. The DIMIA Website does not feature a link to IARC. It would be useful to try to negotiate a link from this site. The MRT does link to IARC, though the links are not annotated. People using the MRT link would not be aware that they are linking to an independent immigration advice service, nor that it is a free service, nor that the Website has specific, detailed information about MRT review.

Recommendation 15. That IARC attempt to negotiate an on-line link to IARC from the DIMIA Website.

Recommendation 16. That IARC discusses with the MRT the possibility of an annotated, more prominent link to its Website.

IARC could also investigate the possibility of being linked from other agencies that may refer clients to IARC. These could include services, organisations and Websites that are not necessarily immigration-focused, such as libraries, community organisations and Scaleplus.

²³ See note 8, above.

²⁴ See Appendix I.

Non web

An analysis of the pathways of respondents provides a useful indication of where it would be most effective to promote the IARC web site. This will have the additional benefit of promoting IARC services as well. Pathways fall into three categories: agencies, family/friends and phone book.

Agencies

Agencies used by respondents included:

DIMIA; Migrant Resource Centres; other migrant groups; Migration agents; Migration Review Tribunal; Red Cross and lawyers

A number of strategies can be used to promote IARC's Website to these agencies:

- Mail-out of brochure about IARC and the Website to relevant intermediaries;
- Web address on all IARC publications;
- A recorded message on the organisations' telephone lines which tells them, while callers are on hold, about the Website and provides the web address;
- Articles in relevant newsletters/journals.

Recommendation 17. That IARC designs a brochure to be sent out to service providers advertising its Website.

Recommendation 18. That IARC enlists student volunteers to write articles for publishing in *Immigration News* and other industry-related newsletters and journals about IARC and its Website.

Another strategy is enlisting the public libraries across the State to promote IARC's services. This method would be particularly useful in accessing people in rural and remote regions. There is a Multicultural Consultant based at the State Library of NSW who works with NSW public libraries to provide services to non-English speaking library clients. Legal Information Access Centre (LIAC) is also based in the State Library and concentrates on making legal information accessible to individuals, unrelated to the legal profession, across NSW.

Recommendation 19. That IARC work with LIAC and the State Library's Multicultural Consultant to discuss the best way to promote the IARC Website to NSW public libraries.

The strategies chosen will partly depend upon the cost and the availability of resources.

Family / friends

The high use of family and friends as a source of referral is in line with other research into information-seeking pathways²⁵. This group is difficult to reach and generalised information campaigns are expensive and have limited effectiveness.

Recommendation 20. Select use of ethnic media may be worth considering for promotion of IARC's services and Website e.g. items in newspapers and radio, if this was within the IARC budget.

Another strategy that could be investigated for potential clients in rural areas, is the use of local newspapers. This could possibly be done in conjunction with public libraries.

Phone book

Some individual respondents said that they discovered IARC through the phone book.

There is a new phone book out with Internet addresses. IARC could investigate the possibility of getting listed in this service.

Otherwise, listings in the White Pages and Yellow Pages can include Website addresses. Cost permitting, this is a good strategy to reach people who rely on off-line methods of contact, even though they may have access to the Internet.

Recommendation 21. That IARC list its web address in the next edition of the White and Yellow Pages.

Improving pathways

One of the main reasons for not using the Website was that people did not have access to the Internet or the skills to use the Internet. While addressing barriers to access is not IARC's primary goal, there are some strategies that may not be resource-intensive for IARC that could be considered.

The number of individuals in both telephone and MRT samples that did not have Internet access was relatively low. Only 29 per cent and 25 per cent respectively, reported that they did not use the Internet. All the service providers surveyed had access to the Internet, mostly from a work computer.

In the telephone sample, 12 out of the 20 people who said they did not use the Internet, stated the reason was that they did not have a computer. Six of that number gave that as the only reason why they didn't use the Internet. The same was true of 3 out of the 10 people in the MRT sample who said they did not have a computer. People in this category, who have the skills but no computer, may not be aware that public libraries, across NSW, provide free Internet access.

²⁵ See for example, Keys Young, *Against the Odds: How Women Survive Domestic Violence, The Needs of Women Experiencing Domestic Violence Who Do Not Use Domestic Violence and Related Crisis Services*, Federal Office of the Status of Women, Canberra, 1998, p. xii.

Recommendation 22. That IARC liaise with LIAC to provide posters about Internet access in public libraries to be hung at the MRT, migrant resource centres and other organisations working with ethnic communities. These posters could feature IARC's Website address. IARC offices could also display these posters.

People without access to the Internet may also not know that some service providers give their clients access to their Internet-connected computers to do their own research. Of the 5 service providers in the e-mail sample who said that they permit their clients to use their Internet-connected computers, none had previously visited the Website.

Recommendation 23. That service providers be asked to inform IARC if they permit their clients to use Internet-connected computers so that the Centre can make their clients aware of this possible resource.

Since so many people across surveys found out about IARC's services and Website through friends and family, it may be useful to include information about service providers who permit their clients to use their Internet-connected computers on the Website. Those people who have Internet access, and visit the Website, would be in a position to pass on that information to those without access.

Recommendation 24. That IARC list service providers who permit clients to use their Internet-connected computers on the Website (if service providers agree).

Coping with demand

IARC already has difficulty in coping with the demand for its services given its limited resources. Several respondents noted the restricted availability of phone advice as being a problem. There is a very real possibility that increasing knowledge of the IARC web site will result in an increased demand for IARC services. While there are no easy answers to this dilemma, the following strategies may be of use:

- Clearly stating the scope of IARC services and who they are available to on the Website.
- Providing content which will hopefully answer some inquiries without the need for additional assistance.

