

# Citizenship in Australia

A guide to Commonwealth  
Government records



This guide is number 10 in the series of Research Guides published by the National Archives of Australia. This guide introduces readers to Commonwealth government records on citizenship held by the National Archives of Australia and provides valuable advice to the researcher interested in this topic. The guide covers important themes related to citizenship in Australia, including British and Australian nationality and citizenship categories, naturalisation, the treatment of aliens, assimilation, racial limitations on citizenship, the civic status of women, and civic rights and duties generally.

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Guides include the material known to be relevant to their subject area but they are not necessarily a complete or definitive guide to all relevant material in the collection.

The National Archives reviews its collection to confirm the value of records for research, evidential and other purposes or to identify, in consultation with agencies, records for destruction. At the time of publication all the records described in this guide were present in the Archives collection. However, it is possible that some of the records may be destroyed if they are reviewed and considered not to be of enduring value. If this occurs the guide will be revised accordingly.

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First published 2000  
First published online 2000

ISSN 1326-7078  
ISBN 0 642 34408 6

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Published by the National Archives of Australia  
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# Introduction

## The National Archives of Australia

The National Archives of Australia ensures that full and accurate records documenting Commonwealth Government activities are created and kept. From this massive body of information, the Archives selects, cares for and makes available to all those records of continuing value. This collection constitutes the archives of the Commonwealth Government – a vast and rich resource for the study of Australian history, Australian society and the Australian people.

The collection spans almost 200 years of Australian history. The main focus of the collection is material which documents Federal Government activities since Federation in 1901. There are also significant holdings of nineteenth-century records which relate to functions transferred by the colonies to the Commonwealth Government at the time of Federation and subsequently. The records described in this guide are a small but significant part of the collection.

Access to the National Archives collection is provided free of charge in public reading rooms located in each capital city. Researchers are assisted by specialist reference staff and are provided with reference tools to help them identify and use the records in the collection. These reference tools include the RecordSearch and PhotoSearch databases, guides, publications and fact sheets. Researchers unable to visit a reading room may seek information and help by telephone, mail, facsimile or email.

RecordSearch and PhotoSearch provide information about agencies, persons and series as well as descriptions of over two million individual records. They are available for online searching in reading rooms located in all offices of the National Archives, at the Australian War Memorial and on the National Archives website.

The National Archives website provides more information about the Archives, its collection and the services it offers. A visit to the site will help you determine whether the Archives holds records relevant to your research. Fact sheets on various topics are also available on the Archives website.

## About this Guide

Citizenship in Australia is not a subject with definite boundaries and contents with which a guide such as this can easily engage. The abstract conceptions of citizenship which researchers might bring to this guide will rarely meet with official understandings of citizenship or the relations between state and citizen. The many policies, laws and rights which researchers might regard as constitutive of citizenship were developed *ad hoc* and in isolation from one another, so there is no well-organised body of records on citizenship in Australia to which this guide can refer the reader.

Instead, the guide is organised thematically around major aspects of citizenship in Australia, with the intent of allowing the reader to seek out whichever part of the guide may assist in their research. The first chapter is about citizenship and nationality generally, and their specific history in Australia. The following three chapters each address important themes in citizenship. Chapter 2 deals with the formal legal definitions of British subject and Australian citizen, and an earlier *de facto* Australian citizenship which developed from the Commonwealth's administration of immigration and deportation. Naturalisation, citizenship ceremonies, and the promotion of citizenship also figure in this chapter as integral elements of the policy regime by which the Commonwealth explicitly constructed categories of citizenship.

Chapter 3 turns to matters of identity and human difference, since citizenship was always intimately linked to concepts of racial and national identity. The Commonwealth's policies of assimilation are important here, since incorporating newcomers into the Australian citizenry was regarded as a social, cultural and psychological process as much as a temporal and legal one by the government. The Commonwealth's archives legislation allows public access to records more than 30 years old, and the guide is therefore limited to the period up to 1969, and does not extend to the era of multiculturalism which replaced assimilation in the 1970s. Chapter 3 also deals with aliens (or non-citizens), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and women as separate categories which were, in one way or another, excluded from citizenship. Research on these subjects is revealing of the character of citizenship in Australia.

Finally, Chapter 4 is concerned with the substance of citizenship. The guide refers to records on civic rights and obligations, movement and passports, and international instruments on human rights which have affected citizenship in Australia.

Each thematic section of the guide begins with a short discussion of the section's theme. The remainder of the section contains lists of record series, and usually a few sample files from each series. The series are organised by the agency or function which produced them, the most relevant functions listed first. Thus, a thematic section might contain a list in which the series created by the Attorney-General's, External Affairs, and Immigration Departments are listed. The guide's thematic structure means that there is a considerable degree of repetition of agencies and record series through different sections of the guide. To assist with this problem, Appendix 1 is devoted to short descriptions of the major Commonwealth government agencies whose records are described in the guide. For each series full details are given at its first citation and more limited details provided wherever it recurs with a direction to the first citation.

The guide is primarily intended to direct researchers to series relevant to their interests, and while important items are listed, the researcher will need to undertake research specific to their subject. Many of the series listed in the guide have not been fully explored by researchers, meaning that research will be both profitable and exciting.

## Description of the records

To fully understand a record it is often helpful to know certain things about it in addition to its contents. For example, it helps to know who created the record, when it was created and what other records exist that deal with the same general subject or issue. This information provides the context of the record, which helps researchers to interpret what the record is really about, determine its relevance, and decide how accurate or complete it might be. The National Archives documents this contextual information for each record in the collection using the Commonwealth Record Series (CRS) System.

Under the CRS System records are described and controlled as *series*. A series is made up of *items*, which are the individual files, volumes, maps, cards, diaries, etc that were received into custody by the Archives from the creating department, agency, or individual. Series usually consist of many items, but can occasionally consist of just a few or even a single item.

When the Archives registers a series it gives it a series number and describes the creating agency, the subject matter of the series, its date range, the format of the individual items making up the series, their quantity (expressed in shelf metres), where they are held and details of related series. An explanatory table below sets out the manner in which the records are described throughout the guide.

<b>❶ CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'SA' PREFIX, 1948-66</b>	<b>D400</b>
<b>❷ Recorded by:</b> <b>Department of Immigration, South Australia (CA 959)</b>	
<b>❸</b>	<b>Adelaide 462.8 metres</b>
<b>❹</b>	This series contains administrative files from the Department of Immigration branch office in Adelaide.
<b>❺</b>	<b>Naturalisation Central Office Instructions, 1950-60 D400, SA1961/1267</b>
<b>❻</b>	This file contains circular instructions from the Department of Immigration in Canberra to state offices, as well as some local correspondence. One memorandum (13 December 1955) advises state offices that Catholics may be permitted to take the oath on the Douai version of the Bible, while Jews should be permitted to cover their heads and take the oath on the Old Testament.

### Key

- ❶ This is the **series title** and the date range of the records that make up the series. The **series number** is shown on the right-hand side.
- ❷ This is the **person** or **government agency that created the series**. It also shows the date range during which each series was created or recorded. This date range does not necessarily correspond to the contents date range of the records which appears in the series title. The CP (Commonwealth person) and the CA (Commonwealth agency) numbers are a unique identifier allocated by the National Archives to each person or agency. These numbers can be used to retrieve more information about the person or

agency, and the records they created, from the National Archives' online database, RecordSearch.

- ③ This is the **total volume of records** in the series and the **location** where the series is held. If copies of records are held in other locations, this is indicated here.
- ④ This is a brief **description of the series**.
- ⑤ This is **the title given to the item by the person or agency** that created it. The dates of the earliest and latest document on the file are shown. The **item's identifying number** appears on the right-hand side. This number must be quoted when requesting a copy of the record or access to it.
- ⑥ This **describes the main contents of an item**. Note that it does not describe every document on the file.

## Access to the records

Researchers are welcome to visit the National Archives reading rooms and examine the records described in this guide. Before you visit, please make sure that the record is held by the reading room you plan to visit. There is no equivalent of the inter-library loan system for archives. To safeguard the records, they are not moved between the Archives offices and to see the records you will need to visit the reading room in the city shown as the location of the records.

In addition, given that the reading rooms of some of the Archives offices are separate from the main repository area, it may also be beneficial to pre-order any material you wish to see to ensure that it is ready upon your arrival. The turnaround time for the issue of records in each reading room is given in our Service Charter. To pre-order material please telephone or write to or the reading room listed as holding it. Contact details of all offices of the National Archives are given in Fact Sheet 1.

If you cannot visit a reading room you may arrange for a representative to do so on your behalf (see Fact Sheets 40–45, Research Agents), or alternatively you may wish to obtain a photocopy of the record. To obtain a copy you may telephone or write to the relevant reading room. Staff are happy to give photocopy quotes for specific items, but please be sure you have the specific series and item numbers for the records you wish to have copied.

## Citing the records

The correct citation of archival records is important both when requesting them from the Archives and when referring to them in written or published works. The correct method of citation will not only help staff of the Archives to more readily locate the records you are seeking, but will also help other researchers to find the material you have used if they wish to examine it for themselves.

The correct form of citation for records held by the National Archives is expressed as follows: the name *National Archives of Australia* followed by a colon, the *series*

*number* followed by a comma, and then the *item number*. An example is:

National Archives of Australia: A461, C349/1/8  
NAA: A461, C349/1/8

The name *National Archives of Australia* may be abbreviated to 'NAA' provided the full name has been used in the first citation.

## Where to obtain more information

If you are unsure about how to request access to any of the records described in this guide, or if you have any other questions about the records, please contact the reading room in your State or Territory by mail, telephone, facsimile or email. All contact numbers and addresses are given in Fact Sheets 1 and 2.



# 1 The Meaning of Citizenship

A guide to Commonwealth government records on citizenship in Australia faces two significant problems, which require elucidation at the outset. First, the concepts of citizenship and nationality have been imparted by political theorists and practitioners alike with a range of varied and sometimes contradictory meanings, so no single definition wins general acceptance nor offers a singular starting point for this guide. Second, the history of citizenship and nationality in Australia presents particular complications since Australia remained a component of the British Empire until quite recently, and as a result categories of civic belonging were primarily imperial rather than national ones. Moreover, citizenship provides an abstract way of thinking about the relations between the individual and the state, which has no necessary connection to the ways that the Commonwealth government historically dealt with the rights and obligations now identified as critical to citizenship. This introductory chapter examines the concepts of citizenship and nationality as they emerged historically, and then discusses the particular history of citizenship in Australia during the twentieth century.

## Citizenship and nationality

Citizenship and nationality are twins born of the modern nation-state system. Since the nineteenth century the nation-state has become the dominant form of political organisation.<sup>1</sup> The globe is now partitioned into discrete nation-states which exercise sovereignty within precise territorial boundaries. The origins of the modern nation-state system can be located in the group of centralised European territorial states that emerged during the sixteenth century. Those states developed centralised administrations, established precise borders, delimited their populations, and founded a system of interstate relations which provided for reciprocal recognition of integrity and sovereignty.<sup>2</sup> This laid the conditions for their gradual transformation into nation-states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That transformation was achieved through the conjunction of the sovereign state and the nation, and the reconstitution of intrastate social relations and identity.<sup>3</sup>

In its pre-modern form the term 'nation' refers to an organic pre-political community. The term originated in the Roman world, where the Latin word *natio* described a group of people who were geographically and culturally, but not politically, integrated. This meaning persisted until early modern times. Since the mid-eighteenth century the term 'nation' has referred to a group of people who are geographically, culturally *and* politically integrated; this nation is an organic community, an expanded kinship group, a single 'people', which shares a

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<sup>1</sup> The end of the First World War marked the point at which the nation-state became the basic criterion of state legitimacy and the universal form of state organisation. See: Paul James, *Nation Formation: Towards a Theory of Abstract Community*, Sage, London, 1996, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995, pp. 36–7.

<sup>3</sup> James, *Nation Formation*.

common historical origin and destiny.<sup>4</sup> The aspect of political integration and the aspiration to self-determination mean that the nation is not reducible to ethnicity.

Historical and theoretical literature continues to contest the political requirements of the classification 'nation'. The line of scholarship on nationalism from Renan to Seton-Watson, which emphasises the willed character of the nation and national identity – and thus tautologically recognises the existence of nations without states which describe themselves as such, such as the Québécois, Basques, Kurds, and Welsh – reduces the nation to national self-consciousness. This definition lacks adequate conceptions of social relations and subjectivity; the integration and constitution of nations involves considerably more complexity than these theories allow.<sup>5</sup> These theories also tend to treat the nation as an unproblematic, 'natural' phenomenon which floats free of political structures, and they overlook the implication of nationalism in the modern state system. Anthony Giddens offers a firmer basis for identifying nations by leaving aside so-called stateless nations; the nation is:

a collectivity existing within a clearly demarcated territory, which is subject to a unitary administration, reflexively monitored both by the internal state apparatus and those of other states.<sup>6</sup>

It exists only 'when a state has a unified administrative reach over the territory over which its sovereignty is claimed'.<sup>7</sup> 'Nationalism is the cultural sensibility of sovereignty, the concomitant of the co-ordination of administrative power within the bounded nation-state.'<sup>8</sup> While these definitions deny nationalist movements recognition as nations, and appear to render nationalism a consequence of the nation-state form, they appropriately recognise the historical connections between the nation and nationalism and the modern state system.<sup>9</sup>

The integration of culture and polity achieved in the concept of the nation and the emergence of national consciousness were instrumental for the development of the nation-state. Nationalism created the possibility of thinking about the totality of individuals residing within a state as a single society. The nation flourished as a social unit structured around a state apparatus which gave form and definition to society, and created a system in which culture and politics are inextricable. Nationalism facilitated the political activity of citizens *and* the consolidation of the state by filling the voids created by secularisation and the consequent need for

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<sup>4</sup> Jürgen Habermas, 'Citizenship and National Identity: Some Reflections of the Future of Europe', *Praxis International*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1992, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> James, *Nation Formation*, pp.125–7.

<sup>6</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*, vol. 2: *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1985, p. 116.

<sup>7</sup> Giddens, *Nation-State and Violence*, p. 119.

<sup>8</sup> Giddens, *Nation-State and Violence*, p. 219.

<sup>9</sup> Eric Hobsbawm emphasises the historicity of the nation and nationalism and argues that there is no point in discussing either except insofar as both relate to the nation-state. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990, pp. 9–10.

new modes of state legitimacy, and the social alienation resulting from processes of modernisation.<sup>10</sup> It anchored the legitimacy of the state in the signifier of the nation, *and* established a language for the population to make demands of the state.

The content of the specific nationalisms that emerged in Europe and North America in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and throughout most of the rest of the world in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries, varied considerably according to historical circumstances. The construction of nations and national consciousness involved an appropriation of language, history, tradition and culture. Poets, novelists and composers were as important as politicians and philosophers for the production of national imaginations. States, classes, intellectuals and artists vied to crystallise the nation around their own interests, and its pervasion attests to the utility of nationalism as a vehicle for their disparate and ambiguous endeavours.<sup>11</sup>

Nationalism was manufactured and manipulated to augment the legitimacy and consolidate the authority of states. From the eighteenth century many states attempted to homogenise their populations through policies that eliminated, marginalised or assimilated people deviant from the emergent national norm. Such policies were coupled with the standardisation and rationalisation of language, education and administration. Populations were, at once, cajoled by and subjected to new national identities and definitions. The process of establishing a nation-state over a delimited geographical region, up till then inhabited by a differentiated and heterogeneous population, involved simultaneously creating, defining and imposing a national culture.

It is difficult to underestimate the significance of the idea of the nation since the eighteenth century. The nation, for its reliance on the technologies of mass communication, its role in the extension of liberal democratic ideas and institutions, its centrality to notions of society and social identification, and its implication in the system of global political organisation, is a fundamental part of the modern world. A consequence of the spread of the national form for the human inhabitants of nations is their division into discrete, meaningful, national populations. Nationality became a universal human attribute and identity that connoted political and cultural belonging to a particular nation-state and national society. It became inconceivable to think about people outside of nationality. Equally, nation-states became an unavoidable point of identification around which identity was constituted. Identity and belonging, in the nation-state system, were presumed to be singular – clear boundaries separated neatly ordered and distinct national populations – although the reality was often different.

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<sup>10</sup> Jürgen Habermas, 'The European Nation State. Its Achievements and Its Limitations. On the Past and Future of Sovereignty and Citizenship', *Ratio Juris*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1996, p. 128.