E-mail

A number of respondents suggested an e-mail advice facility. While it is feasible to use a limited e-mail information system, there are a number of dangers in an e-mail advice line. One is the security of advice sent through e-mail. A second is that the individual's circumstances are often not provided in a complete or accurate form and advice provided in response could be misleading. The third is that it is hard to limit the number of e-mails received in relation to the capacity of IARC to respond to them.

IARC has in place a comprehensive, yet discretionary e-mail policy in place that takes account of the above-mentioned difficulties. In its policy, the Centre

acknowledges that e-mail correspondence is a way to address the needs of people who are prevented by other constraints from being able to contact IARC during service hours. IARC treats these cases as exceptional and will provide e-mail advice after the client completes a form providing the same details requested for phone advice.

For non-exceptional e-mail advice requests, IARC uses auto-responses that explain their e-mail policy and refer the inquirer either to IARC's advice services or other appropriate agencies. It is not recommended, at this time, that IARC revise its currently operating e-mail policy.

Marshalling other resources – maximising the Website

IARC volunteers

Some Websites have information about employment in the organisation. Although IARC only has a small number of employees, it could provide information for people who might be interested in volunteering. This would describe the volunteering work, the times when volunteers are needed, the qualifications required and how to volunteer on-line.

Recommendation 25. That IARC includes information on the Website about volunteer work at the Centre, including a facility to volunteer on-line.

IARC's products

One of the main aims of the Website, as determined by IARC, was to sell its products more widely. The Website, in its current form, mentions the publications it publishes and the fact that it runs workshops, seminars and a migration agent registration course.

In order to properly advertise these products, it is recommended that much more detail be included on the Website. This detail should include prices and a brief description of the product (for courses this should include what the course is about, dates, time and location), and how to purchase the products.

Recommendation 26. That IARC include on the Website all details about its products that are necessary to sell them.

Beyond advertising the products, it is recommended that the products are available to be ordered on-line. This could be achieved by a couple of different methods:

- An on-line ordering form that can be e-mailed to IARC from the Website. Payment on-line requires a secure site and probably would not be desirable for many service providers. Invoices could be sent by ordinary mail.
- A printable form on-line that could be faxed to IARC from the ordering service provider. For this method, credit card payments would be a possibility.

Recommendation 27. That the re-designers of the Website create an on-line ordering form for publications and courses.

Immigration News

As revealed in the results section of this report, roughly half of the service providers who subscribe to *Immigration News* expressed a preference for receiving it electronically. Three out of 4 respondents to the on-line survey stated a preference for an electronic version. It is possible to interpret this disparity in terms of the greater familiarity on-line respondents have with the Internet.

If an order form for *Immigration News* was available on-line (see recommendation above), it is possible that people purchasing subscriptions in this way would also express a preference for an electronic subscription. The subscription page could also provide a list of contents and synopses of the current and past editions and allow people to purchase past editions or just the current edition as an alternative to subscribing on an ongoing basis.

Benefits of electronic newsletter

Making the newsletter available electronically, as well as in print format, would reduce the amount of paper and printing for each edition. This would save time and labour.

Electronic form

As *Immigration News* provides revenue for IARC, it could not be posted on the Website, as it would be freely available. The publication could either be e-mailed as a Word document, or if IARC have the software, it could be e-mailed as a PDF file.

Recommendation 28. That IARC consider making *Immigration News* available in electronic as well as in-print format.

Website standards

Content should comply with the *Best Practice Guidelines for Legal Web sites*²⁶. This includes the need to clearly state the authorship and currency of the information, the jurisdiction the information applies to and a disclaimer. Any on-line links to, or contact details for, other organisations should always be annotated²⁷ to indicate such information as the kind of services provided as well as whether they are government or non-government organisations.

Websites should provide mechanisms for user feedback. IARC has stated that gathering feedback is one of the objectives of its Website. In view of the complexity of the on-line surveys and the time-consuming task of analysing the data they produce, the research team feels that it would be in IARC's best interests to develop a simplified feedback form with the re-designers. This

²⁶ See <http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/lisc>.

²⁷ A good example of annotated links, compiled by the Law & Justice Foundation, can be found at <http://www.abc.net.au/diylaw/e2resources.htm>.

should be a more guided exercise than the current feedback form on the site, including perhaps three or four open-ended questions.

Recommendation 29. That IARC develop and install a guided feedback form for users.

The re-designed IARC site should be accessible to users with disabilities.

Accessibility guidelines can be found on-line at:

http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/olap/access/web_access.html.

The needs of users with low bandwidth need to be taken into account. This is particularly important for rural users who are often connected via low speed modems. This means ensuring that web pages are not graphics heavy.

This last consideration contrasts with comments by a number of service providers that the material is too text heavy and could benefit by more non-verbal content. Therefore, some balance between the two positions will need to be reached by the re-designers and IARC.

Conclusion

The respondents to the survey overall had quite positive comments to make about IARC and its Website. There was enthusiasm expressed both by individuals and service providers about the re-design of the site.

Due to the limited number of responses to surveys, the research can only be viewed as suggestive of the needs of users and potential users, though it nevertheless has raised some valuable issues and suggestions for consideration. It is clear that users and potential users want more than is currently offered on the Website.