<sup>11</sup> A significant literature on the 'invention' or 'fabrication' of nationalism now exists. Anderson, Gellner and Hobsbawm are the primary exponents of such approaches in the theory and history of nationalism. Specific historical studies proceeding from similar assumptions are also numerous. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed., Verso, London, 1991. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1983. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*.

The idea of citizenship emerged alongside the nation-state, and was conditioned both by the character of centralised, rationalised, territorial states and nationalism. In a basic sense citizenship can be understood as political membership: the possession of citizenship denotes that a person belongs to a particular political authority. The terms of that citizenship are defined within the legal and political structure of that polity, and at least stipulate the rules for acquisition and loss of citizenship, and the obligations and privileges of citizens, and outline the standing of the citizen in relation to the state.

However, the rise of citizenship was interwoven with the democratisation of European states from the time of the French Revolution and the emancipation of the subjects of monarchical states and empires through processes of popular mobilisation. Since that time, citizenship has held wider meanings than political membership alone, since sovereignty was reconceptualised as resident in, and exercised by, the nation or the people. In the republican and liberal theoretical traditions the terms 'nation' and 'people' carry distinct meanings because two discourses of citizenship appeared during the French Revolution and remain influential today. The first puts forward the nation as the repository of sovereignty: 'man' became political and his national identity became the expression of his sovereignty. Citizenship, in this sense, means membership of concurrent social and political bodies; nationality and citizenship are conflated. After the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* (1789), the nation-state was presented as the frame in which the 'rights of man' were to be realised; that is, the universal 'rights of man' were to be realised as the particular 'rights of citizen', within specific national contexts.<sup>12</sup> Subsequently, emancipation was pursued within the context of the nation-state.

The second concept of citizenship that emerged during the French Revolution inverts the manner in which national identity determines citizenship. This republican idea of citizenship is based purely upon *praxis*; a person's national identity is determined by their participation, by the exercise of their civic rights.<sup>13</sup> The citizenry is constituted by the group of people inhabiting a state. Recent debates over the future of citizenship in multicultural societies and the articulation of regional, extranational citizenships have seen the resurgence of this notion.<sup>14</sup>

In recent years, citizenship has become a major theme in political thought, around which an array of political claims is situated. Using the language of citizenship to frame political arguments is perceived as an effective strategy, and the scope of citizenship has expanded considerably as a result. Literature on citizenship is principally engaged with issues of political practice arising from either political rule or social participation. Since the French Revolution, when sovereignty was relocated in the nation and citizens postulated as collectively constituting the sovereign, citizenship has always been intimately concerned with the means by

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<sup>12</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, Leon Roudiez, trans., Columbia University Press, New York, 1991, pp. 148–51.

<sup>13</sup> Habermas, 'Citizenship and National Identity', p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Habermas argues for a European Union citizenship based on *praxis* in 'Citizenship and National Identity'. Similar arguments are put in Australia by Donald Horne and others that call for a purely civic nationalism, defined by the participation of citizens.

which citizens exercise sovereignty. The republican and liberal traditions of citizenship engage with such questions. The republican tradition emphasises the role of citizens in democratic processes, whereas liberalism concentrates on preserving rights (particularly economic rights, where the market is postulated as the model of the sovereign individual, and, in recent liberal theory, the rights of collectivities such as ethnic groups). Discourse on citizenship intersects with issues of social participation by addressing the inequalities produced by capitalism. In this sense, social rights and the development of the welfare state have been identified as necessary for citizenship. Marshall's famous account of citizenship, based on British experience, portrays a process of gradually expanding rights, from civil to political to social.<sup>15</sup> This literature generally presents the spread and expansion of citizenship as a process of emancipating human conditions and improving human well-being brought about by the progressive realisation of universal principles.

Yet, such accounts of citizenship are historically flawed. Barry Hindess' recent account of citizenship as an essential element of the nation-state system offers striking insights into the exclusive character of citizenship as political membership. For Hindess, the most important aspect of citizenship is its partitioning of people within states, and between states, into citizens and aliens. This partitioning of populations did not accord with any pre-existing differences or discrete societies; rather, states fashioned national populations out of heterogeneous ones and worked to disrupt cross-border commonalties. The character of citizenship rights, usually recognised as of only secondary importance to the universality of human rights, arose inevitably from the division of people according to the sovereignty of states.<sup>16</sup> Historically, citizenship emerged within the modern nation-state system as a means of facilitating governance and establishing control over the movement of populations. From this perspective, citizenship is a component of the governance of populations, and is an integral feature of the nation-state system.

The connections between nationalism and citizenship as inter-related aspects of the development of the modern nation-state system thus become clearer. In that system all people, except those unfortunates who fall through the gaps (such as refugees and stateless people), are ascribed nationality and citizenship. These are more than mere imposed political attributes; they are simultaneously social and political identities, and constitute the frame for political action. Indeed, through them (and policies directed towards the same end) society was constructed around the state. Implicit here is the historical contention that there is no modern society or nation prior to the state. In this guide, nationalism and citizenship are understood as historical concepts inherent to the character of the modern nation-state system that emerged from around the sixteenth century, and which is arguably beginning to disintegrate.

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<sup>15</sup> TH Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class and other essays*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1950.

<sup>16</sup> Barry Hindess, 'Divide and Rule: the international culture of citizenship', *European Journal of Social Theory*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1998, pp. 57–70.

## Citizenship in Australia

Citizenship in Australia has a complex and confusing history. At Federation in 1901 no legal category of Australian citizenship existed: 'British subject' remained the sole civic status. Since the delegates to the Australasian Federal Convention of 1897–98 faltered over the issue of citizenship, the Australian Constitution provided neither a definition of citizenship, nor a power over it. The term 'citizen' was not employed in British law, which spoke only of 'subjects' at that time, although the former term was frequently used in political discussion to refer to the members of the colonies and the mooted federation. The Convention wished to preserve the British nationality and British subject status already existing in the colonies since both politicians and public identified themselves, and the state they were creating, as British. Several notable liberals argued, as much from nationalist enthusiasm as legal need, that a definition of citizenship, or a power over it, should be included in the Constitution to identify British subjects resident in Australia and to allow future parliaments to deal with circumstances which the delegates could not yet envisage. However, the proposal failed when agreement could not be reached on a meaning for an Australian citizenship supplementary to the status of British subject, and the issue became confused over the co-existence of state and federal citizenships. When the matter was revisited during a proposal for a safeguard of individual rights – which eventually became, in much reduced form, section 117 of the Constitution – debate again floundered in confusion over interpretation of the term 'citizen'.<sup>17</sup> Its republican connotations also figured in the reticence of delegates to give it legal meaning, because it could be construed as a departure from British forms of government. Eventually, the term 'citizen' was avoided in the Constitution and reference made only to the 'people of the Commonwealth'.<sup>18</sup>

Between the foundation of the Commonwealth in 1901 and the proclamation of the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948* on Australia Day 1949, British subject remained the only formal civic status in Australia. However, a *de facto* administrative Australian citizenship operated during the period which arose from the necessity of distinguishing between those British subjects who were permanent residents and belonged to the Commonwealth (in the sense that they could not be deported), and those British subjects who were merely visitors or who were yet to reside in Australia long enough to be regarded as belonging. Contributing to this administrative concept of citizenship were several High Court decisions which limited the Commonwealth's powers over immigration and deportation. The term 'Australian citizen', as it occurred within policy discourse

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<sup>17</sup> Section 117 provides that 'A subject of the Queen, resident in any State, shall not be subject in any other State to any disability or discrimination which would not be equally applicable to him if he were a subject of the Queen resident in such other State.' This section was a reduced version of a clause proposed by Andrew Inglis Clark (Tasmania) modelled on the Fourteenth Amendment to the American Constitution.

<sup>18</sup> G Craven, ed. *The Convention Debates 1891–1898*, Legal Books, Sydney, 1986. See debate on motion to include 'citizenship' in the list of the Commonwealth's powers: vol. 5, pp. 1750–68, and debates on s. 117: vol. 4, pp. 664–91, and vol. 5, pp. 1780–1802. See commentary by John Quick and RR Garran: *The Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1901, pp. 954–9. For more recent accounts see: JA La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1972, pp. 229–32; Helen Irving *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 156–62; and John Williams, 'Race, Citizenship and the Formation of the Australian Constitution: Andrew Inglis Clark and the "14th Amendment"', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 42, no. 1, 1996, pp. 39–53.

prior to the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948*, referred to a British subject born in Australia or recognised as a permanent resident and 'member of the community' (including a naturalised person). There were three administrative civic categories of non-Aboriginal people in Australia before 1948: British subjects with permanent residence (including naturalised people), British subjects without permanent residence, and aliens. British subjects generally possessed full political rights, but only those with permanent residence were considered Australian citizens. Therefore the first category consisted solely of the Australian citizenry; the other two categories were outside the boundaries of the citizenry, although people within them nonetheless resided within the Commonwealth's geographic jurisdiction, and were subject to forms of state management.

In September 1945 Arthur Calwell, the Minister for Immigration 1945–49, proposed to Cabinet that 'Australian nationality' be defined in law. Canada also announced that month that it intended to introduce legislation providing for a separate Canadian citizenship. For Calwell an 'Australian nationality' – he equated nationality with citizenship – would facilitate immigration and deportation, the issue of passports, and the representation of Australians abroad. He proposed a definition of an Australian national as:

- a person born in Australia who has not acquired another nationality,
- a British subject not born in Australia who was not a prohibited immigrant at his time of entry and has resided in Australia for 5 years,
- a person naturalised in Australia who has residence of five years,
- the wife of an Australian national who is herself a British subject resident in Australia,
- children born outside Australia whose fathers at time of birth were Australian nationals.

This proposal provided for little more than a formalisation of the existing *de facto* regime, although it was motivated by Calwell's nationalism and desire for a separate category of Australian citizenship around which nationalist sentiment could coalesce. However, the matter was deferred, and then postponed pending discussions on nationality and citizenship within the British Commonwealth.<sup>19</sup>

In February 1947 a meeting in London of 'experts' from the British Commonwealth agreed on a system of nationality and citizenship similar to that adopted by Canada:

The essential features of such a system are that each of the countries shall by its legislation determine who are its citizens, shall declare those citizens to be British subjects and shall recognise as British subjects the citizens of the other countries.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Cabinet submission, agenda no. 947, 'Nationality Matters', AA Calwell, Minister for Immigration, 21 September 1945, and memorandum, F Strahan, Secretary to Cabinet to NJO Makin, Acting Minister for External Affairs, 3 October 1945, NAA: [A446, 1960/67025](#).

<sup>20</sup> Report of British Commonwealth Conference of Nationality and Citizenship, 26 February 1947, NAA: [A467, 82/SF40/1](#).

Australia subsequently legislated in accordance with the principles agreed by the conference. Ann-Mari Jordens has argued that the '*Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948* was not inspired by any significant political pressure to assert a separate identity from that of Britain'; rather, Australia was pushed by the results of the conference.<sup>21</sup> Jordens does not acknowledge the nationalism which animated Calwell's citizenship policies and became increasingly evident in his later changes to the process and symbolism of naturalisation, but she is certainly correct in concluding that there was little content to Australian citizenship in 1948. In her account of a multicultural 'notion of citizenship based on equality of rights rather than British culture and ethnicity' it is hardly surprising that policymakers of the 1940s are found wanting.<sup>22</sup>

The *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948* formalised the existing *de facto* categories of citizenship. The Act created a legal status of Australian citizenship devoid of any new substance which meant no more than the *de facto* administrative concept that preceded it. Australian citizens were still British subjects, and were only to be distinguished from the general category of British subjects (and Irish citizens) by rights of movement: permanent residence, and departure and return. 'Alien' was given formal definition as 'a person who is not a British subject, an Irish citizen or a protected person'; the 'foreigner' remained defined against British subject status and not against Australian citizenship.<sup>23</sup> As a statutory category 'Australian citizenship' was slow to acquire any substance since legislation underpinning political rights and social benefits continued to specify British subjects, rather than Australian citizens, as the category of eligibility into the 1970s. Thus the effect of the Act was limited to codifying the three civic categories identified above. The rhetorical significance of the Act was greater, and was seen in the new form of naturalisation ceremonies.

Until 1993 citizenship by birth was acquired in Australia under the regime of *jus soli* (law of the soil). *Jus soli* prevailed in Britain from 1608 when a test case (Calvin's case) established that anyone born on British soil held British nationality. Thereafter, all people born on British soil were attributed the status of British subjects irrespective of the nationality of their parents, and *jus soli* applied in New South Wales and later the other colonies from the time of their foundation. Various statutes dealing with endenization, naturalisation and nationality in Britain and the Australian colonies were passed from the 1840s but none disturbed this fundamental principle of British nationality.<sup>24</sup> With the *Nationality Act 1920* the Commonwealth instituted *jus soli* under its own statutes, and the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948* also granted Australian citizenship to all people born in

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<sup>21</sup> Ann-Mari Jordens, *Redefining Australians: Immigration, Citizenship and National Identity*, Hale and Iremonger, Marrickville, 1995, p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Jordens, *Redefining Australians*, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948*, s. 5(1). This remained the case until 1987.

<sup>24</sup> In Britain, endenization was a legal process for granting certain property and participation rights to aliens, making them 'denizens'. However, denizens did not possess full civic rights. Endenization laws were gradually replaced with naturalisation laws over the second half of the nineteenth century.



Australia (with a few minor exceptions).<sup>25</sup> The great majority of people acquired their status as Australian citizens by birth. Additional provision existed for the formal status of British subject to be attributed to those people born of a British father outside British territory, and the same applied for the status of Australian citizen after 1948.<sup>26</sup> Collectively, these people were 'natural-born' Australian citizens.

For those people not born as Australian citizens or British subjects, naturalisation was the only means by which they could acquire citizenship. The civic status of naturalised people was qualified in several important respects. First, during several periods, naturalisation was recognised only within the jurisdiction of the government that granted it: hence, a person naturalised in Britain was not a British subject in Australia and vice versa. This difference in civic status within the Empire was remedied by a scheme of reciprocal recognition set up between some British Empire countries in the 1920s. Until 1904 the same situation existed in Australia between the colonies, where there was no obligation for any colonial government to recognise people naturalised in any of the other colonies as being British subjects, although there were some provisions for reciprocal recognition. This situation was addressed by the Commonwealth's *Naturalization Act 1903* which deemed all people who had been naturalised in any state to be British subjects throughout the Commonwealth. A second and more significant discrepancy that detracted from the civic status of naturalised people was the ability of Commonwealth and state governments to discriminate in legislation between natural-born and naturalised British subjects. And third, naturalisation – unlike birth – could be revoked, and the Commonwealth could strip a naturalised person of citizenship and then deport them. Such measures were sometimes taken against people thought undesirable for criminal or health reasons, but more often the reasons were related to the Commonwealth's view of the loyalty of naturalised people. Citizenship acquired through naturalisation, therefore, always retained a provisional quality until 1958 when the Nationality and Citizenship Act was amended so that naturalisation could only be revoked where it had been obtained by fraud.

The complexity of citizenship categories in Australia arose from the disjunction of prevailing conceptions of citizenship and nationality, and the incongruity of the legal category of British subject with the administrative needs of the Commonwealth. The nationality of the Commonwealth's population was bound up in the concepts of intertwined British and Australian nationalisms and imperialism which offered a variety of national identities and definitions. Broadly, Australian nationalism was imagined as a subset of British nationalism over the first decades of the twentieth century, and it gradually lost its British emphasis and came to constitute an independent national ideal. Whereas in the early decades of the century the predominant view of Australian nationalism constructed Australians as British people distinguished by their Australian residence and distance from the centre of the empire, by the later decades of the century Australia was described as an independent nation.

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<sup>25</sup> *Nationality Act 1920*, s. 6(1a). *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948*, s. 10.

<sup>26</sup> *Nationality Act 1920*, s. 6(1b). The paragraph was replaced by the *Nationality Act 1925*. *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948*, s. 11. That Act also allowed for maternal descent where the child was illegitimate.

The term 'Australian nationality' entered usage only in the 1940s when the Commonwealth's full sovereignty was realised, but during the 1960s the census continued to require Australian citizens to declare their nationality as British. Calwell talked of Australian nationality in the 1940s, and policymakers in the mid-1950s recognised that, at least in law, Australian citizens could be described as being of Australian nationality, but the term was given no official recognition or meaning and Australian citizens were considered to be of British nationality.<sup>27</sup> Not until 1969 did they cease to *be* British subjects, and retain only the *status* of British subjects; a semantic change that attracted much general criticism for being confusing and also criticism from the Labor opposition, which regarded the concept 'British subject' as an anachronism in need of abolition. Only then were Australian citizens to be described as such for official purposes rather than as British subjects, and the Nationality and Citizenship Act was renamed the Citizenship Act. The Act was renamed again in 1973: the Australian Citizenship Act.

During the 1960s Australians also began to lose their rights as British subjects in Britain, as the British government fashioned a national citizenship from an imperial one following the disintegration of the British Empire. However it was not until 1984 that Australian citizens ceased to be British subjects altogether.<sup>28</sup> Thus the nationalist expectation of the coincidence of citizenship and nationality – of membership and identity – was not fully realised in Australia until the 1980s. Prior to that time citizenship and nationality were never singular concepts in Australia: they were split between Australia and Britain.

Australian citizenship becomes even more complex when its consequences – that is, the rights and obligations attached to it – are considered. The Commonwealth never seriously attempted to imbue citizenship with strong legal implications during the period this guide deals with. Recent writers on citizenship have imposed their theoretical definitions of citizenship over the history of political and social rights and obligations in Australia only to find that citizenship was not the coherent or substantive concept that they expected. Rights and obligations were, and are, defined in an *ad hoc* manner, and moreover make sense only within the context of liberal discourses of state and citizen.

The legal meaning of Australian citizenship has never been singularly defined, and must, even now, be sought in the common law, and a multitude of Commonwealth and state statutes dealing with immigration, passports, the franchise, jury service, employment in the public service, and social security.<sup>29</sup> The absence of a coherent concept of Australian citizenship capturing the whole relationship between citizen and state means that this guide must look widely across governmental agencies

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<sup>27</sup> Memorandum, THE Heyes, Secretary of the Department of Immigration to Minister for Immigration, July 1954, NAA: [A432.1961/3191](#).

<sup>28</sup> Jordens, *Redefining Australians*, pp. 152–5. Alastair Davidson, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997, p. 88.

<sup>29</sup> Kim Rubenstein, 'Citizenship in Australia: Unscrambling its Meaning', *Melbourne University Law Review*, vol. 20, 1995, pp. 503–27.

and policies to locate those features of the relation between citizen and state generally regarded as relevant to citizenship.

## 2 Civic Status

### Constitutional and legal meanings of citizenship

In the first decade of Federation much attention was devoted to the citizenship status of people naturalised in various parts of the British Empire. The jurisdiction of dominion and colonial governments was limited such that the act of naturalising a person in one dominion or colony was not recognised in any other part of the Empire; a person could be a naturalised British subject in Australia, and remain an alien in New Zealand. This situation seriously detracted from the notion of a common imperial civic status. Australia first opposed reciprocity of naturalisation at the 1902 Colonial Conference, the Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, explaining that this would necessitate racial restrictions on the entry of British subjects to Australia. The argument was fallacious since such restrictions were already in place to implement the 'white Australia policy'. However, by 1909 the government was firmly in favour of the principle, and at the 1911 Imperial Conference, where the issue was discussed at length, the Minister for External Affairs, EL Batchelor, insisted that reciprocity should be achieved, but through local (as against imperial) legislation, thus affirming dominion authority.<sup>30</sup> In 1914 the British parliament accordingly passed a *Nationality and Status of Aliens Act*, which contained terms for naturalisation and nationality which could be adopted by the dominions. In Australia, the preparation of a bill was delayed by the war and further by deliberations over amendments in Britain. Eventually, the Nationality Act 1920 joined Australia to a system of reciprocal recognition of people naturalised in Britain, Canada, Newfoundland, South Africa (from 1926), and New Zealand (from 1929), which operated until the Second World War.

In the mid-1940s the matter of citizenship categories within the Empire again came to the fore of imperial debate as the dominions concluded that the single civic status of British subject was insufficient for the purposes of governing their populations. In 1945 Calwell proposed to Cabinet a separate Australian citizenship be created, at the same time as Canada moved to create a Canadian citizenship. A 1947 conference in London resolved to alter the imperial system of nationality and citizenship along the lines Canada had legislated. This system provided that each self-governing part of the British Commonwealth should establish a local citizenship, and that all local citizens would be deemed British subjects. The Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948 created Australian citizenship in accordance with this plan, however most legislation continued to employ the category British subject rather than Australian citizen until the 1970s, and the conservative governments of the 1950s and 1960s continued to refer to Australian citizens as being of British nationality.

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<sup>30</sup> Clive Parry, *Nationality and Citizenship Laws*, Stevens & Sons, London, 1957, p. 531.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1929–****A432****Recorded by:****Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****Canberra and Sydney 2054.7 metres in Canberra; 352.6 metres in Sydney**

This series constitutes the main correspondence series of the Attorney-General's Department, and accordingly contains a large amount of material. While the contents of the series are mostly related to the period that the series was active (from 1929), useful material from as early as 1901 was incorporated into it.

The legal interpretation of citizenship in Australia was predominantly a function of the Attorney-General's Department, and its opinions and deliberations remain an important source for research into citizenship. Opinions were issued mostly in response to requests from other parts of the Commonwealth government for guidance of particular constitutional or legal issues. Many of these are potentially of interest, particularly those concerned with immigration and naturalisation. The other side of correspondence with the Attorney-General's Department can often be located within the files of the agency requesting an opinion on a particular problem, and places the problem in a broader context.

**Naturalization by State – Constitution Section 117, 1902 A432, 1929/2612**

This file contains the Attorney-General's opinion on s. 117 of the Constitution. In Deakin's opinion, s. 117, while preventing any state from imposing a disability on the resident of another state, did not oblige state governments to recognise as British subjects people naturalised in other states. Accordingly, Federation had no effect on the problem whereby people naturalised in one colony remained aliens in all other colonies because of the limited jurisdiction of colonial governments.

**Census Returns – Nationality A432, 1961/3191**

In this file Tasman Heyes, Secretary of the Department of Immigration, informed his Minister following complaints from the public that Australian citizens were compelled to answer 'British' as their nationality on the 1954 census form, that:

Politically any strong emphasis on a separate 'Australian nationality' has its critics who fear that it signifies cleavage between us and the United Kingdom; usually such critics are as strong in voice as they are weak in logic and in the facts of Commonwealth relations... The tendency has been to regard such distinctions as likely to be productive of contentious arguments.

Heyes pointed out that only the *Passports Act 1920–38* employed the category of Australian citizenship as the basis of civic privileges; all other legislation continued to use British subject status.

**SPECIAL FILES, 'SF' PREFIX, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1952–****A467****Recorded by:****Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****Canberra 32 metres**

This series is comprised of bundles of papers on a diverse range of topics, assembled in the Attorney-General's Department.

Special file 40 in this series, which is split into two bundles and numerous items, contains correspondence surrounding the 1947 conference on British nationality and citizenship. Bundle 82/SF40/5 and Bundle 83/SF40/1 contain deliberations over Australia's position at the conference, and the report of the Australian delegates.

**BILL FILES, 1901– A2863****Recorded by:****1901–70: Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****Canberra and Sydney 298.9 metres in Canberra; 117.9 metres in Sydney**

This series contains a file for each bill introduced to the Commonwealth parliament since 1901. The files are numbered according to act number where enacted; lapsed bills numbered sequentially thereafter. The contents of the files vary considerably: some contain only drafts of the bills, while others contain substantial correspondence. Files are extant on the Naturalization Acts 1903, the Nationality Act 1920, the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948, and each of their many amendments. Two items are of particular interest.

**Naturalization Act 1917, No. 25 A2863, 1917/25**

This file includes correspondence on the recognition of imperial naturalisation from 1902.

**Nationality Act 1920 A2863, 1920/48**

This file contains some correspondence about the Nationality Act 1920, and drafts of earlier bills which were never enacted.

**LETTER BOOKS OF OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL, THE CROWN SOLICITOR,  
AND THE SECRETARY, 1901–18 A8779****Recorded by:****Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****Canberra 0.9 metres**

This series is composed of five bound volumes of opinions issued by the Attorney-General's Department between 1901 and 1918. A summary of each request is followed by the full text of each opinion. Unfortunately, the first volume covering the period 1901 to 1903 is missing.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38 A1****Recorded by:****1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)****1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)****1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)****1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)****Canberra 445.7 metres**

This series contains the general filing of the Department of External Affairs (I) and its successors. It includes a diverse array of topics, including many files on the administration of immigration, naturalisation, and passports. Research in this series is time-consuming, since it is organised as an annual single number series, and files tend to deal with individual inquiries and responses, rather than themes over a period of time.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES WITH YEAR AND LETTER  
PREFIXES, 1947 A1068****Recorded by:****Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)****Canberra 26.5 metres**

For several years in the 1940s the Department of External Affairs (II) used annual file series, based on a multiple number system. This series contains files raised in 1947, although the date range of material included in the series is much wider (1933–71). Consult the item lists at the National Archives Canberra office for information on the meaning of file numbers in the series.

**Nationality. Variation to amendment of Nationality Act. British Commonwealth Conference on Nationality and Citizenship, 1947–49 A1068, IC47/68/3**

This very large file contains much material around the 1947 conference. It includes British proposals, the report of the conference, cables between London and Canberra, and many newspaper clippings on the topic.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1948–89****A1838****Recorded by:****1948–70: Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)****Canberra 3343.9 metres**

This vast series contains the policy records of the Department of External Affairs, and its successors, from 1948 until 1989. The series is organised as a multiple number series, making research relatively easy, although some topics were allocated additional numbers once the original numbers were exhausted, meaning that there may be two sections of numbers for a single subject. Some material was top-numbered within the series, which creates confusion in researching some subjects.

**British Commonwealth – Commonwealth Citizenship, 1965–80 A1838,  
899/13/1**

Correspondence in this file concerns a 1965 British Commonwealth conference at which the meaning of 'Commonwealth citizenship' or 'British subject status' were discussed. At issue was the status of British subjects in countries where they were not citizens, and some legal problems which left certain categories of people stateless.

**VOLUMES OF CORRESPONDENCE AND PAPERS RELATING TO EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,  
ASSEMBLED BY EL PIESSE, 1920–21 A1108****Recorded by:****Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)****Canberra 4 metres**

This series is composed of a set of 66 bound volumes organised by EL Piesse, head of the Pacific Branch of the Prime Minister's Department. The volumes concern a variety of matters connected to Australia's external affairs. Volumes 32 to 37 contain documents and minutes from colonial and imperial conferences.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS, 1953– A446****Recorded by:****1953–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)****Canberra and Sydney 2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

This series is the main correspondence series for the Department of Immigration and its successors from 1953. The series contains both case files and policy files. The latter are numbered above 65000, while case files are numbered below that figure. Despite heavy culling of files from this series, much valuable material remains. This series contains an extensive amount of material that has not yet been opened for public access, and it warrants considerable attention from researchers. The series contains many files on the adoption and amendment of the Nationality and Citizenship Act. Those listed below are particularly helpful.

**Nationality of Married Women, 1941–64 A446, 1960/67025**

Calwell's 1945 submission to Cabinet proposing an Australian citizenship, and memoranda on the Cabinet's decision, can be found in this file.

**CIAC 'Charter of Australian Citizenship', 1955 A446, 1955/67340**

In 1955 a committee was established to consider drafting a charter or statement of Australian citizenship. The idea had received qualified support at the 1955 Citizenship Convention, and the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council established the committee to investigate further. The agenda and notes of the committee's meeting are on file, and include some fascinating suggestions for a citizenship 'credo' and other statements upon the meaning of Australian citizenship. The committee's report is also here; the committee concluded that rather than attempt to impart a wide meaning to citizenship which would not be generally endorsed, it should confine itself to formulating a brochure on the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship to be presented to migrants.

**Suggested amendments to Nationality and Citizenship Acts, 1950–78 A446, 1957/66699**

This large file contains detailed documentation on proposed amendments to the Nationality and Citizenship Act from 1950. The Act was amended frequently during the 1950s, and here various documents on the deliberations of the Department of Immigration, the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council, the Citizenship Conventions, and the Cabinet can be found.

**Minister for Immigration and Department of Immigration – proposed addition of words 'and citizenship' to titles A446, 1964/45038**

This item contains a 1962 memorandum written by a Department of Immigration official proposing the addition of 'citizenship' to the department's title on the grounds that citizenship tasks had become a major function of the department and this was misunderstood by the public. Peter Heydon, Secretary of the department, proposed this to the Minister following the 1963 election, but no change was made.



**MENZIES AND HOLT MINISTRIES – CABINET FILES 'C' SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1958–67  
A4940**

**Recorded by:**

**Secretary to Cabinet/Cabinet Secretariat (I) (CA 3)**

**Canberra 77.8 metres**

**Nationality and Citizenship Act 1950 – Amendments A4940, C125**

This item contains Cabinet submissions for amendments of the Nationality and Citizenship Act from 1950 to 1966.

**SEVENTH MENZIES MINISTRY – COPIES OF CABINET SUBMISSIONS AND ASSOCIATED  
DECISIONS (FIRST SERIES), 1958–61 A5818**

**Recorded by:**

**Cabinet Office (CA 1472)**

**Canberra 3.8 metres**

This series was artificially constructed by copying the contents of subject-based Cabinet files in A4940 so as to provide a series accessible in the same manner as previous and subsequent Cabinet documents. Several files on amendments to the Nationality and Citizenship Act are contained in the series.

**EIGHTH MENZIES MINISTRY – COPIES OF CABINET SUBMISSIONS AND ASSOCIATED  
DECISIONS, 1963–66 A5827**

**Recorded by:**

**Cabinet Office (CA 1472)**

**Canberra 3.6 metres**

This series was constructed from A4940 for the same reasons as A5818 (above). Several files on amendments to the Nationality and Citizenship Act are contained in the series.

## Naturalisation

Naturalisation was a legal process that emulated the relationship between individual and Crown that was established at birth for natural-born citizens.<sup>31</sup> The 'natural' character of that relationship, the national citizenry, and the personal attributes of citizenship and nationality, were prominent throughout most of the period this guide deals with, and paramount during times when assimilation was the dominant mode of incorporating strangers. Naturalisation offered means by which the alien could renounce former allegiances and be attributed the same rights and obligations applying to natural-born citizens. Given that naturalisation was conceptualised as the emulation of a natural relationship, then it is no surprise to find that the civic position of naturalised people was at a discount to the natural-born, nor that naturalisation policies were so closely attuned to normative understandings of national belonging. In 1973 policymakers replaced the terms 'natural-born' and 'naturalised' with 'citizenship by birth' and 'citizenship by grant', reflecting the passing of naturalistic understandings of the citizenry.

As a legal process governing the admission of foreigners into the citizenry, naturalisation existed in Britain only from 1844. Previously foreigners were either recognised as denizens or individually naturalised by acts of parliament. After 1844 naturalisation occurred at the executive's discretion under a statute, and separate legislation was adopted following the British example in each of the Australian colonies.<sup>32</sup> The Commonwealth extinguished all colonial legislation dealing with naturalisation and established its own procedures with the Naturalization Act 1903 which came into effect on 1 January 1904. That statute was replaced by the Nationality Act 1920, which was amended six times, before it was replaced with the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948.

Since the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948 established an Australian citizenship distinct from the wider class of British subjects, it also required a process by which British subjects and Irish citizens could become Australian citizens. Rather than require British subjects to be naturalised, the Act provided for a process of 'registration' which was easier to obtain than naturalisation. Since British subjects already held British nationality, no process of 'naturalisation' was imagined and the oath was unnecessary; rather, registration was a simple procedure for recognising British subjects as Australian citizens. In 1973 registration was abolished and British subjects, for the first time, needed to apply for naturalisation in order to become Australian citizens.

The process of naturalisation which the Naturalization Act 1903 introduced was a simple one meant to encourage European aliens to acquire Australian citizenship. An applicant had to be resident for two years in the Commonwealth or been previously naturalised in Britain. He (rarely she) was required to present a declaration of personal details and intent to settle permanently, and a character reference from a person holding one of several positions of community respect.

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<sup>31</sup> For a detailed discussion of the legal history of allegiance, naturalisation and denization see: David Wishart, 'Allegiance and Citizenship as Concepts in Constitutional Law', *Melbourne University Law Review*, vol. 15, 1986, pp. 662–707.

<sup>32</sup> Parry, *Nationality and Citizenship Laws*, pp. 523–8.