Recommendations made in this report were presented with the knowledge that not all will be financially viable nor desirable to be implemented. They were presented in this way so that IARC would be able to prioritise areas for improvement and expansion. Clearly these decisions will be influenced by IARC's capacity to maintain the site at the standard that is necessary to meet the objectives for the Website.

Appendices

- Appendix A - Online Survey A: Individuals with immigration problems
- Appendix B - Online Survey B: Service Providers
- Appendix C - E-mail Survey: Service Providers
- Appendix D - MRT Survey
- Appendix E - Telephone Survey
- Appendix F - Invitation to Participate
 - Instructions for Interviewers: MRT Survey
- Appendix G - Instructions for Interviewers: Telephone Survey
- Appendix H - Methodology
- Appendix I - Metadata

HOME	SEARCH	SITE MAP	CONTACT US
<i>About Us</i>			
<i>Access to Justice</i>			
<i>Grants Program</i>			
<i>Research</i>			
<i>Legal Information</i>			
<i>Justice Awards</i>			
<i>Publications</i>			
<i>Media Releases</i>			
Legislation & Parliament			
Judgments & Courts			
Court Lists			
Helpful Links			

Resources

Immigration Advice and Rights Centre Website Evaluation and Needs Analysis

Prepared by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, May 2002

Online Survey A - individuals with immigration
problem

1. I am: (Please choose one only)

- A person with an immigration question
- A friend or family member of a person with an immigration question
- An individual just browsing

2. I am looking for information about: (You can tick more than one box)

- An immigration application
- Seeking review in the Migration Review Tribunal
- How to find a migration agent to help with my immigration application or review application.
- Immigration Advice and Rights Centre's (IARC's) advice services
- IARC's immigration training and seminars
- How to order IARC's publications (Immigration News and Immigration kit)
- Other. Please tell us what *other* information you have been looking for:

Can you tell us what immigration problem you have? For example, is it a particular visa you are hoping to get?

3. Did you find the information you were looking for on this website?

- Yes
- No

Please tell us what else you would like to see on this website:

4. The names of other websites I have visited to answer my immigration questions are:
(Please list names of organisations)

5. I knew that IARC had a website because of... (Please choose one only)

- A web link. *From which site?*
- Search engine like Yahoo, Google etc
- I was told by a friend or family member
- An organisation. *Which one?*
- The Migration Review Tribunal (MRT)
- The Department of Immigration (DIMIA)
- An IARC Brochure
- I don't remember
- Other. *Please tell us here*

6. I am using the Internet from a... (Please choose one only)

- Home computer
- Work Computer
- Friend or family member's computer
- Community organisation
- Library
- Internet cafe
- Other *Please tell us here*

7. I have used the following IARC Services (You can tick more than one)

- None
- Telephone advice
- Advice service at Surry Hills or Parramatta
- Bought publications (Immigration Kit or Immigration News)
- Other. Please tell us what *other* IARC services you have used



8. Do you have a migration agent helping you?

- Yes
 No

9. If you are in Australia, which State or Territory?

- NSW
 QLD
 VIC
 TAS
 NT
 SA
 WA

Please name the city or town you live in

10. If you are NOT in Australia, which country are you in?

11. Which language do you feel most comfortable reading?

12. I am a:

- Male
 Female

13. What age are you?

- Under 15
 15-24
 25-34
 35-44
 44-54
 55-59
 60 or over

14. Are there any comments you would like to make - about IARC, these questions or the website?



Please click on the **Submit** button to send your answers to us. Thank you.

Submit

HOME

SEARCH

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Thursday, 26-Jun-2003 11:24:15 E

HOME	SEARCH	SITE MAP	CONTACT US
<i>About Us</i>			
<i>Access to Justice</i>			
<i>Grants Program</i>			
<i>Research</i>			
<i>Legal Information</i>			
<i>Justice Awards</i>			
<i>Publications</i>			
<i>Media Releases</i>			
Legislation & Parliament			
Judgments & Courts			
Court Lists			
Helpful Links			

Resources

Immigration Advice and Rights Centre Website Evaluation and Needs Analysis

Prepared by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, May 2002

Online Survey B - Service provider

1. Are you:

- A community organisation worker?
- A community legal centre worker?
- A community-based migration agent?
- A fee-charging migration agent?
- A library worker?
- A government department worker?
- Other? *Please tell us*

2. I am looking for information about: (You can tick more than one box)

- An immigration application
- Seeking review in the Migration Review Tribunal
- How to find a migration agent to help with my client's immigration application or review application.
- IARC's advice services
- IARC's immigration training and seminars
- How to order IARC's publications (Immigration News and Immigration kit)
- Other. Please tell us what *other* information you have been looking for:

3. Can you tell us what immigration problem(s) you are researching? For example, is it a particular visa your client is hoping to get?

4. Did you find the information you were looking for on this website

- Yes

No

Comments?