The government could refuse or accept the application without giving any reason. If accepted the applicant would be required to take an oath of allegiance to the King unless previously naturalised in Britain, after which a certificate of naturalisation would be issued. The Act was amended in 1917 to expand the powers of the government and to insist on the loyalty and good character of applicants. Where previously a certificate of naturalisation could be revoked only where it had been fraudulently obtained, the government could now revoke it 'for any reason'. The applicant was required to advertise his intention to become naturalised in a newspaper so that members of the public could lodge confidential objections, and to produce not one but three references. In addition the applicant was to prove that he could read and write English. These conditions remained largely intact under the Nationality Act 1920, although the period of residency was increased to five years in the British Empire and at least one year immediately preceding the application in Australia.

With the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948 two new provisions were added to the process of naturalisation. The first required aliens wishing to be naturalised to make a declaration of intent at least two years prior to their actual application for naturalisation. This was replaced in 1955 by a six-month delay between application and the grant of naturalisation designed to give the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO) sufficient time to screen applicants. The second provided for the registration of British subjects and Irish citizens as Australian citizens.

The military and security agencies became closely involved in the administration of naturalisation during the First World War, and in 1919 the Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CIB) took over the task of screening naturalisation applicants. From 1920 all applications were forwarded by the Department of Home and Territories to state offices of the Investigation Branch for inquiry. The investigation process was simple. First, a CIB officer would interview the applicant to ensure that the statements on the application were correct and to form an opinion of the applicant's character. The officer reported on the conduct of the applicant during the war, whether he displayed evidence of disloyalty or disaffection to the King, and his English language ability. Outside the mainland state capitals the CIB delegated this responsibility to state police, Customs officers, postmasters, or – where no other option was available – a trusted local man. Second, at the CIB office the name of the applicant was checked against the various indexes maintained by the Branch of 'undesirable' people, and the state police was asked to provide details of any criminal conviction. Finally, a complete report was forwarded to Home and Territories accompanied by the Investigation Branch's recommendation. Home and Territories decided applications on the basis of this information.

This procedure continued until the Second World War, altered only from 1930 when applicants were advised to apply directly to the CIB. During the Second World War, Military Intelligence and the Security Service also played parts in deciding applications. With demobilisation the Commonwealth Investigation Service took over these tasks, until in March 1949 the Department of Immigration assumed responsibility for interviewing naturalisation applicants for the first time.

Also that year, ASIO began screening naturalisation applications, and the CIS remained in the process only to check criminal records.<sup>33</sup>

ASIO's process for checking the security background of naturalisation applicants was relatively simple in 1950. The Department of Immigration prepared lists of names which were forwarded to ASIO offices where the names were checked against indexes to their state and central records. Within a few years however, with increasing numbers of immigrants becoming eligible for naturalisation having resided in Australia for five years, ASIO was inundated with checking work and long delays resulted. The delays were exacerbated by its practice of referring all applications from immigrants who arrived before 1950 to its overseas offices for checking against the records of foreign intelligence organisations. In Australia, security screening of naturalisation applicants remained throughout the 1950s and 1960s a matter of checking an applicant's name against state and central records and undertaking certain sorts of inquiries where an applicant's name was found in ASIO's records. Under the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948 British subjects needed to lodge applications to register as Australian citizens, and while screening was at first only cursory, from 1959 similar screening procedures were adopted, and in 1964 the Department of Immigration advised ASIO that treatment should be identical.

The quantity of records on naturalisation is substantial, and the following series are roughly divided into four groups: files created by the Attorney-General's Department, files created by the agencies which administered naturalisation, Prime Minister's Department files, and the records of various security agencies which were involved in naturalisation. For further information on naturalisation certificates and case files for people naturalised by the Commonwealth see *Finding Families: The Guide to the National Archives of Australia for Genealogists*.<sup>34</sup> This guide also lists series of pre-1904 naturalisation certificates issued by colonial governments, including those issued to Chinese people which were subsequently cancelled by the Commonwealth government.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38**

**A1**

##### **Recorded by:**

**1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)**  
**1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)**  
**1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)**  
**1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**

**Canberra 445.7 metres**

This series contains the general filing of the Department of External Affairs (I) and its successors. It includes a diverse array of topics, including many files on the administration of immigration, naturalisation, and passports. Research in this series is time-consuming, since it is organised as an annual single number series, and files tend to deal with individual inquiries and responses, rather than themes over a period of time.

<sup>33</sup> David Dutton, 'The Commonwealth Investigation Branch and the political construction of the Australian citizenry, 1920–40', *Labour History*, no. 75, November 1998, pp. 155–74.

<sup>34</sup> *Finding Families: The Guide to the National Archives of Australia for Genealogists*, National Archives of Australia in association with Hale and Iremonger, Sydney, 1998.

**REGISTER OF DEFERMENTS AND REFUSALS OF CERTIFICATES OF NATURALISATION,  
1921–39 A245****Recorded by:**

**1921–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)**  
**1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)**  
**1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**  
**1939–39: Department of the Interior (II) (CA 31)**

**Canberra 0.2 metres**

This series consists of a single volume containing the names of about 500 people whose applications for naturalisation were refused or deferred, and the reason in each case. While the list is incomplete, it provides an insight into the reasons for which naturalisation was refused, and might be employed as a source from which interesting case files might be sought. Political views were the most common reason for naturalisation to be denied: these were variously described as Bolshevik, Communist, Anarchist, and Revolutionary views, tendencies and sympathies. These aside, others include irregular entry to Australia, criminal convictions, character, mental health and 'sexual perversity'.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES (POLICY MATTERS), 1951–55  
A445****Recorded by:**

**Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra 28.8 metres**

This series contains general policy files of the Department of Immigration for the period 1951 to 1955. Many files include top-numbered material from previous series. The series is organised thematically as a multiple number series, making for easy research.

There does not appear to be much material on naturalisation in this series, since those files dealing with the Nationality and Citizenship Act were top-numbered into A446. However, some files on other subjects contain documents bearing on naturalisation.

**Aliens Classification Committee – Modification of Naturalisation Laws, 1943–46 A445, 230/16/19**

This item contains reports and correspondence about the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee's activities during the Second World War. The Committee made extensive recommendations on the naturalisation of enemy aliens.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK  
ALLOCATIONS, 1953– A446****Recorded by:**

**1953–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra and Sydney 2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

This series is the main correspondence series for the Department of Immigration and its successors from 1953. The series contains both case files and policy files. The latter are numbered above 65000, while case files are numbered below that figure. Despite heavy culling of files from this series, much valuable material remains. This series contains an extensive amount of material that has not yet been opened for public access, and it warrants considerable attention from researchers. The series contains many files on the adoption and amendment of the Nationality and Citizenship Act. Those listed below are particularly helpful.

**Naturalisation of Non-Europeans Part 1, 1934–59      A446, 1965/47123**

The contents of this file relate to policy on the naturalisation of non-Europeans from the mid-1930s when some consideration was given to allowing their naturalisation, to the 1956 Cabinet decision to allow the non-European spouses of Australian citizens to be naturalised.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'N' (NEW SOUTH WALES)  
PREFIX, 1952–77      C3939****Recorded by:****1952–74: Department of Immigration, New South Wales (CA 957)****Sydney      38.7 metres**

During the 1950s and 1960s the Department of Immigration carried out much of its administration in the state capitals. This series contains a considerable amount of policy material, including memoranda sent from Canberra to state offices, and documents on local activities. Series such as this provide a useful source for researchers unable to visit Canberra, and sometimes include material which has not been preserved in Canberra. Extensive files on naturalisation policy and procedure were maintained by the Department of Immigration office in New South Wales.

**Immigration – Naturalisation Office Procedure, 1954–56      C3939,  
N1959/75141 part 1**

This file contains correspondence on naturalisation procedure in the mid-1950s. Many of the documents in the file are concerned with ASIO's checking of naturalisation applicants and the long delays thereby caused.

**Immigration – Naturalisation Publications, 1963–72      C3939, N1963/75182**

This item contains documents on a naturalisation promotion campaign launched in 1963, and includes correspondence on arrangements for publicity.

**CASE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1946–      J25****Recorded by:****1946–74: Department of Immigration, Queensland (CA 958)****Brisbane      1855.2 metres**

Misleadingly titled 'case files', this series also contains records concerning policy and the activities of the Queensland branch of the Department of Immigration, along similar lines to the NSW series C3939. The process of locating policy files is complicated by the enormous quantity of case files in the series, but useful material is preserved here.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'SA' PREFIX, 1948–66  
D400****Recorded by:****Department of Immigration, South Australia (CA 959)****Adelaide      462.8 metres**

This series contains administrative files from the Department of Immigration branch office in Adelaide.

**Naturalisation Central Office Instructions, 1950–60      D400, SA1961/1267**

This file contains circular instructions from the Department of Immigration in Canberra to state offices, as well as some local correspondence. One memorandum (13 December 1955) advises state offices that Catholics may be permitted to take the oath on the Douai version of the Bible, while Jews should be permitted to cover their heads and take the oath on the Old Testament.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'S' PREFIX, 1966–D399****Recorded by:****1966–74: Department of Immigration, South Australia (CA 959)****Adelaide      750.4 metres**

This series continues the files of the Department of Immigration, South Australian office, where D400 leaves off. The series contains several files on naturalisation policy, similar to those held in other states. For instance, items 79/16472, 79/16492, 79/16507, 79/16519, and 79/16520 cover naturalisation procedures between 1954 and 1965.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'W59' PREFIX, 1959–73 K403****Recorded by:****Department of Immigration, Western Australia (CA 962)****Perth      22.15 metres**

As in New South Wales, the Department of Immigration's records are organised into separate series for policy and case files. See the description for C3939 above. This series contains well-organised policy files on naturalisation.

**Nationality – General Policy and Procedure, 1947–69      K403, W59/428 part 1**

These items contain similar material to files on naturalisation in other state offices, mentioned above. One memorandum (9 February 1958) in Part 2, informs state offices that they may approve naturalisation for people with adverse character reports where offences related to drunkenness, offensive, indecent or disorderly behaviour, so long as such behaviour had been infrequent.

**Nationality – General Policy and Procedure, 1947–69      K403, W59/428 part 2****Nationality – General Policy and Procedure, 1947–69      K403, W59/428 part 3****Nationality – General Policy and Procedure, 1947–69      K403, W59/428 part 4****Nationality – General Policy and Procedure, 1947–69      K403, W59/428 part 5****Nationality – General Policy and Procedure, 1947–69      K403, W59/428 part 6****Nationality – General Policy and Procedure, 1947–69      K403, W59/428 part 7**

**SECRET CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS AND 'S' (SECRET) PREFIX, 1972–****A6980****Recorded by:****1972–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)****Canberra 80.3 metres**

This series constitutes an invaluable and largely untapped source of material on the Department of Immigration's activities during the postwar period. The series was established in 1972 from the Department's existing secret and top secret files in A445 and A446. Accordingly, few documents with these classifications remain in those series. Material contained in this series stretches back to the inter-war years since the Department of Immigration took over various Department of Interior files.

**Establishment of Security Organisation in Australia, 1949–50 A6980, S250188**

This file deals with ASIO's establishment and its entry into the field of assessing naturalisation applicants. One letter records a 1950 discussion of the Director-General of Security, Charles Spry, and the Secretary of the Department of Immigration, Tasman Heyes, on the kind of applicants to whom security objections should be made.

**Naturalisation of Aliens in Time of War, 1939–56 A6980, S250200**

This file contains extensive correspondence on changes to naturalisation procedure and policy from the outbreak of war in 1939 till 1942. The file then jumps to a 1956 debate over whether enemy aliens should be treated separately from other aliens in the event of war.

**Grant of Naturalisation to Communists, 1955–78 A6980, S250755**

From 1950 it was common practice for naturalisation to be denied to anyone ASIO identified as having links to the Communist Party of Australia or any communist-influenced body. This file contains correspondence from 1955 when the Minister for Immigration, Harold Holt, prepared a Cabinet submission on the topic, and subsequently received Cabinet's approval for the practice to continue.

**Rejection of Applicants for Naturalisation on Political Grounds, 1957–78 A6980, S250756**

In the late 1950s several Labor party parliamentarians began to frequently question the government over its refusal of naturalisation to various people for political reasons. Questions asked in parliament produced a correspondence between ASIO and the Department of Immigration over how these questions should be answered. While ASIO recommended that 'none' might be answered to such questions since applicants were refused on 'security' rather than 'political' grounds, one Immigration officer thought this approach was 'too cavalier'.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, FIRST SYSTEM, 1915–23 A457****Recorded by:****Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)****Canberra 18.3 metres**

This series contains general files of matters considered by the Prime Minister's Department during and shortly after the First World War. Helpfully, it is organised in a multiple number system, making research relatively simple. A list of the meaning of the numbers in the system is available in the reading room at the National Archives in Canberra. Several files on naturalisation dating from the period just after



the First World War can be found in this series. Files on naturalisation are readily located by the number 111/2, to which letter prefixes are affixed; for instance, item R111/2 is titled 'Naturalisation Czecho-Slovaks'.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, SECOND SYSTEM, 1923–34  
A458**

**Recorded by:**

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra 49.9 metres**

This series continues the records of the Prime Minister's Department from A457. A new numbering system was adopted with this series, but it works similarly to the system in A457, again simplifying research. In this series naturalisation files are denoted by the number 158/1. Individual files are allocated letter prefixes, as in A457.

**Naturalisation Aliens, 1922–33 A458, G158/1**

In this item are documents on the effect on foreign citizenships of naturalisation in Australia. This matter exercised the interests of policymakers considerably since they regarded dual nationality as an impossible conflict of allegiances which must be avoided.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, THIRD SYSTEM, 1934–50  
A461**

**Recorded by:**

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra 143.8 metres**

Like A457 and A458 this series is based on a multiple number system with a letter prefix denoting individual files. The contents of this series are more substantial than its two predecessors since much useful material was top-numbered into it.

**Naturalisation – Main Policy File, 1914–50 A461, A349/3/6 Part 1**

These two large files cover naturalisation policy from 1914 to 1950. The records contained in the first part, which stretch from 1914 to 1946, are invaluable for research on several aspects of naturalisation.

**Naturalisation – Main Policy File, 1914–50 A461, A349/3/6 Part 2**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH OCCASIONAL 'G'  
(GENERAL REPRESENTATIONS) INFIX, 1956– A463**

**Recorded by:**

**1956–71 Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra and Sydney 543.7 metres in Canberra; 184 metres in Sydney**

This series deals with topics directly under the control of the Prime Minister, and reflects the coordinating role of the Prime Minister's Department with its diverse array of topics. Among these topics are some files on citizenship and naturalisation matters. Given the nature of the role of the Prime Minister's Department, these files do not provide the insight into policy deliberations which can be found in the records of agencies with direct responsibility for policy formulation.

**Citizenship rights under naturalisation – general      A463, 1957/2783**

This file contains documents on an assortment of topics about naturalisation. Of particular interest is the 1954 announcement by the Minister for Immigration, Harold Holt, that the Coronation and the Queen's visit to Australia had each sparked considerable interest among migrants to take out Australian citizenship.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH YEAR PREFIX, 1916–27, AND 'C' PREFIX, 1927–53      A367****Recorded by:**

**1916–19: Special Intelligence Bureau (CA 746)**  
**1919–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CA 747)**  
**1946–53: Commonwealth Investigation Service (CA 650)**

**Canberra      66.6 metres**

The Commonwealth Investigation Branch became a crucial element in the naturalisation approval process during the 1920s, responsible for interviewing and assessing applicants and making recommendations to the Department of Home and Territories on each application. The Branch's particular angle on the significance of naturalisation and the allegiance of applicants provides fascinating insights into naturalisation policy from the First until the Second World War. Documents on naturalisation policy and procedure are contained in the various parts and attachments of file C1145.

**Naturalisation, 1914–49      A367, C1145 Part 1**

These items contain fascinating material on the ideas of the military and intelligence agencies about the meaning of naturalisation during the First World War, and the system of assessing naturalisation applicants set up initially by the military, but then taken over by the Investigation Branch in 1919. Further documents track the development of the Investigation Branch's thinking and practice in this area through the 1920s and 1930s, and the controversies surrounding naturalisation and the treatment of aliens during the Second World War.

**Naturalisation, 1914–49      A367, C1145 Part 2****Naturalisation, 1914–49      A367, C1145 Part 3****CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1941–49****A373****Recorded by:**

**1941–45: Security Service (CA 660)**  
**1919–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CA 747)**  
**1946–53: Commonwealth Investigation Service (CA 650)**

**Canberra      7.4 metres**

This series contains records created by the Security Service during and shortly after the Second World War. The Service became a central point for the assessment of naturalisation applicants, and had a wider role in determining naturalisation policy through its responsibility for aliens control matters. Many of the records in this series are correspondence and reports surrounding the deliberations of the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee. Files bearing on naturalisation are scattered throughout the series.

**Objections to Naturalisation, 1943    A373, 2778**

In this file is found documentation of the reasons for which the Security Service denied naturalisation to applicants during the Second World War. The objections of SH Jackson in Melbourne are of particular interest, since he simply reverses the onus of proof, refusing applications because there was no reason to approve them.

**Amendment of Naturalisation Policy, 1943    A373, 8203**

The treatment of enemy aliens during the Second World War became the subject of a battle between the Security Service which adhered to the notion that a person's citizenship status equalled their political allegiance and behaviour, and the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee which believed that the political behaviour of aliens did not necessarily flow from the civic status. Ultimately, the Committee prevailed. This file contains interesting correspondence between the parties to this controversy and the Attorney-General. The second of the Committee's reports can be found here.

**Aliens Tribunals Submission of Reports, 1942    A373, 1336**

This file contains correspondence between the Attorney-General, HV Evatt, and the Minister for the Army, FM Forde, over the division of responsibilities between the Army and the Security Service, and the particular duties of the Service.

**INVESTIGATION FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'N' (NEW SOUTH WALES) PREFIX, 1920–57    SP1714/1****Recorded by:**

**1920–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch, NSW (CA 904)**

**1946–57: Commonwealth Investigation Service, NSW (CA 912)**

**Sydney    10.8 metres**

The Investigation Branch maintained offices in the mainland state capitals which carried out much of the work of the Branch. Often correspondence which has not survived in the records of the Branch's central office are preserved in state holdings. State offices also hold the majority of case files held by the Investigation Branch, although a large number of files were transferred into ASIO's custody at the time of its creation.

**Naturalisation Files, 1930–48    SP1714/1, N18035 Part 1**

These items contain correspondence between the New South Wales and central offices regarding naturalisation policy. Many case files are also found in this series.

**Naturalisation Files, 1930–48    SP1714/1, N18035 Part 2****Naturalisation Files, 1930–48    SP1714/1, N18035 Part 3****CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'V' (VICTORIA) PREFIX, 1924–62    B741****Recorded by:**

**1924–45: Commonwealth Investigation Branch Victoria (CA 907)**

**1945–60: Commonwealth Investigation Service Victoria (CA 916)**

**1960–62: Commonwealth Police Force (II) Victoria (CA 955)**

**Melbourne    29 metres**

Like SP1714/1 above, this series contains the investigation and policy files of a state office of the Investigation Branch, in this case the Victorian office. Although it seems

that policy files of the sort kept in New South Wales were never compiled or have not survived, some select documents on naturalisation can be located.

**Victoria. Naturalisation, 1922–24      B741, V/389**

This file contains documents from 1923 instructing that naturalisation should be denied to members of the Australian Communist Party, the Friends of the Soviet Union, and the Russian Association.

**INVESTIGATION CASE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'SA' (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) PREFIX, 1917–69      D1915**

**Recorded by:**

**1919: Commonwealth Police Force (I) (CA 2919)**  
**1919–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch, SA (CA 905)**  
**1945–60: Commonwealth Investigation Service, SA (CA 914)**  
**1960–69: Australian Security Intelligence Organization, SA (CA 4716)**

**Canberra and Adelaide      1.6 metres in Canberra; 37.3 metres in Adelaide**

This series contains both policy and case files for the Investigation Branch in Adelaide, as B741 does for the Melbourne office.

**Naturalisation of Aliens Procedure, Policy, 1920–48      D1915, SA194 Part 1**

This file contains some material on naturalisation policy and procedure in South Australia, and includes copies of memoranda sent from Investigation Branch headquarters in Melbourne (until 1927).

**Naturalisation of Aliens Procedure, Policy, 1920–48      D1915, SA194 Part 2**

**Functions of Investigation Branch, 1931–56      D1915, SA870**

This item contains details of the activities of the Investigation Branch's South Australian office. Statistics on the number of inquiries undertaken by the South Australian office into various matters, including naturalisation, are laid out in successive annual reports. These figures provide an insight into the activities of the Investigation Branch and the division of its resources, which is not available elsewhere. Similar figures do not appear to have survived in any other state, making this file particularly valuable.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'Q' (QUEENSLAND) PREFIX, 1924–61      BP242/1**

**Recorded by:**

**1924–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch Qld (CA 753)**  
**1945–60: Commonwealth Investigation Service Qld (CA 913)**  
**1960–61: Commonwealth Police Force (II) Qld (CA 952)**

**Brisbane      46.4 metres**

Like the series created by other state offices of the Investigation Branch, this series contains both policy and case files, and some useful material on the Investigation Branch's conduct of inquiries into naturalisation applicants.

**Applications for Naturalisation (Queensland), 1921–33      BP242/1, Q569 part 1**

This file mainly contains memoranda from headquarters, and includes a lesser amount of local material.

**Aliens for Naturalisation (List), 1941–42      BP242/1, Q17182**

Lists of candidates for naturalisation during the early years of the Second World War are contained in this file. Given tight eligibility rules during the war, most applications were not approved.

**SUBJECT FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1949–      A6122****Recorded by:**

**Australian Security Intelligence Organization (CA 1297)**

**Canberra      42.3 metres**

Unlike most government agencies which are required under the *Archives Act* to deposit all records more than 30 years old with the National Archives, ASIO's records are transferred to the National Archives only after a researcher requests files on a certain topic. Accordingly, this series consists of policy files opened at the request of researchers, and does not contain all of ASIO's holdings. The file numbering system is accordingly one imposed by the Archives. ASIO took an active role in naturalisation matters from soon after its establishment. It took over the vetting of applicants, and generally offered advice to the Department of Immigration on naturalisation policy.

**Security Checking of Applications for Australian Citizenship, 1949–66  
A6122, 1834 to 1838**

These files cover ASIO's role in naturalisation policy from 1949 until 1967. They contain invaluable information on the government's conceptions of national security, and the kind of people regarded as unsuitable to be granted Australian citizenship.

**Protective Security Memoranda Volume 1, 1950–62      A6122, 1425**

These items contain copies of ASIO's 'protective security memoranda', policy instructions for ASIO's vetting activities. These memoranda cover the full range of ASIO's vetting activities, and include several on naturalisation and the registration of British subjects as Australian citizens.

**Protective Security Memoranda Volume 2, 1950–62      A6122, 1426**

## Revocation of naturalisation

While citizenship acquired by birth could be lost only by a person voluntarily taking out citizenship in another state, naturalisation could be revoked by the government. The Commonwealth possessed an unrestricted power to revoke naturalisation for a few years after the Naturalization Act was amended in 1917, until the Nationality Act 1920 qualified that power by specifying disloyalty, serious criminal offences and fraudulent application as grounds for de-naturalisation. Only during the two world wars were substantial numbers of people de-naturalised: nearly 150 naturalisation certificates were cancelled in 1918 and 1919 as a preface to the deportation of many people of enemy origin (most had been internees), and more were stripped of their naturalisation during the Second World War. It appears that during peacetime no more than half a dozen people were de-naturalised each year, usually to allow the deportation of people convicted of serious criminal offences. Accordingly, citizenship acquired through naturalisation retained a provisional quality – since it could be revoked – until 1958 when the Nationality and Citizenship Act was amended so that naturalisation could only be revoked if it had been obtained by fraud. Documents on the revocation of naturalisation are spread throughout many of the series described in the previous section on naturalisation. Three series are worth particular mention.

### **CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS, 1953– A446**

#### **Recorded by:**

**1953–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra and Sydney 2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

This series is the main correspondence series for the Department of Immigration and its successors from 1953. The series contains both case files and policy files. The latter are numbered above 65000, while case files are numbered below that figure. Despite heavy culling of files from this series, much valuable material remains. This series contains an extensive amount of material that has not yet been opened for public access, and it warrants considerable attention from researchers. The series contains many files on the adoption and amendment of the Nationality and Citizenship Act. Those listed below are particularly helpful.

#### **Revocation of Certificates of Naturalization, 1918–41 A446, 1964/46455**

This item contains top-numbered documents from both wars on de-naturalisation, and includes lists of people whose naturalisation was revoked between 1916 and 1923. A Department of Interior memorandum (4 February 1941) discusses grounds for revocation of naturalisation. The document offers a definition of disloyalty in speech, before concluding that:

Generally it may be said that disloyalty is held to exist where, by his conduct, a naturalized person shows that he regards his personal convenience or any other interest as superior to his duty to his adopted country.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1941–49****A373****Recorded by:****1941–45: Security Service (CA 660)****1945–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CA 747)****1946–49: Commonwealth Investigation Service (CA 650)****Canberra 7.4 metres**

This series contains records created by the Security Service during and shortly after the Second World War. The Service became a central point for the assessment of naturalisation applicants, and had a wider role in determining naturalisation policy through its responsibility for aliens control matters. Many of the records in this series are correspondence and reports surrounding the deliberations of the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee. Files bearing on naturalisation are scattered throughout the series.

**Amendment of Naturalisation Policy, 1943 A373, 8203**

This item (also cited above) contains correspondence from the Second World War on the topic of de-naturalisation.

**MENZIES AND HOLT MINISTRIES – CABINET FILES 'C' SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1958–67****A4940****Recorded by:****Secretary to Cabinet/Cabinet Secretariat (I) (CA 3)****Canberra 77.8 metres**

This series contains Cabinet files arranged by subject. Typically files include Cabinet submissions and associated correspondence between the responsible department and the Cabinet office.

**Amendments to the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948–60, 1950–66  
A4940, C125**

Documents in this file include the Cabinet submission from Athol Townley, Minister for Immigration, summarising a debate in foreign language newspapers over the inequality between citizenship acquired by birth and by naturalisation implied by the provisions to revoke naturalisation, and proposing to amend the Nationality and Citizenship Act to remedy the problem.

## Citizenship ceremonies

Certificates of naturalisation were not issued until after a person had been assessed and approved by the responsible department and taken the oath and (from 1917) the renunciation. The gravity of naturalisation ceremonies was a frequent topic of discussion among policymakers in the 1930s who favoured strong measures to impart the significance of citizenship to new citizens. Prior to 1938 the oath and renunciation were simply taken in front of a justice of the peace, but in that year Cabinet decided that they be taken only before a magistrate, clerk of petty sessions, or clerk of a local court. Occasionally calls were made for the introduction of naturalisation ceremonies with emphasis on the rights and duties of citizens and the nation's history, and during the Second World War this too was picked up in planning. Noel Lamidey, secretary to the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee and later head of the Assimilation Division of the Department of Immigration, diagnosed the situation. He thought that aliens sought naturalisation:

not so much in an attempt to capture the spirit of the country as to secure the material gains and benefits which nationality automatically confers... The absence of any service of induction to British nationality and the atmosphere of almost casual renunciation of allegiance are also not calculated to imbue the applicant with any sense of dignity of the occasion or the seriousness and far reaching effects of the obligations he has so lightly been asked to assume.

Lamidey proposed ceremonies in open court, attended by community representatives and attended by relatives of the persons taking the oath, at which the oath would be impressively administered and a short address made on citizenship and democracy.<sup>35</sup>

Citizenship ceremonies along these lines began in early 1949 under the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948. The ceremonies were designed to impress upon the new citizen the rights and obligations of Australian citizenship, make the person feel as though he had done something significant for himself and for Australia, and inform the community that the person was no longer an alien. Short pamphlets on Australian citizenship were prepared to inform the new citizen on relevant aspects of Australian political history, national character and political participation. Naturalisation ceremonies were postulated as the central feature of the process of assimilation; the ceremony signified the alien's crossing of the boundaries of citizenship. Such occasions demanded nationalistic trappings, and Arthur Calwell arranged for the purchase of an Australian flag for every court in Australia to be displayed at ceremonies. Shortly after assuming office and reflecting the Liberal Party's more conservative and imperialist views in contrast with Calwell's nationalism, Harold Holt instructed that a Union Jack also be provided for each court. For Holt, the Australian flag symbolised Australian citizenship, and the Union Jack symbolised allegiance to the Crown and British nationality.<sup>36</sup> The 1954 Australian Citizenship Convention asked that a portrait of the Queen also be present at ceremonies. Ceremonies were transferred from

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<sup>35</sup> Memorandum, 'Proposed Amendments to Procedure Governing the Issue of Certificates of Naturalisation', NW Lamidey, Secretary, Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee, 19 September 1945, NAA: [A437, 1946/6/68](#).

<sup>36</sup> Memorandum, THE Heyes to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 16 March 1950, NAA: [A445, 230/1/4](#).



courts to local government by the Department of Immigration in the early 1950s as it was thought ceremonies in court received little public and media attention.<sup>37</sup> Ceremonies resembling these continue today.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38****A1****Recorded by:**

**1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)**  
**1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)**  
**1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)**  
**1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**

**Canberra 445.7 metres**

This series contains the general filing of the Department of External Affairs (I) and its successors. It includes a diverse array of topics, including many files on the administration of immigration, naturalisation, and passports. Research in this series is time-consuming, since it is organised as an annual single number series, and files tend to deal with individual inquiries and responses, rather than themes over a period of time.

**Question of JPs administering Oath of Allegiance under the Nationality Act, 1924–36 A1, 1938/10147**

Deliberations over the manner in which the oath was taken for naturalisation arose in the late 1930s, and in 1938 a Cabinet submission proposed that the oath be taken in court. The submission is preserved in this file, as is related correspondence.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, CLASS 6 (ALIENS REGISTRATION), 1946–50****A437****Recorded by:**

**CA 51 (Department of Immigration)**

**Canberra 2.2 metres**

This series is one of several policy series maintained by the Department of Immigration between its establishment and 1950, when it adopted a single general policy file series (A445). Files in this series are mostly concerned with aliens registration policy, although some files bear on naturalisation policy.

**Proposed Amendments to Issue of Certificates of Naturalisation, 1945–46 A437, 1946/6/68**

This file contains some documents concerned with naturalisation policy arising from the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee. The documents written by Noel Lamidey quoted above are located here.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES (POLICY MATTERS), 1951–55  
A445****Recorded by:**

**Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra 28.8 metres**

This series contains general policy files of the Department of Immigration for the period 1951 to 1955. Many files include top-numbered material from previous series.

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<sup>37</sup> Memorandum, H McGinness to the Acting Secretary, Department of Immigration, 2 April 1954, NAA: [A445, 230/16/49](#).

The series is organised thematically as a multiple number series, making for easy research.

There does not appear to be much material on naturalisation in this series, since those files dealing with the Nationality and Citizenship Act were top-numbered into A446. However, some files on other subjects contain documents bearing on naturalisation.

This series contains a substantial amount of material on the development of naturalisation ceremonies after the Second World War by the Department of Immigration. These files are easily located since they begin with the number 230.

**Annual Citizenship Day, 1952–54      A445, 230/1/1**

This file contains a 1952 Department of Immigration memorandum considering the purposes of naturalisation ceremonies and suitable times to hold them. The purposes of ceremonies were identified as: (a) to impress upon the citizen his new rights and duties; (b) to make him feel he has done something significant for himself and his country; and (c) to make members of the community realise he is no longer an alien.

**Oaths of Allegiance – Ceremonies in Open Court, 1948–49      A445, 230/1/3**

In this file there is correspondence around the establishment of new naturalisation ceremonies in court in 1949, leading up to the first such ceremony in Albert Hall on Australia Day 1949. One document proposes that aliens hand in their alien registration certificate as they receive their naturalisation certificate, making a symbolic change.

**Oaths of Allegiance – Ceremonies in Open Court, 1949–52      A445, 230/1/4**

Among other correspondence on naturalisation ceremonies, this file contains the exchange on which flags should be present at naturalisation ceremonies referred to above.

**Developments in Naturalisation Matters 1950–54, 1954      A445, 230/16/49**

This file contains a 1954 memorandum looking back over the changes to naturalisation ceremonies introduced by the conservative government since it assumed office in 1949.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'N' (NEW SOUTH WALES)  
PREFIX, 1952–77      C3939**

**Recorded by:**

**1952–74: Department of Immigration, New South Wales (CA 957)**

**Sydney      38.7 metres**

During the 1950s and 1960s the Department of Immigration carried out much of its administration in the state capitals. This series contains a considerable amount of policy material, including memoranda sent from Canberra to state offices, and documents on local activities. Series such as this provide a useful source for researchers unable to visit Canberra, and sometimes include material which has not been preserved in Canberra. Extensive files on naturalisation policy and procedure were maintained by the Department of Immigration office in New South Wales.