5. Please tell us what else you would like to see on this website:

6. The names of other websites I have visited to answer my immigration questions are:
(Please list names of organisations)

7. Links to other websites that should appear on IARC's website are:
(Please list names of organisations)

8. I have used the following IARC Services (You can tick more than one box)

- None
- Telephone advice
- Advice service at Surry Hills or Parramatta
- Bought publications (Immigration Kit or Immigration News)
- Training
- Other. Please tell us what *other* IARC services you have used

9. I knew that IARC had a website because of... (Please choose one only)

- A web link. *From which site?*
- A search engine like Yahoo, Google etc
- I was told by a friend or colleague
- The Migration Review Tribunal (MRT)
- The Department of Immigration (DIMIA)
- Some other organisation. *Which one?*
-
- An IARC Brochure
- Other. *Please tell us here*

10. I am using the Internet from a... (Please choose one only)

- Home computer
- Work Computer
- Friend or family member's computer
- Community organisation
- Library
- Internet cafe
- Other *Please tell us here*

11. How often do you visit this website?

- This is my first visit
- About once a week
- About once a month
- Rarely
- Other. *Please tell us here*

12. If you are in Australia, which State or Territory?

- NSW
- QLD
- VIC
- TAS
- NT
- SA
- WA

13. Where is your organisation located?

- Sydney
- Elsewhere. *Please tell us where*

14. If you are NOT in Australia, which country are you in?

15. If your organisation's online needs were addressed in the redesign of IARC's website

how would you be likely to use the website? (You can tick more than one box)

- To inform myself about immigration issues
- To print out information to give to my clients
- To refer clients to IARC's services or website
- Other. Please tell us what *other* ways you would use the website

16. If you subscribe to Immigration News, IARC's quarterly newsletter, would you prefer electronic version or print (assume they cost the same)?

- Electronic
- Print
- I do not subscribe to the newsletter

17. Please list the three languages most commonly used by your clients.

18. How many computers with internet access does your organisation have?

19. Do your clients use your internet-connected computers for their own research?

- Yes
- No

20. I am a:

- Male
- Female

21. What age are you?

- Under 15
- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 44-54
- 55-59
- 60 or over

22. [Optional] Are you happy for us to ring you if we need to discuss any of your answers?

- Yes. Name Phone number

- No

23. Are there any other comments you would like to make - about IARC, these questions or the website?

Please click on the **Submit** button to send your answers to us. Thank you.

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HOME	SEARCH	SITE MAP	CONTACT US
<i>About Us</i>			
<i>Access to Justice</i>			
<i>Grants Program</i>			
<i>Research</i>			
<i>Legal Information</i>			
<i>Justice Awards</i>			
<i>Publications</i>			
<i>Media Releases</i>			
Legislation & Parliament			
Judgments & Courts			
Court Lists			
Helpful Links			

Resources

Immigration Advice and Rights Centre Website Evaluation and Needs Analysis

Prepared by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, May 2002

Online Survey - Service provider
(email)

1. Are you: (Please choose only one)

- an IARC volunteer?
 an ethnic community organisation?
 a migrant resource centre?
 a community-based migration agent?
 a fee-charging migration agent?
 a community legal centre?
 a law firm?
 Other? *Please specify*

2. I have used the following IARC Services (You can tick more than one box)

- None
 I am an IARC volunteer
 Telephone advice
 Advice service at Surry Hills or Parramatta
 Bought publications (Immigration Kit or Immigration News)
 Referral to other agencies
 IARC's immigration training and seminars
 Other. Please tell us what *other* IARC services you have used

3. Have you ever visited IARC's website on the Internet?

- Yes, just now because of this survey (**Please go to Q6**)
 Yes, I have been there before (**Please go to Q4**)
 No (**Please go to Q10**)

4. How did you know that IARC had a website? (Please choose one only)

- A link from another website. *Which one?*

 A search engine like Yahoo, Google etc
 I was told by a friend or colleague
 The Migration Review Tribunal (MRT)

- The Department of Immigration (DIMIA)
- Some other organisation. *Which one?*

- An IARC Brochure

- Other. *Please specify*

5. How often do you visit this website? (Please choose one only)

- This is my first visit
- About once a week
- About once a month

- Other. *Please specify*

6. Does IARC's website have the sort of information you need?

- Yes
- No

Comments?

7. What would you like to see on the website:

8. Have you looked at the information on the website about the Migration Review Tribunal?

- Yes
- No

Comments?

9. What other websites have you visited to answer your immigration questions?

(Please list names of organisations)



10. What links to other websites should appear on IARC's website?
(Please list names of organisations)



11. Where are you using the internet? (Please choose one only)

- Home computer
 Work Computer
 Friend or family member's computer
 Community organisation
 Library
 Internet cafe
 Other *Please tell us here*

12. If you are in Australia, which State or Territory?

- NSW
 QLD
 VIC
 TAS
 NT
 SA
 WA

13. Where is your organisation located?

- Sydney
 Elsewhere. *Please tell us where*

14. If you are NOT in Australia, which country are you in?

15. If your online needs were addressed in the redesign of IARC's website, how would you be likely to use the website? (You can tick more than one box)

- To inform myself about immigration issues
 To print out information to give to my clients
 To refer clients to IARC's services or website
 Other. Please tell us what *other* ways you would use the website



16. If you subscribe to Immigration News, IARC's quarterly newsletter, would you prefer electronic version or print (assume they cost the same)?

- Electronic
- Print
- I do not subscribe to the newsletter

17. Please list the three languages most commonly used by your clients.



18. How many computers with internet access does your organisation have?

19. Do your clients use your internet-connected computers for their own research?

- Yes
- No

20. I am a:

- Male
- Female

21. What age are you?

- Under 15
- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 44-54
- 55-59
- 60 or over

22. [Optional] Are you happy for us to ring you if we need to discuss any of your answers?

- Yes. Name Phone number

- No

23. Are there any other comments you would like to make - about IARC, these questions or the website?

Please click on the **Submit** button to send your answers to us. Thank you.

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http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/resources/iarc/email_survey.html

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APPENDIX D

MRT Survey

As explained in the leaflet you received from the desk, we want to ask you some questions so we can improve IARC's website on the Internet. We will not ask for your name or phone number, or pass information about you to anyone else. And you can choose not to answer any question.