As with naturalisation policy more generally in the 1950s and 1960s, material on naturalisation ceremonies is preserved in the states as well as in Canberra. State offices of the Department of Immigration were responsible for the administration of citizenship ceremonies, and many files remain on the procedure for these ceremonies, and for ceremonies on particular occasions such as Australia Day.

**Handbook of Naturalisation Ceremonies, 1955–63****C3939, N1955/25/76086**

The contents of this item are well indicated by its title. This large handbook on every aspect of holding naturalisation ceremonies was compiled to provide a comprehensive guide to conducting ceremonies.

**CASE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1946–****J25****Recorded by:****1946–74: Department of Immigration, Queensland (CA 958)****Brisbane 1855.2 metres**

Misleadingly titled 'case files', this series also contains records concerning policy and the activities of the Queensland branch of the Department of Immigration, along similar lines to the NSW series C3939. The process of locating policy files is complicated by the enormous quantity of case files in the series, but useful material is preserved here.

The Brisbane office of the Department of Immigration seems to have been particularly active in generating material on citizenship ceremonies, or at least much more survives from there. Two examples are given below, while a range of similar files on special ceremonies for Immigration Week and on Australia Day are also available.

**Nationality, Naturalisation and Citizenship / Ceremonies (Court) / Policy and Procedure, 1949–54 J25, 1953/3222**

This item contains details of special naturalisation ceremonies held during Coronation Week in 1953. Additional decorations, including portraits of the Queen, were obtained for the ceremonies.

**Naturalisation and Citizenship Ceremonies. Australia Day 1957 (Photographs), 1956–57 J25, 1957/1078**

As the title suggests this file contains photographs from a 1957 naturalisation ceremony in Brisbane. Other materials in the file include lists of people naturalised in the ceremony, and a speech given by one 'New Australian', Dr Gertrid Wenzel, on their behalf.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1929–****A432****Recorded by:****Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****Canberra and Sydney 2054.7 metres in Canberra; 352.6 metres in Sydney**

This Attorney-General's Department series contains some material bearing on dual citizenship and the renunciation of allegiance which was required from 1917.

**Renunciation of Allegiance. Applicants for Naturalisation, 1963 A432, 1963/3164**

This file contains discussion from 1963 over whether the renunciation should be required, since it was frequently criticised as an unnecessary deterrent to naturalisation for many people. The Secretary of the Department of Immigration, Peter Heydon, averred that:

The chief reason for requiring renunciation is that it is considered candidates for citizenship should be prepared to devote their undivided loyalty to Her Majesty and to Australia, and the object is to secure an explicit statement from the candidate that he is prepared to abandon allegiance to any other State or Monarch.

**RADIO ARCHIVES MASTER AUDIO TAPES, SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM, 1970–71  
C102**

**Recorded by:**

**Australian Broadcasting Commission – Radio Archives (CA 251)**

**Sydney      49.7 metres**

This series contains sound recordings from the ABC library.

**First Naturalisation Ceremony under the Nationality and Citizenship Act (audio  
tape), 1949      C102, OC22**

As the title suggests this item is an audio recording of the first naturalisation ceremony under the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948. The ceremony was held in the Albert Hall, Canberra, on Australia Day 1949.

## Promotion of citizenship

During the 1950s and 1960s the Department of Immigration undertook various campaigns to promote Australian citizenship to new migrants and the public more generally. The Australian Citizenship Conventions held at first annually and then biennially from 1950 to 1968 were a centrepiece of the Commonwealth's promotion of Australian citizenship, and at its meetings many aspects of citizenship were discussed. (A longer discussion of the Conventions can be found in the next chapter, since they were also closely related to the Commonwealth's assimilation policies.) Other promotional campaigns included recurrent efforts to encourage aliens to take out Australian citizenship, and associated inquiries into the attitudes of aliens towards applying for naturalisation.<sup>38</sup>

### **CORRESPONDENCE FILES, CLASS 7 (GENERAL ADMINISTRATION), 1949–50 A438**

**Recorded by:**

**Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra 1.8 metres**

This series contains documents on the transport, assimilation, education and welfare of immigrants. The series also includes material on the Australian Citizenship Conventions.

**Address by the Minister for Immigration to the Australia Citizenship Convention, 1950 A438, 1950/7/217**

The principal document in this file is referred to in the title above: the version here is a draft with extensive annotations. Some further papers deal with the circulation of the speech to all members of parliament.

**Commonwealth Jubilee Citizenship Convention – Second Citizenship Convention, 1951 A438, 1950/7/759**

Within this large file are correspondence and drafts generated in preparation for the 1951 Citizenship Convention. Later material on the file concerns a Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council item prepared from the Convention's resolutions.

### **CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES (POLICY MATTERS), 1951–55 A445**

**Recorded by:**

**Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra 28.8 metres**

This series contains general policy files of the Department of Immigration for the period 1951 to 1955. Many files include top-numbered material from previous series. The series is organised thematically as a multiple number series, making for easy research.

There does not appear to be much material on naturalisation in this series, since those files dealing with the Nationality and Citizenship Act were top-numbered into

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<sup>38</sup> For further details of these campaigns see: Ann-Mari Jordens, *Alien to Citizen: Settling Migrants in Australia, 1945–75*, Allen and Unwin in association with the Australian Archives, St Leonards, 1997, Chapter 8

A446. However, some files on other subjects contain documents bearing on naturalisation.

This series contains the most substantial collection of records from the Citizenship Conventions. The large number of files concerned with the Citizenship Conventions start with the number 146.

**Citizenship Convention 1951 (Jubilee) General, 1950–52      A445, 146/2/1**

This large file includes the published report of the proceedings of the 1951 Citizenship Convention, and a considerable amount of correspondence concerning the implementation of the Convention's resolutions.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS, 1953–      A446**

**Recorded by:**

**Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra and Sydney      2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

This series is the main correspondence series for the Department of Immigration and its successors from 1953. The series contains both case files and policy files. The latter are numbered above 65000, while case files are numbered below that figure. Despite heavy culling of files from this series, much valuable material remains. This series contains an extensive amount of material that has not yet been opened for public access, and it warrants considerable attention from researchers. The series contains many files on the adoption and amendment of the Nationality and Citizenship Act. Those listed below are particularly helpful.

Also within this series is much material on the promotion of citizenship including various campaigns encouraging aliens to be naturalised, and the Citizenship Conventions.

**Australian Citizenship Convention – policy, 1949–61      A446, 1964/45953**

This file contains documents on the purposes of the Citizenship Conventions as well as correspondence on seeking speakers and themes for individual Conventions. To take one example, the Department of Immigration tried to give the 1955 Convention more focus on immigration policy since previous Conventions had been concerned mostly with assimilation matters.

**Citizenship Convention 1966 – theme, 1965      A446, 1965/46410**

This file contains correspondence between the Department of Immigration and its posts around Europe on the reasons migrants chose to come to Australia. The correspondence was initiated by the idea that the 1966 Convention should be on the theme of Australia's attractions for migrants.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'S' PREFIX, 1966–      D399**

**Recorded by:**

**1966–74 Department of Immigration, South Australia (CA 959)**

**Adelaide      750.4 metres**

This series continues the files of the Department of Immigration, South Australian office, where D400 leaves off. The series contains several files on naturalisation policy, similar to those held in other states. For instance, items 79/16472, 79/16492, 79/16507, 79/16519, and 79/16520 cover naturalisation procedures between 1954 and 1965.

This series contains a variety of documents on the promotion of citizenship.

**Nationality and Citizenship Instructions Policy, 1960–65      D399, 79/16492**

Among other documents on this file are letters from H Opperman, Minister for Immigration, encouraging migrants to take out naturalisation.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES, 1945–57      MP275/1**

**Recorded by:**

**Department of Labour and National Service (CA 40)**

**Melbourne      5.2 metres**

This series is the central correspondence series of the Department of Labour and National Service. Little research has been undertaken on the records of this department, and accordingly few of the items in this series have been entered into the database. Researchers should consult the item list in the Melbourne office of the National Archives for a full inventory.

**Australian Citizenship Convention, 1955      MP275/1, 1954/3020**

In this item is a variety of materials deriving from the 1955 Citizenship Convention: copies of the program, agenda for discussion groups, reports, and the *Digest* publication. Among the printed booklets are 'A Happier Land' which features addresses to the 1955 convention by the Minister for Immigration, Harold Holt, and 'Australia's Citizenship Conventions 1950–1–2'. Also on file is a 'Handbook of the Good Neighbour Movement' on assimilation and the role of the Movement.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES, 1953–57      MP340/1**

**Recorded by:**

**Department of Labour and National Service (CA 40)**

**Melbourne      5.4 metres**

Some files concerning the Department of Labour and National Service's role in Citizenship Conventions are contained in this series, which is otherwise not of substantial interest. Only a few items in the series are on the database, and researchers must consult the inventory in the National Archives Melbourne office.

**Australian Citizenship Convention 24th–27th Jan 1956, 1955–56      MP340/1, 1955/3415**

This file contains a full set of delegate papers for the 1956 Citizenship Convention. Among these is a report on action taken on matters arising in the 1955 Convention, and a discussion paper by the demographer Charles Price on 'The Social Consequences of the Present Distribution of Nationalities'.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES, 1948–58      MP413/6**

**Recorded by:**

**Department of Labour and National Service (CA 40)**

**Melbourne      6.7 metres**

Like MP340/1, this series contains general correspondence from the Department of Labour and National Service, and includes material on the Citizenship Conventions. A larger amount of material in this series concerns assimilation matters. Few files are on the database, and researchers should consult the item list in the Melbourne office.

**Australian Citizenship Convention 22nd–25th Jan 1957, 1956 MP413/6, 1956/3704**

This file contains the 1957 *Digest* reporting on the Citizenship Convention, and agenda papers including the text of an address by Sir Richard Boyer titled 'The Australian Good Neighbour Movement – Past and Present'.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, THIRD SYSTEM, 1934–50  
A461****Recorded by:****Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)****Canberra 143.8 metres**

Like A457 and A458 this series is based on a multiple number system with a letter prefix denoting individual files. The contents of this series are more substantial than its two predecessors since much useful material was top-numbered into it.

**Jubilee Citizenship Convention, 1950–51 A461, DV317/1/6**

This file contains various documents about the 1951 Citizenship Convention on the theme of assimilation, including its program, and correspondence between the Prime Minister and the Premiers on the representation of the states. A copy of the Governor-General's address is also found here.

**Australian Citizenship Conventions, 1949–50 A461, P349/1/1**

Documents in this file cover arrangements for the first Citizenship Convention, and discuss its purposes.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, FOURTH SYSTEM, 1951–55  
A462****Recorded by:****Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)****Canberra 49.2 metres**

This series continues the records of the Prime Minister's Department after A461. Like its predecessors, it is organised as a multiple number series. Files on Citizenship Conventions, and many aspects of immigration more generally, begin with the number 663.

**Australian Immigration Policy – General – Australian Citizenship Conventions, 1953–56 A462, 663/27**

This item contains some assorted correspondence from the 1954, 1955 and 1956 Citizenship Conventions. One large paper on the file is 'An Outline of Australia's Immigration Policy and Programme' given by delegates to the 1954 Convention by the Minister for Immigration. The resolutions arising from the 1956 Convention are also here.



**AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP CONVENTION TRANSCRIPT, 1960****MP598/5****Recorded by:****Sir John Klunder Jensen (CP 138)****Melbourne      0.1 metres**

This series consists of a single item. The transcript includes addresses made to the Convention on various migration and assimilation topics.

**AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP CONVENTION – HANDOUTS AND BROCHURES, 1951–61  
MP598/6****Recorded by:****Sir John Klunder Jensen (CP 138)****Melbourne      0.2 metres**

This series consists of annual folders for the years 1951 to 1961, each containing agenda papers, reports, digests, summaries, and publications arising from the Convention.

**TRANSCRIPT OF AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP CONVENTION (DEPARTMENT OF  
IMMIGRATION), 1958      MP598/44****Recorded by:****Sir John Klunder Jensen (CP 138)****Melbourne      0.2 metres**

This series is composed of only a single item: the transcript of the 1958 Convention

**FOLDERS OF SPEECHES AND ARTICLES MAINTAINED BY THE RT HON. HAROLD HOLT  
M2607****Recorded by:****Harold Edward Holt (CP 27)****Canberra      108 metres**

This series consists of folders of speeches, articles and correspondence maintained by Holt during his parliamentary career. Those relating to his tenure as Minister for Immigration and Minister for Labour and National Service are of interest here. Among the speeches in this series are some given at the 1950 Citizenship Convention.

# 3 Civic Identity

## Modes of incorporating migrants

As a settler society seeking a continual and regulated influx of immigrants throughout the century, Australian governments always sought to incorporate newcomers into the Australian population and nation. Immigration marked just the beginning of a process of incorporation while, for many policymakers, naturalisation constituted its culmination. In between these poles, strangers were subjected to a series of expectations about appropriate behaviour, and were observed and controlled by several agencies of the state. 'Incorporation' describes the sets of expectations and the various policies which applied to the conduct, relations and identities of immigrants and groups of immigrants. Policies of incorporation were intended by the state to ensure that immigrants entered into prevailing modes of social cohesion and allegiance, and thereby entered into the forms of governance which already applied to the native-born. Two forms of incorporation have been of enduring significance in Australia during the twentieth century: assimilation and multiculturalism.

Between Federation and the First World War little attention was paid to the incorporation of aliens. Official attitudes towards Europeans were relatively tolerant and welcoming, and naturalisation was liberally offered. This period, reaching back into the nineteenth century, was distinctly cosmopolitan in contrast to what followed. The First World War produced a stark and fundamental change in official attitudes and policies towards Europeans: the Commonwealth saw no danger in the presence of the slight number of Europeans in Australia until foreigners were reconceptualised during the war in close relation to subversion and disloyalty. With the First World War assimilation emerged as the dominant mode of incorporation for more than fifty years, and it was frequently articulated as a set of expectations about the appropriate conduct for strangers by which they would cease to be identifiable as foreigners and would acquire characteristics designated Australian.

Assimilation meant the incorporation of strangers into the national citizenry, such that they were indistinguishable and unrecognisable from the wider population. Strangers were to disperse rather than congregate, participate in Australian schools and social institutions, form relationships with Australians rather than others of foreign origin, and adopt Australian traits. Assimilation thereby enclosed aspects of private conduct (marriage and reproduction, personal relations, identity, language and cultural tradition) in objects of public import and governance (social cohesion, national unity, and allegiance).

Simultaneously, assimilation operated as a process of incorporation into the nation's network of kinship, of the intermingling of blood through marriage and reproduction. Here close similarities can be found with the policies of assimilating Aboriginal people, which postulated the submersion of Aboriginality within the greater Australian population such that there would cease to be distinct groups.

This meant not only the disappearance of Aboriginal practices and beliefs but of different physiological characteristics.

The policies and meanings of assimilation shifted after the Second World War, and some important changes can be identified. Whereas after the Second World War assimilation manifested in measures intended to encourage and coerce the foreigner to assimilate, during the inter-war years assimilation primarily appeared in disqualifications and in policies of disrupting foreign practices which inhibited assimilation. Commonwealth policy shifted from observing, assessing and excluding the foreigner who was incapable or unwilling to assimilate to positively assisting assimilation.

The postwar immigration program was accompanied by a host of new assimilationist measures, and an attitude of encouraging, facilitating and sometimes forcing assimilation. This approach derived from the necessity of ensuring that the large influx of non-British European immigrants was not a threat to social cohesion and was acceptable to an Australian public regarded as intolerant of difference and cautious of immigration's effect on employment levels, a new emphasis on inculcating and celebrating the privileges and obligations of Australian citizenship, and an expanded and well-resourced administrative apparatus. The scope of state management of assimilation expanded considerably. Many instances could be cited here, but the Citizenship Conventions held between 1950 and 1968 are a good example. Calwell intended the first Convention to encourage settlers to become 'British subjects and Australian citizens' in a 'full sense', not merely a legal one. It would enable many voluntary organisations and churches to deliberate on the obstacles to assimilation and recommend measures for its advancement:

so that all may contribute their share in the achievement of the ideal of one Australian family, devoid of any foreign communities, thus preserving our homogeneity and solidarity as a nation.<sup>39</sup>

The records of the Citizenship Conventions offer insights into the Commonwealth's efforts to engage large sections of the public in the national endeavour of assimilating hundreds of thousands of new European immigrants. (These records are described in the previous chapter, since the Conventions discussed a wider range of citizenship issues than assimilation alone, and are not repeated here.)