Questions

1. Are you:

[Read aloud - tick one box only]

- Potential applicant to the Migration Review Tribunal (MRT)?
- An applicant to the MRT?
- A friend or family member of an MRT applicant?
- Sponsoring a friend or family member from overseas?

[If yes to any of the above, go to Q. 2]

[If none of these options – record who below and terminate interview]

[TERMINATE INTERVIEW IF YOU ARE SPEAKING TO A SERVICE PROVIDER who does not have a personal immigration problem]

2. Are you waiting to go into a hearing today?

- No

[Go to Q. 3]

- Yes

[TERMINATE INTERVIEW]

3. Do you have a migration agent helping you?

- Yes.

[TERMINATE INTERVIEW]

- Not yet.

[Go to Q. 4]

- No.

[Go to Q. 4]

4. Can you tell me what immigration problem you have? For example, is it a particular visa you are hoping to get?

[Please write down as much information as you can – prompt if necessary]

Was the visa:

- Refused
- Cancellation

5. Before speaking to me today, had you ever heard of the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre or IARC?

- Yes

[Go to Q. 6]

- No

[Go to Q. 7]

6. Which of these IARC services have you ever used?

[Read aloud - you can tick more than one box]

- Telephone advice

- Advice service at Surry Hills or Parramatta
- Website
- Bought publications (Immigration Kit or Immigration News)
- Are there any other IARC services you have used?

- None

7. What other help have you had with your immigration problem?

[Read aloud if necessary - you can tick more than one box]

[Prompt here to find out what kind of help eg. filling in forms etc.]

- Community groups. Who? _____

- Support services. Who? _____

- Law firm or legal centre

- Department of Immigration (DIMIA)

- MRT (Migration Review Tribunal)

- Other. Please tell me what _____

- None

8. What help or information would be useful to you in preparing your MRT application?

9. Do you use the Internet at all?

- Yes
[Go to Q. 11]
- No

[Go to Q. 10]

10. As you do not use the Internet, what stops you from using it?

[Read aloud - you can tick more than one box]

- No computer
- Do not know how to use a computer
- Do not know how to use the internet
- Do not want to
- Do not read/speak English well
- Other. Please tell me _____

[Go to Q. 18]

11. Where do you use the Internet?

[Read aloud if necessary - you can tick more than one box]

- Home computer
- Work computer
- Friend or family member's computer
- Community organisation
- Library
- Internet café
- Other. Please tell me where _____

12. Have you ever visited IARC's website on the Internet?

- Yes

[Go to Q. 14]

- No

[Go to Q. 13]

13. Before today, did you know that IARC had an Internet website?

- Yes – how did you find out about it? _____

- No

[Go to Q. 17]

14. Did you find what you wanted on the website?

- Yes

- No

15. What else would you like to see on IARC's website?

[Please write down as much information as you can – prompt if necessary eg. information about visas, procedures, delays etc.]

16. Did you look at the information on the website about the Migration Review Tribunal?

- Yes

- No

Comments:

17. Can you name some other organisations you have visited on the Internet to answer your immigration questions?

Demographics

18. Where do you live?

[Please write down city or town and State if other than NSW – please check spelling]

19. Which language do you feel most comfortable reading?

[Please record – do not read aloud]

<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
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20. What is your age?

[Read out age groups]

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 15-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 44-54	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-59	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 or over
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21. Are there any other comments you would like to make – about IARC, these questions or the website?

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, you can contact IARC directly...

[Please hand them an IARC leaflet]

APPENDIX E

Telephone Survey

Telephone Questionnaire

What are your on-line information needs?

Good _____, my name is _____. I'm calling on behalf of the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre (IARC). I wondered if I could speak to

[Repeat above if necessary.]

[If the person who contacted IARC is not available, make a time to call back _____]

IARC have a website on the Internet which is going to be redesigned. I wanted to ask you some questions so we can improve the website. We are trying to find out about the needs of people who might use the website. As you have contacted the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre before, we are interested in your opinions as someone who has or did have an immigration problem. Do you have the time to answer this short telephone survey, so that IARC can better understand your needs?

[If yes, say...]

We will not pass information about you to anyone else. And you can choose not to answer any question.

[If people ask, the interview will take about 10 minutes]

1. How did you first find out about IARC?

[Do not read aloud, but prompt if necessary]

- A brochure or leaflet. Which organisation's brochure _____
- The phone book
- Their website
- A Friend/family member told me
- Another agency. Please tell us here _____
- Other. Please tell us here _____

2. I'm wondering why you contacted IARC. Are you or were you:

[Read aloud – tick one box only]

- An applicant to the Migration Review Tribunal (MRT)?
- A person with an immigration question?
- A friend or family member of a person with an immigration question?
- Sponsoring friend or family member?
- Other. Please tell me _____

[If none of these options – record below and terminate interview]

[TERMINATE INTERVIEW IF YOU ARE SPEAKING TO A SERVICE PROVIDER who does not have a personal immigration problem]

3. At the time you contacted IARC, were you looking for information about:

[Read aloud - you can tick more than one box]

- An immigration (or visa) application
- Seeking review in the Migration Review Tribunal
- Finding a migration agent to help with your immigration or review application.
- IARC's advice services
- IARC's immigration training and seminars
- Ordering IARC's publications (Immigration News and Immigration kit)
- Or something else. Please tell me what else _____

4. Can you tell me what immigration problem you have? For example, is it a particular visa you are hoping to get?

[Please write down as much information as you can – we are looking for specific visas etc. Prompt if necessary]

5. Which of these IARC services have you ever used?

[Read aloud - you can tick more than one box]

- Telephone advice
- Advice at Surry Hills or Parramatta
- Website
- Bought publications (Immigration Kit or Immigration News)
- Are there any other IARC services you have used?

-
- None

6. What other help have you had with your immigration problem?

[Read aloud - you can tick more than one box]

[Prompt here to find out what kind of help eg. filling in forms etc.]

- Community groups. Who? _____

- Support services. Who? _____

- Law firm or legal centre

- Department of Immigration (DIMIA)

- MRT (Migration Review Tribunal)

- Other. Please tell me what _____

- None

7. Do you use the Internet at all?

- Yes

[Go to Q. 9]

- No

[Go to Q. 8]

8. As you do not use the Internet, what stops you from using it?

[Read aloud - you can tick more than one box]

- No computer
- Do not know how to use a computer
- Do not know how to use the internet
- Do not want to
- Do not read/speak English well
- Other. Please tell me _____

[Go to Q.17]

9. Where do you use the Internet?

[Read aloud - you can tick more than one box]

- Home computer
- Work computer
- Friend or family member's computer
- Community organisation
- Library
- Internet café
- Other. Please tell me where _____

10. Have you ever visited IARC's website on the Internet?

- Yes

[Go to Q. 12]

- No

[Go to Q. 11]

11. Before today, did you know that IARC had an Internet website?

- Yes – how did you find out about it? _____

- No

[Go to Q. 16]

12. How did you know that IARC had a website?

(Prompt below - Tick one box only)

- An on-line link. From which site? _____
- A search engine eg. Yahoo, Google etc
- I was told by friend or family member
- The Migration Review Tribunal (MRT)
- The Department of Immigration (DIMIA)
- Some other organisation. Please tell us here _____
- An IARC Brochure

13. Did you find what you wanted on the website?

- Yes
- No

14. What else would you like to see on IARC's website?

[Prompt – 'Is there anything else?' Try to get them to focus on information needs]

15. Did you look at the information on the website about the Migration Review Tribunal?

- Yes
 - No
- Comments:

16. Can you name some other organisations you have visited on the Internet to answer your immigration questions?

[Prompt – 'Are there any other organisations you can think of?']

17. What other help and information would have been good for you in dealing with your immigration problem?

[Prompt – ‘We are trying to find the gaps in information and advice that would have been useful for you’.]

18. Do you have a migration agent helping you?

- Yes
- No
- Not yet

Demographics

19. Where do you live?

[Please write down city or town and State if other than NSW – please check spelling]

20. Which language do you feel most comfortable reading?

[Please record – do not read aloud]

<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
-------------------------------	---------------------------------

21. What is your age?

[Read out age groups]

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 15-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-59	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 or over
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22. Is there any other comments you would like to make – about IARC, these questions or the website?

[Prompt – ‘Are there any other important issues you haven’t already mentioned?’]

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, you can contact IARC directly...

Advice Line: 61 2 9281 8355

Admin Line: +61 2 9281 1609

Fax: +61 2 9281 1638

Email: judy_burgess@fcl.fl.asn.au

Website: <http://www.iarc.asn.au>

APPENDIX F

Invitation to Participate
Instructions for Interviewers – MRT Survey

IMMIGRATION ADVICE & RIGHTS CENTRE SURVEY

What are your immigration information needs?

The Immigration Rights and Advice Centre (IARC) is a non-profit community legal centre, specialising in immigration law. We provide free, confidential immigration advice and have a website with immigration information.

IARC believes that everyone has the right to clear information about the law. For that reason, we want to ask you some questions so we can improve IARC's website on the Internet. Even if you do not have access to the Internet, we would still like to talk to you.

Would you mind taking a few minutes to talk to one of our researchers. The information you provide help make IARC's website more useful for people with immigration problems. We will not ask for your name or contact details or pass information about you to anyone else. You may choose not to answer any question.

If you would like to help IARC by answering our survey, please tell the people behind the desk.

If you prefer not to participate, thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet.

For further advice contact the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre:

Telephone Advice: (02) 9281 8355 Tuesday and Thursday 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Drop in service (no appointment needed)

Surry Hills: Monday 6 - 9pm, IARC, Level 4, 414 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills

Parramatta: Wednesday 6 - 9pm, Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre, L6, Macquarie House , 169 Macquarie Street (cnr Smith) Parramatta

Website Address: www.iarc.asn.au

Interview Tips for Volunteers

The Migration Review Tribunal (MRT) is located at:

Level 3, 44 Market St, Sydney (the AXA building).

Before you go to the MRT, it is a good idea to read through the survey once or twice to familiarise yourselves with the text.

Upon arrival at the MRT, please ask to speak to Genie Ng or Rhys Jones, whichever is available. Please introduce yourself and say you are the IARC volunteers for the survey. They have been through the process already so they will know what you are doing.

Setting up the interview area

Please set up tables at the back of the waiting area, so that each volunteer is at a separate table. The interviewer should face towards the front desk. This way you will be able to keep an eye out for those who have agreed to participate as they approach. You will probably find it best to conduct the interview with the participant sitting at your side. That way they can follow along as you fill out the survey. This will help in ensuring accuracy and will probably make the participant feel more comfortable.

As the participant approaches welcome them and introduce yourself by your first name only. Please thank them for agreeing to participate and ask them to take a seat.