The tone of debates at successive Citizenship Conventions, first held annually and then biennially for nearly twenty years, reveals a gradual widening of spaces for difference in assimilationist discourses. While assimilation meant the complete effacement of difference during the inter-war years, during the 1950s there emerged a recognition that immigrants would also change the character of Australia as they assimilated. Calwell, with his enthusiasm for American history, spoke of the metaphor of the 'melting pot' with its image of immigrants from many places blending to make a new cohesive national family. This remained the tone of Commonwealth policy into the 1960s, and the idea crept into public statements on postwar immigration policy. For instance, in a 1959 lecture, AR Downer, then

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<sup>39</sup> Letter, AA Calwell, Minister for Immigration to JB Chifley, Prime Minister, 20 August 1949, NAA: [A461, P349/1/1](#).

Minister for Immigration, praised the economic, cultural and intellectual contributions of European immigrants to Australia and their invigoration of 'our rather stodgy Anglo-Saxon communities'; even if at the same time he expressed a wish for more British migrants and a concern that 'our basic British characteristics... [not] become too diluted or submerged'.<sup>40</sup>

These changes led to the displacement of the term 'assimilation' by 'integration' in Commonwealth policy from 1964. 'Integration' reflected a more benign and inclusive set of expectations, in which the demands for the effacement of foreign characteristics were slightly diminished. However, it remained a variant of assimilation which emphasised the harmonious merging of difference into a new homogenous totality; suggestions of cultural or racial pluralism were consistently rejected by conservative governments in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Rather, it was Al Grassby, Minister for Immigration in the newly elected Whitlam government, who declared in 1973 that Australia had become multicultural.<sup>41</sup> For Grassby, Australia's national images were all too narrow: they contained no space for 'the Maltese process worker, the Finnish carpenter, the Italian concrete layer, the Yugoslav miner or... the Indian scientist'.<sup>42</sup> He postulated 'social and cultural rights' as a domain of personal identity and activity irrelevant to national cohesion. A multicultural Australia could embrace cultural diversity. Multiculturalism in the 1970s departed from assimilationist modes of incorporation by detaching social cohesion from racial and national origins, and by encouraging the retention of non-British Australian practices and languages other than English to a limited extent. By adopting a notion of social and cultural rights, already enunciated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), multiculturalism located aspects of social and cultural identity and practice in the private domain; although with the riders that the state would protect these rights, ameliorate inequalities produced by difference, and govern through ethnic organisations. The beginnings of multiculturalism in the 1970s, which mark the end of the period with which this guide is concerned, were based upon a recognition that prevailing discourses of Australian nationalism did not accommodate a large number of people already in Australia, and that assimilation imposed unrealistic expectations on immigrants which were unjust and no longer indispensable for social cohesion.

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<sup>40</sup> Text of speech by AR Downer, Minister for Immigration at the Millions Club, Sydney, 9 July 1958, NAA: [A446, 1966/45420](#).

<sup>41</sup> Jordens, *Redefining Australians*, pp. 163–6.

<sup>42</sup> AJ Grassby, 'A multi-cultural society for the future', 1973, reproduced in John Lack and Jacqueline Templeton, eds, *Bold Experiment: A Documentary History of Australian Immigration since 1945*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995, pp. 143–4.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38****A1****Recorded by:**

**1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)**  
**1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)**  
**1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)**  
**1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**

**Canberra 445.7 metres**

This series contains the general filing of the Department of External Affairs (I) and its successors. It includes a diverse array of topics, including many files on the administration of immigration, naturalisation, and passports. Research in this series is time-consuming, since it is organised as an annual single number series, and files tend to deal with individual inquiries and responses, rather than themes over a period of time. Within this series many documents on inter-war immigration policy are preserved, including reports and assessments of aliens in Australia.

**Influx of Aliens to Queensland, 1925–26 A1, 1925/18474**

This file contains the report of, and correspondence surrounding, the 1925 Ferry Royal Commission into the presence of aliens in Australia. Established by the Queensland government, the Commission reported an array of findings on the particular characteristics of groups of southern Europeans in Queensland. While northern Italians were deemed desirable by the Commissioner, southern Italians, Greeks, and Maltese were described as preferring low living standards. Although the report's findings were rejected by the Prime Minister, SM Bruce, it had a significant impact on the political atmosphere of the 1920s.

**Limitation of number of aliens immigrating to Australia, 1924–27 A1, 1925/21985**

This file is divided into five parts, each of which deals with southern European immigration in the 1920s. Various opinions on the assimilability of different racial groups are put forward, and documents on the restriction of southern European immigrants are present.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, THIRD SYSTEM, 1934–50****A461****Recorded by:**

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra 143.8 metres**

Like A457 and A458 this series is based on a multiple number system with a letter prefix denoting individual files. The contents of this series are more substantial than its two predecessors since much useful material was top-numbered into it.

Documents on assimilation are mostly contained in files dealing with immigration. Files on foreign migrants employ the identifying number of 349/3, while files on Commonwealth immigration policy are denoted by 349/1/2. A large number of files on foreign migrants are contained here, and many bear on the policy of assimilation.

**Immigration – Policy, 1944–46 A461, A349/1/2 part 5**

During the Second World War an interdepartmental committee considered various aspects of migration in preparation for the resumption of immigration at war's end. This file contains the committee's report on 'white alien migration'. It offers views on the desirability of various European groups measured in part by their ability to assimilate.

**Alien Communities, 1943–45      A461, J349/3/1**

This small file contains resolutions from the United Country Party and a returned soldiers organisation calling for the prevention of alien communities. A letter from the Queensland Premier to the Prime Minister discusses Chinese businesses in Brisbane.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, CLASS 2 (RESTRICTED IMMIGRATION), 1939–50  
A433****Recorded by:****1939–45: Department of the Interior (II) (CA 31)****1945–50: Department of Immigration (CA 51)****Canberra      12.6 metres**

This series deals with restricted immigration files, and is organised similarly to A434, A435, A436 and A437. It contains a large amount of interesting material, although like the other series mentioned, some of the most significant files and documents were top-numbered into A445 and A446.

**Assimilation of aliens – Question of prohibiting foreign schools, 1925–40  
A433, 1943/2/4227**

The most interesting correspondence in this file dates from 1925 when an interdepartmental conference on alien migration recommended the prohibition of foreign language schools in Australia. Since the Commonwealth did not have the power to implement such a policy, the states were asked to do so, and their responses are found here.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, CLASS 6 (ALIENS REGISTRATION), 1946–50****A437****Recorded by:****Department of Immigration (CA 51)****Canberra      2.2 metres**

This series is one of several policy series maintained by the Department of Immigration between its establishment and 1950, when it adopted a single general policy file series (A445). Files in this series are mostly concerned with aliens registration policy, although some files bear on naturalisation policy.

**Italian–Australian Association. Assimilation of Italians, 1950      A437,  
1950/6/153**

The folios in this file cover a suggestion to the Minister for Immigration that the Italian–Australian Association was infiltrated by communists. ASIO was asked to investigate.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES (POLICY MATTERS), 1951–55  
A445****Recorded by:****Department of Immigration (CA 51)****Canberra      28.8 metres**

This series contains general policy files of the Department of Immigration for the period 1951 to 1955. Many files include top-numbered material from previous series. The series is organised thematically as a multiple number series, making for easy research.

There does not appear to be much material on naturalisation in this series, since those files dealing with the Nationality and Citizenship Act were top-numbered into A446. However, some files on other subjects contain documents bearing on naturalisation.

The series contains a considerable amount of material bearing on assimilation in the 1950s, across the range of the Department of Immigration's activities.

Within this series the minutes of the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council are preserved. The Council was established to advise the government on an extensive range of matters referred to it within the ambit of the postwar immigration program. Assimilation and citizenship matters were frequently considered by the Council. Its minutes are found under the number 140/4.

**Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council – Committee on Social Welfare, 1951–52      A445, 140/5/6**

This committee of the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council was appointed to inquire into the establishment of a social work service for migrants. Transcripts of some of its meetings and its report are on file.

**Assimilation film 'No Strangers Here', 1949–55      A445, 261/5/1**

This file contains papers on the production of a Department of Immigration film on the topic of assimilation. An Eastern European family of four are the central characters, as they arrive in Australia and take up residence in the nonexistent town of 'Littleton'. Comment from Departmental officers on the script is in the file, as well as correspondence with cinemas and other parties over the film's screening. Two versions of the film – long and short – were ultimately produced for screening to different audiences. The film is preserved at ScreenSound Australia, formerly the National Film and Sound Archive.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS, 1953–      A446**

Recorded by:

**1953–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra and Sydney      2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

This series is the main correspondence series for the Department of Immigration and its successors from 1953. The series contains both case files and policy files. The latter are numbered above 65000, while case files are numbered below that figure. Despite heavy culling of files from this series, much valuable material remains. This series contains an extensive amount of material that has not yet been opened for public access, and it warrants considerable attention from researchers. The series contains many files on the adoption and amendment of the Nationality and Citizenship Act. Those listed below are particularly helpful.

**Established Immigration Policy – Part 11, 1963–67      A446, 1966/45348**

The title of this file is the euphemism employed in the 1960s to refer to the 'white Australia policy'. Deliberations over the liberalisation of the conditions of entry for Asians turned on social homogeneity as the principal aim of immigration policy, and the associated question of whether Asians could be assimilated.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'N' (NEW SOUTH WALES)  
PREFIX, 1952–77 C3939****Recorded by:****1952–74: Department of Immigration, New South Wales (CA 957)****Sydney 38.7 metres**

During the 1950s and 1960s the Department of Immigration carried out much of its administration in the state capitals. This series contains a considerable amount of policy material, including memoranda sent from Canberra to state offices, and documents on local activities. Series such as this provide a useful source for researchers unable to visit Canberra, and sometimes include material which has not been preserved in Canberra. Extensive files on naturalisation policy and procedure were maintained by the Department of Immigration office in New South Wales.

**Australia's assimilation of its migrant population, 1956–63 C3939,  
N1956/75135**

This file contains the text of a 1956 talk by NW Lamidey, then head of the Assimilation Division of the Department of Immigration, on assimilation. He discusses the meaning of assimilation (making somewhat false claims), migrant settlement, the Good Neighbour Movement, and naturalisation.

**CASE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1946– J25****Recorded by:****1946–74: Department of Immigration, Queensland (CA 958)****Brisbane 1855.2 metres**

Misleadingly titled 'case files', this series also contains records concerning policy and the activities of the Queensland branch of the Department of Immigration, along similar lines to the NSW series C3939. The process of locating policy files is complicated by the enormous quantity of case files in the series, but useful material is preserved here.

This series contains a large amount of material on assimilation policies and activities in the postwar decades.

**Assimilation policy and procedure, 1949–63 J25, 1958/9262**

This item contains some interesting correspondence on the Department of Immigration's assimilation activities. In 1952 the Secretary of the Department, THE Heyes, arranged for information on assimilation to be distributed to departmental officers since it appeared they were largely unaware of the role they were intended to play. Monthly reports of state branch activities in the field of assimilation were compiled for the next two years. These covered a great range of activities; to take just one example, on Coronation Day (2 June) '400 New Australian children, both British and foreign... sang "Waltzing Matilda" at the Brisbane Exhibition Grounds'. The song was recorded by the ABC which sent the record to London for inclusion in a world broadcast.

**Assimilation. New Settlers' League. General policy, 1952–65 J25, 1961/9500**

Many of the documents in this file contain the names and addresses for the Good Neighbour Councils and the New Settlers' League around Australia. Also on file is a copy of the Handbook of the Good Neighbour Movement, along with some earlier drafts.



**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'SA' PREFIX, 1948–66  
D400****Recorded by:****Department of Immigration, South Australia (CA 959)****Adelaide      462.8 metres**

This series contains administrative files from the Department of Immigration branch office in Adelaide.

**Assimilation – Paper by JE Bromley, 1954      D400, SA1954/1805**

This file contains a copy of a paper by JE Bromley of the Australian National University, titled 'Primary group solidarity and social change in migrant community'. This is a study of young men's subgroups among Italian immigrants from Molfetta, now living in Port Pirie, South Australia. It examines their social groupings and considers problems with their assimilation.

**Assimilation – Registration of Non-British Subjects for National Service, 1954–55      D400, SA1954/3272**

This item contains various documents from Canberra on the registration of New Australians for National Service.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'W59' PREFIX, 1959–73  
K403****Recorded by:****Department of Immigration, Western Australia (CA 962)****Perth      22.2 metres**

As in New South Wales, the Department of Immigration's records are organised into separate series for policy and case files. See the description for C3939 above. This series contains well-organised policy files on naturalisation.

**Assimilation Welfare work. Policy and procedure, 1949-53      K403, W59/43**

A document in this file discusses the role of social workers in assisting immigrants to adapt to the 'Australian way of life' and the wider responsibility of the population to assimilate newcomers.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES, 1945-57****MP275/1****Recorded by:****Department of Labour and National Service, (CA 40)****Melbourne      5.2 metres**

This series is the central correspondence series of the Department of Labour and National Service. Little research has been undertaken on the records of this department, and accordingly few of the items in this series have been entered into the database. Researchers should consult the item list in the Melbourne office of the National Archives for a full inventory.

**Migrant Assimilation – English Language Courses, 1948-55      MP275/1, 1953/1067**

This item contains correspondence relating to policy and implementation of English classes for migrants. A pamphlet titled 'New Australians – learn English – free' is also on the file.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1941-72  
MP1308/1****Recorded by:****Department of Labour and National Service, (CA 40)****Melbourne      6.7 metres**

This series resembles the other series of the Department of Labour and National Service referred to in the previous chapter in that only a small proportion of it has been entered on the database and it is virtually untouched by researchers. There is some material on assimilation and work matters in the series.

**Assimilation of Migrants – Policy, 1953-61      MP1308/1, 1963/3392**

Papers in this item relate to the assimilation of migrants in the labour force.

**RECORDS EXTRACTED FROM REGISTRY, 1947-62****AP210/1****Recorded by:****Department of Labour and National Service, SA (CA 2895)****Adelaide      0.5 metres**

This series contains assorted files created by the Departments of Labour and National Service in South Australia. There are only about fifty items in the series, but several are concerned with assimilation matters in the workplace.

**PPS – Migrant assimilation in industry, 1954-56      AP210/1, 1956/114**

The contents of this files relate to a proposed 'personnel practice survey' of non-British migrants which would gauge the effects of migrants in the workplace.

**Assimilation of migrants in industry. PPS research, 1956-57      AP210/1, 1956/473**

This item contains a discussion of methods intended to overcome communication problems and misunderstandings arising from cultural differences between migrants and supervisors in the workplace.

**CORRESPONDENCE, 1948-52****SP446/1****Recorded by:****Migrant Workers' Accommodation Division, Department of Labour and National Service (CA 2047)****Sydney      2.7 metres**

This series contains the files concerning the administration of migrant worker hostels. A limited amount of material deals with assimilation matters.

**Policy – Co-operation Assimilation with state migrants, 1951      SP446/1, 50/4/558**

This file contains correspondence concerning the placement of British migrants in the Queensland sugar and tobacco industries.

**Policy – Mixing of British and Alien migrants, 1951      SP446/1, 51/4/669**

Correspondence in this file concerns the question of mixing British and alien migrants in work hostels. Reflecting a general policy preference to mix immigrants from the moment of their arrival, one document notes that 'the tendency to

accommodate migrants of the same nationality in one hostel is not in the best interests of assimilation'.

**RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION, 1939-51****CP815/1****Recorded by:****Department of Information (CA 34)****Canberra 8.6 metres**

This multiple number series contains a considerable amount of immigration publicity material, including documents on assimilation. See item lists in the Canberra office of National Archives for further information on its organisation.

**Alien Assimilation Committee, 1946-49 CP815/1, Bundle 29/021/53**

The documents in this item result from the Department of Information's role in a committee established by the Minister for Immigration (and simultaneously Information), Arthur Calwell, to investigate naturalisation procedures and conditions, and to consider the necessity for instructing aliens in the 'Australian way of life'. The work of the committee was soon taken over by the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council, and eventually a pamphlet to give to aliens upon their naturalisation was produced.

**ANNUAL REPORTS, 1950-79****AA1980/253****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of the ACT (CA 2980)****Canberra 0.4 metres**

This series contains annual reports of the Australian Capital Territory Good Neighbour Council. The reports are collected in two boxes. They provide a useful overview of the Council's activities in the ACT.