If the participant brings along a support person

If an applicant/potential applicant comes up to see you with their support person, ask them if they would like to have the support person assist them with answering the survey. It may be that the applicant needs the help of the support person as an interpreter for the survey. If, on the other hand, both the applicant and their support person want to participate, they may be interviewed separately. This is desirable if they both understand English and have both been involved in dealing with the problem. If this is the case we want to be able to link the two surveys later. Please make a note at the bottom of the survey which survey this is to be paired with by noting the ID number (e.g. write a note to link survey number 10 with survey number 17). Please note that the ID numbers appear at the bottom right on the first page of each survey.

If they ask for help and advice

Explain that the best people to contact for advice are IARC and mention the hours that IARC is open. Tell them that you are a volunteer whose job is to conduct the survey and that you do not have any qualifications or knowledge about immigration matters. If they persist in asking for your help explain to them that you do want to

give them any advice or information because you may give them incorrect information.

Conducting the Interview

The Questionnaire

A lot of time was spent choosing the wording of the questions and testing how well they achieve the kind of responses we are looking for. For consistency, it is a good idea to ask the questions the same way every time. Please read the questions as they are, and if the person indicates that they don't understand, then proceed to rephrase the question.

The questionnaire is set out with instructions for you in square, bold, italics.

Q2: If the participant indicates that they are waiting to go into a hearing today, explain that we have decided that we should not interview people who are waiting for a hearing, because we feel it is unfair to distract them at this important time. If they still wish to complete the survey after their hearing, they are most welcome to. If they insist on participating before the hearing it is best to let them do so.

Prompting but not leading

Questions 4, 5, 6 and 15 ask you to use prompts. Some examples of prompts are, "who", "when", "is there anything else you can think of". Such prompts can be very helpful when the participant gives very brief responses.

If the participant gives a brief response or seems to have not understood the question, it may also be helpful to rephrase the question and ask again.

It is important, when prompting or rephrasing the question, not to lead the participant to an answer that they would not have given themselves. Always be careful when prompting not to suggest an actual answer to the question.

If a participant seems stuck and can't add anything else to their response, tell them that you will go on to the next question, but if they think of anything else they can let you know at the end. Question 21, the final question, is an excellent opportunity to check if the participant has thought of anything else that they would like to add regarding any issue.

Clarifying Responses

You may find some of the responses that the participants give confusing, in such a situation it is important to be sure that you have understood correctly. One of the most effective ways to ensure that you have understood a response correctly is to

say back to the participant what you thought they meant in your own words, this will give the participant an opportunity to correct any misunderstandings.

Always give the participant your full attention. If you do not follow their responses it may become obvious when you ask later questions that you have not been paying attention.

If the participant becomes very upset

If the participant seems too upset to continue with the survey, let them know that they do not have to continue with the survey. Please make a note if the survey is terminated for this reason.

After the interview

Please take the opportunity to go through the questionnaire and add anything that you didn't get a chance to note during the interview. Please go through and make sure that your writing is clear and readable.

When you finish going over the survey, please write, on the last page, any additional comments or observations that you feel may be of interest. For instance, please make a note if you thought that the participant's understanding of English was very poor.

If you have any questions

See Genie Ng or Rhys Jones at the front desk, if you need assistance from the MRT staff e.g. if you need more chairs. For any questions regarding the survey please call Sarah Ellison at the Law and Justice Foundation on 9221 3900.

At the end of the day

When you finish interviewing for the day, please feel free to call Sarah at the Law and Justice Foundation on 9221 3900, so that you can discuss the day's interviews and any problems that you encountered.

APPENDIX G

Instructions for Interviewers - Telephone Survey

Interview Tips for Volunteers

Preparing for the interview

Please read over the questionnaire a couple of times before you start your first interview. That way you will be familiar with the wording of the questions and you will know where it is necessary to skip questions.

The questionnaire is set out with instructions for you in square, bold, italics. It is important follow these instructions as you go through the interview.

If the participant cannot understand/speak English

If the person that you ask for cannot understand English well enough to answer the questionnaire, see if there is anyone else at their home who can act as an interpreter or answer the questions on behalf of the participant.

If they ask for help and advice

Explain that the best people to contact for advice are IARC and mention the hours that IARC is open. Tell them that you are a volunteer whose job is to conduct the survey and that you do not have any qualifications or knowledge about immigration matters. If they persist in asking for your help explain to them that you do not want to give them any advice or information because you may give them incorrect information.

Conducting the Interview

The Questionnaire

A lot of time was spent choosing the wording of the questions and testing how well they achieve the kind of responses we are looking for. For consistency, it is a good idea to ask the questions the same way every time. Please read the questions as they are, and if the person indicates that they don't understand, then proceed to rephrase the question.

The questionnaire is set out with instructions for you in square, bold, italics.

Prompting but not leading

A few of the questions ask you to use prompts. Some examples of prompts are, "who", "when", "is there anything else you can think of". Such prompts can be very helpful when the participant gives very brief responses.

If the participant gives a brief response or seems to have not understood the question, it may also be helpful to rephrase the question and ask again.

It is important, when prompting or rephrasing the question, not to lead the participant to an answer that they would not have given themselves. Always be careful when prompting not to suggest an actual answer to the question.

If a participant seems stuck and can't add anything else to their response, tell them that you will go on to the next question, but if they think of anything else they can let you know at the end. Question 20, the final question, is an excellent opportunity to check if the participant has thought of anything else that they would like to add regarding any issue.

Clarifying Responses

You may find some of the responses that the participants give confusing, in such a situation it is important to be sure that you have understood correctly. One of the most effective ways to ensure that you have understood a response correctly is to say back to the participant what you thought they meant in your own words, this will give the participant an opportunity to correct any misunderstandings.

Always give the participant your full attention. If you do not follow their responses it may become obvious when you ask later questions that you have not been paying attention.

If the participant becomes very upset

If the participant seems too upset to continue with the survey, let them know that they do not have to continue with the questionnaire. Please make a note if the survey is terminated for this reason.

After the interview

Please take the opportunity to go through the questionnaire and add anything that you didn't get a chance to note during the interview. Please go through and make sure that your writing is clear and readable.

When you finish going over the questionnaire, please write, on the last page, any additional comments or observations that you feel may be of interest. For instance please make a note if you thought that the participant's understanding of English was very poor.

If you have any questions

For any questions regarding the survey, please call Sarah Ellison at the Law and Justice Foundation on 9221 3900.

APPENDIX H

Methodology

Methodology

Online Survey

Beyond establishing who is using the Website, it was thought that the on-line survey would provide the most accurate assessment of the existing Website, since people would be using the site at the point of answering questions about it. They would not have to rely upon a memory of having used it some time ago.

The research team decided that the survey should not 'pop-up' when the user entered the site. Instead, notification of the survey was posted, colourfully and boldly, at the top of every page. While there was the risk that they may not notice this posting, the researchers thought it preferable to allow the user to navigate their way through the site, and then exercise the option to answer the survey. It was thought that people might be dissuaded from participating if they visited the Website for the first time, and before they were able to search for information, a questionnaire popped up asking them, for example, whether the site provided the information they were seeking.

The on-line survey was divided into two separate questionnaires: one for individual people with immigration problems, and one directed at service providers and IARC's volunteers¹. The rationale for this division was that the questions that needed to be asked of the two groups would necessarily differ. For example, service providers were asked how they were likely to use the site in the future, as their immigration questions would not end with the resolution of a singular visa refusal or cancellation. Their information needs are ongoing, and they are therefore likely to use the site more broadly and indefinitely than individuals.

Telephone Survey

The questions asked interest he telephone questionnaire were more extensive than those in the on-line questionnaire for individuals. In the latter, it was a given that respondents had computer/web skills and access to the Internet, as they were answering the questions on-line. In the telephone survey, these presumptions could not be made. The questions had to establish whether the target audiences could meet the threshold level of access and skills in order to be deemed truly potential users of the site.

E-mail Survey

Although the questions were essentially the same as the on-line survey for workers, it was considered necessary to separate the data out from the unsolicited respondents. The researchers did not want to skew the results of the on-line survey by stacking them with workers who had been invited to participate. It was thought that in this way, a more accurate picture of those currently using the Website would be achieved, without forfeiting the important data from other service providers. Invitations were sent by e-mail to a variety

¹ See On-line Survey A and On-line Survey B in Appendices A and B.

of intermediaries. They were sent to volunteers, community organisations, migrant resource centres and government organisations.

MRT Survey

In consultation with IARC and MRT staff, it was agreed that people waiting at the MRT can be in a very vulnerable state. Appreciating that this might be the case, it was jointly decided that only those people not waiting for a hearing, or handing down of a decision, would be invited to participate. By excluding these people, it was felt that the potential to distract or distress applicants would be minimised. Further safeguards were developed so that people would not feel pressured to participate.

An invitation leaflet was produced which was handed out by MRT counter staff to people who met the prescribed criteria – unrepresented applicants who were not waiting for a hearing. After reading the leaflet, the person then let the counter staff know if they wished to participate. At that point, they were directed to the IARC volunteer, set up in the waiting room, who would administer the questionnaire.

APPENDIX I

Metadata

Metadata is descriptive information arranged in different fields (such as author, title, availability etc) that helps to describe a resource, a bit like a cataloguing record in a Library catalogue. It is not visible on the web page but is present in a 'hidden' tag on the page. Search engines often pay particular attention to information in the metadata, so it increases the findability of the page. There are various 'schema' or standards for metadata. For example one has been developed for government information, another for health information. They usually are based on the Dublin Core, which is a core set of metatags to include.

The primary reason for including Justice Sector metadata in the IARC site (and conforming to the Justice Sector Metadata Standard or JSMS) is so that the LawAccess spider or robot can harvest the metadata from these pages and put them into a searchable web-based database that will give the general public access to plain language legal information. Only resources such as fact sheets etc. would need to have the metadata included. (though it is good practice to at least include it on all main pages). IARC would then direct LawAccess to the pages they want included.

1. What is LawAccess Online

LawAccess Online (<http://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au>) is a search facility that enables the general public to easily access quality plain language legal resources, and services that provide legal assistance via the internet. LawAccess Online uses metadata to identify reliable and up to date legal information resources from participating government, industry and community legal services.

2. How do I make my resources accessible via LawAccess Online?

To have your legal resources and services accessible via LawAccess Online, metadata conforming to the Justice Sector Metadata Standard (JSMS) must be added to the webpages.

3. Where can I get help?

For any help or assistance regarding LawAccess Online or the Justice Sector Metadata Standards please contact:

Jane Pritchard
Project Officer LawAccess Online
LawAccess NSW
PO Box 620
Parramatta NSW 2124

Telephone: 61 2 88333115
Facsimile: 61 2 88333101
Email: jane_pritchard@agd.nsw.gov.au
Website: <http://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au>