**MINUTES, AGENDA, REPORTS AND ACCOMPANYING PAPERS OF MEETING AND CONFERENCES, AND ATTENDANCE BOOKS, 1950-79****AA1980/254****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of the ACT (CA 2980)****Canberra 1.3 metres**

The minutes, agendas and reports of Council meetings are contained in this series, and are organised by meetings. Searching for specific material on assimilation requires sorting through the folders.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ALPHABETICAL SERIES, 1950-80****AA1980/255****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of the ACT (CA 2980)****Canberra 1.4 metres**

This series is organised into thematic folders containing the correspondence of the Good Neighbour Council of the ACT. The file titles are not yet on the database.

**MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS AND PUBLICATIONS, 1950-80****AA1980/256****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of the ACT (CA 2980)****Canberra 1.6 metres**

This series contains minor material from the Good Neighbour Council of the ACT. Like the previous series, it may prove fruitful when further researched.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ALPHA-NUMERIC SERIES, 1977-79****M653****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of Victoria (CA 3491)****Melbourne 7.7 metres**

A wide range of correspondence across the Council's activities is found in this series. A complicated system of arrangements divides the files into thematic areas. Details of the system can be obtained from the data base or the Melbourne office.

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS, MINUTES OF WINDING-DOWN COMMITTEE, 1950-80****M690****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of Victoria (CA 3491)****Melbourne 2 metres**

This series contains thirteen volumes of minutes taken at Executive Committee meetings of the Victorian Good Neighbour Council.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES RELATING TO BRANCHES, ALPHABETICAL SERIES, 1950-77****M691****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of Victoria (CA 3491)****Melbourne 0.7 metres**

This series contains correspondence between the Council and its branches around Victoria. The correspondence concerns a variety of matters, including details of local initiatives and campaigns.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES RELATING TO AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS, ALPHABETICAL SERIES, 1960-70****M1115****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of Victoria (CA 3491)****Melbourne 0.3 metres**

This series contains correspondence between the Council and its affiliates around Victoria.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1950-79****K1225****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of Western Australia (CA 7268)****Perth 4.7 metres**

This series contains correspondence covering the range of the Council's activities in Western Australia. Researchers need to consult the list of file contents available at the National Archives in Perth.

**CORRESPONDENCE RECORDS WITH METROPOLITAN AND COUNTRY BRANCHES,  
ALPHABETICAL SERIES, 1955-79****PT2134/3****Recorded by:****Good Neighbour Council of Western Australia (CA 7268)****Perth 0.7 metres**

This series contains correspondence between the Council and its branches around Western Australia. Like M691 in the Victorian office, the files concern a variety of matters, including details of local initiatives and campaigns.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1941-49****A373****Recorded by:****1941-45: Security Service (CA 660)****1945-46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CA 747)****1946-49: Commonwealth Investigation Service (CA 650)****Canberra 7.4 metres**

This series contains records created by the Security Service during and shortly after the Second World War. The Service became a central point for the assessment of naturalisation applicants, and had a wider role in determining naturalisation policy through its responsibility for aliens control matters. Many of the records in this series are correspondence and reports surrounding the deliberations of the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee. Files bearing on naturalisation are scattered throughout the series.

The Security Service was vital to the Commonwealth's policies on aliens during the Second World War, and there is much valuable material contained in this series. The examples listed below are only a few of the interesting files to be found in this series.

**Alien Migration Policy, 1936-42 A373, 3075**

This file contains fascinating documents bearing on assimilation. A 1937 memorandum from a Commonwealth Investigation Branch inspector in Sydney, DRB Mitchell, presents his views on the characteristics of various European groups and their potential for assimilation, and argues that the system of administration of naturalisation needs reform. In a slightly later memorandum, he proposes an inquiry into the racial characteristics of each European group and their assimilation experiences in Australia. Later documents by RS Browne, an Investigation Branch inspector in Melbourne, present his views on aliens matters, concentrating on the significance of allegiance.

**INVESTIGATION CASE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'S' PREFIX, 1942-60  
D1918****Recorded by:**

**1942-46 Commonwealth Investigation Branch, SA (CA 905)  
1946-60 Commonwealth Investigation Service, SA (CA 914)**

**Adelaide 1.4 metres**

This series consists of security-classified investigation files created by the Investigation Branch in South Australia. Its numbering system was imposed by the National Archives since the records were previously poorly organised.

**Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council – assimilation of migrant children, 1959-60 D1918, S3045**

The Immigration Advisory Council conducted a survey of delinquency rates among migrant children through state police organisations. The documents in this item relate to the organisation of the survey, although the findings are not located here.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1948-89****A1838****Recorded by:**

**1948-70: Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)**

**Canberra 3433.9 metres**

This vast series contains the policy records of the Department of External Affairs, and its successors, from 1948 until 1989. The series is organised as a multiple number series, making research relatively easy, although some topics were allocated additional numbers once the original numbers were exhausted, meaning that there may be two sections of numbers for a single subject. Some material was top-numbered within the series, which creates confusion in researching some subjects.

This Department of External Affairs series contains a great quantity of material bearing on the development and adoption of international instruments on human rights. Among this material are files on racial discrimination in Australia, both in the treatment of Aboriginal people, and policies covering non-European immigrants.

**Australian Immigration Policy – Entry of Asians into Australia, 1958-60  
A1838, 581/1 Part 6**

This file contains correspondence between the Department of Immigration and the Department of External Affairs over the immigration of Asians to Australia. The documents found here provide fascinating insights into government thought on Asian people and their potential for assimilation in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The other parts of this file (there are twelve in all) are similarly valuable.

**UNESCO – Cultural assimilation of immigrants, 1952-59 A1838, 862/24/1**

This file contains a ten-page report prepared by the Department of Immigration in 1952 in response to an inquiry from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation about Australia's assimilation policies. The document covers Citizenship Conventions, the Good Neighbour movement, social welfare, education, and language instruction. Further correspondence surrounds a UNESCO conference on assimilation, and another document prepared for the conference contains the principles upon which assimilation policy was based.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED TO INVESTIGATE CONDUCT OF MIGRANTS, 1946-57  
MP598/51****Recorded by:****Sir John Klunder Jensen (CP 138)****Melbourne      0.2 metres**

This series consists of the report of a committee which met in April 1957 to consider the 'general standard of conduct' of migrants under postwar schemes, incidence of serious crime among non-British migrants, and whether the incidence of crime in Australia could be attributed to any particular section of the community. The report includes an interesting discussion of these issues plus some statistical analysis of the incidence of crime among aliens versus the wider population.

## Aliens

The existence of a category of citizenship requires the existence of a category of non-citizen or alien. Between the First World War and the 1950s much more of the Commonwealth's attention was devoted to the presence and conduct of aliens than the meaning of citizenship. For the Commonwealth, aliens constituted a threat to Australian security, unless they could be effectively assimilated, since they retained allegiance to foreign powers. The fundamental assumption shaping policies towards aliens during this period was that citizenship status provided an accurate guide to the political allegiance (and therefore political behaviour) of all 'civilised' people. On this basis the Commonwealth introduced controls over the conduct of aliens during both world wars, interned and deported 'enemy aliens' during those wars and planned for more of the same during the Cold War, and sought to register and otherwise track and observe aliens in Australia in peacetime as well as war. Research into the Commonwealth's treatment of aliens is essential for the study of citizenship in Australia, since the Commonwealth's policies governing aliens are just as significant as its more positive civic policies. Moreover, these policies on aliens are revealing for what citizenship meant in Australia.

The records discussed in this section cover a wide range of policies governing the conduct of aliens. A detailed history of these policies is beyond the scope of this guide, but a few points give a basic structure upon which the reader can pursue further research. During the First World War an array of regulations were introduced limiting the freedom of enemy aliens specifically, and aliens generally. Among these regulations were limitations on freedom of movement within the Commonwealth, and prohibitions on possessing firearms and other potential instruments of violence or sabotage. More significantly, compulsory registration of aliens was introduced – something that policymakers had been waiting for an opportune moment to initiate – and thousands of enemy aliens were interned, and many were later deported. Of the various wartime measures only registration endured after the war: temporary rules were replaced by an *Aliens Registration Act* in 1920. However, the scheme of registration introduced by the Act soon failed since it required the cooperation of the states, which was not forthcoming for financial reasons.

During the inter-war years the Commonwealth Investigation Branch strongly argued for the necessity of registering aliens as a security measure. For the CIB the appeal of aliens registration was that it would provide statistical knowledge of every alien in Australia. That information could be employed in individual investigations or to determine concentrations of aliens in particular localities or industries. The Branch pressed for the reintroduction of registration, but secured only an alternative system which required aliens to make a declaration of personal details (the 'A42' form) upon arrival in Australia. This remained the only system of aliens registration until the Second World War (although the A42 survived into the postwar era as a landing declaration) but it lacked accuracy and efficiency. The CIB was unable to track the movements of aliens within Australia and there was no provision for recording the exit of aliens from the country.



Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Investigation Branch maintained that the security of the Commonwealth required the supervision of aliens through technical bureaucratic methods. This entailed maintaining accurate records of the whereabouts of aliens and basic information about their occupations and families, statistical inquiries into concentrations of aliens, rates of naturalisation, intermarriage and other measurable phenomena connected to assimilation, and conducting regular investigations into foreign communities and organisations. All this was based firmly on the assumption that nationality denoted allegiance and that the retention of foreign languages and cultural practices in Australia constituted a risk to the security of the Commonwealth.

With the outbreak of war in 1939 the Commonwealth quickly enacted a new set of measures designed to control aliens, which closely resembled those which had operated during the previous war. Aliens were required to register and were subjected to various restrictions on their movement.<sup>43</sup> Internment soon followed. During the war, restrictions on aliens were subjected to scrutiny and argument between the military and internal security agencies, and the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee and the Department of the Interior. Impetus to the reconsideration of policies governing aliens came particularly from the presence in Australia of German Jews who were presumed under the existing policy regime to be sympathetic to the German government and therefore treated as enemy aliens. Ultimately, the Committee prevailed, and the postwar immigration program was based on notably different premises with respect to the loyalty of aliens. Nonetheless, the *Aliens Act 1947* continued registration, and during the Cold War ASIO built this into a mechanism for generating lists of aliens to intern in an emergency. The records generated by the agencies involved in these policies – particularly during the Second World War and from ASIO's later deliberations – provide compelling reading and insight into the nature of citizenship and allegiance in Australia.

Records relating to individuals are not listed here. There are several series in each state relating to alien registration, including applications for registration, aliens declaration forms, and requests for land transfers by aliens. These are listed in *Finding Families: The Guide to the National Archives of Australia for Genealogists*.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1929–**

**A432**

##### **Recorded by:**

**Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****Canberra and Sydney    2054.7 metres in Canberra; 352.6 metres in Sydney**

This series constitutes the main correspondence series of the Attorney-General's Department, and accordingly contains a large amount of material. While the contents of the series are mostly related to the period that the series was active (from 1929), useful material from as early as 1901 was incorporated into it.

The legal interpretation of citizenship in Australia was predominantly a function of the Attorney-General's Department, and its opinions and deliberations remain an important source for research into citizenship. Opinions were issued mostly in

<sup>43</sup> A full list of the duties of aliens and enemy aliens and powers over them can be found in annexure C of Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee, *Interim Report*, 14 March 1943, NAA: [A373, 4830/3A](#).

response to requests from other parts of the Commonwealth government for guidance of particular constitutional or legal issues. Many of these are potentially of interest, particularly those concerned with immigration and naturalisation. The other side of correspondence with the Attorney-General's Department can often be located within the files of the agency requesting an opinion on a particular problem, and places the problem in a broader context.

**Rights and disabilities of aliens in Australia, 1920–42      A432, 1960/3142**

This item contains documents detailing the legal restrictions imposed on aliens in each state and territory, including lists of professions aliens could not enter. It also includes a paper prepared by the Pacific Branch of the Prime Minister's Department in 1920 called 'Discrimination against Persons of Non-European Race in Australia'.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'W' (WAR) PREFIX, 1914–27  
A456**

**Recorded by:**

**Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)**

**Canberra      8.2 metres**

The files in this series are concerned with policy and cases arising out of wartime legislation, many of which deal specifically with the control and internment of aliens.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'W' (WAR) PREFIX, 1939–49  
A472**

**Recorded by:**

**Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)**

**Canberra      44 metres**

This series consists of files concerning wartime legislation, and opinions and prosecutions under such statutes.

**Aliens Control (Prohibited Possessions) Order. National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations, 1940–46      A472, W1500**

Copies and drafts of orders and regulations for the control of aliens are found in this item, as is some associated administrative correspondence.

**PAPERS RELATING TO THE ALIENS INTERNMENT APPEAL TRIBUNAL AND ACTIVITIES OF  
THE GERMAN AND ITALIAN COMMUNITIES, 1939–41      CP504/1**

**Recorded by:**

**Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)**

**Canberra      0.7 metres**

The papers in this series are those of JD Holmes, who appeared for the Crown before the Aliens Tribunal. They are organised into four bundles of papers on appeal cases.

**CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO ALIENS TRIBUNALS, 1941–45****MP529/5****Recorded by:****Deputy Crown Solicitor's Office, Victoria (CA 889)****Melbourne      0.4 metres**

The five folders in this series are concerned with the appeals of internees. The contents include the Army's disputes with recommendations of the Aliens Tribunals.

**CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER TRIBUNALS AND ALIENS ADVISORY COMMITTEES, 1941–44****MP529/6****Recorded by:****Deputy Crown Solicitor's Office, Victoria (CA 889)****Melbourne      0.2 metres**

This series consists of a single item containing the reports of the Aliens Tribunal No. 4 (Victoria) from May to August 1941, and reports to other Tribunals from later years.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38****A1****Recorded by:****1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)****1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)****1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)****1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)****Canberra      445.7 metres**

This series contains the general filing of the Department of External Affairs (I) and its successors. It includes a diverse array of topics, including many files on the administration of immigration, naturalisation, and passports. Research in this series is time-consuming, since it is organised as an annual single number series, and files tend to deal with individual inquiries and responses, rather than themes over a period of time.

This series contains many files on aliens matters, mostly from the First World War and the 1920s. Those listed here are only a small sample of relevant files.

**Secret control of aliens in time of war, 1911–12      A1, 1913/6804**

In 1911 and 1912 the Council of Defence and the Department of External Affairs made plans for the control of aliens in the event of war. Their deliberations concluded that decisions on the precise nature of controls could not be made until the character of the war was known, and decided that aliens should be considered to be all 'non-British' people.

**Disabilities of Aliens and Coloured Persons in the Commonwealth and its Territories, 1920–21      A1, 1921/13034**

EL Piesse, then head of the Pacific Division of the Prime Minister's Department, compiled a memorandum in 1920 detailing the legal disabilities applied to aliens in Australia and those based on racial restrictions. The memorandum which is on this file includes all the state and territory governments as well as the Commonwealth.

**Aliens Registration Act 1920, 1919–22      A1, 1923/5625**

This file contains correspondence covering the preparation and intent of the Aliens Registration Act 1920, and its failure due to the refusal of the Western Australian government to cooperate.

**Treatment of aliens in time of war, 1921–25      A1, 1925/14505**

Documents in this file include a British parliamentary report on the topic and memoranda generated by the Australian government's consideration of the report.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, CLASS 6 (ALIENS REGISTRATION), 1946–50****A437****Recorded by:****Department of Immigration (CA 51)****Canberra      2.2 metres**

This series is one of several policy series maintained by the Department of Immigration between its establishment and 1950, when it adopted a single general policy file series (A445). Files in this series are mostly concerned with aliens registration policy, although some files bear on naturalisation policy.

This series is of great value since the Department of Immigration's records on aliens registration for the period 1946 to 1950 are concentrated here. Some files also deal with related policies of aliens control, alien migration, and the Civil Aliens Corps.

**Alien Control Bill, 1943–47      A437, 1946/6/85 Part 1**

The two parts of this file contain documents from the late period of the Second World War when plans were being made for a postwar regime of aliens control. The documents consider the disabilities and restrictions in place on aliens, and which of these are required in peacetime. A December 1945 draft Cabinet submission (in Part 2) provides an overview of the matters under consideration.

**Alien Control Bill, 1943–47      A437, 1946/6/85 Part 2****CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES (POLICY MATTERS), 1951–55  
A445****Recorded by:****Department of Immigration (CA 51)****Canberra      28.8 metres**

This series contains general policy files of the Department of Immigration for the period 1951 to 1955. Many files include top-numbered material from previous series. The series is organised thematically as a multiple number series, making for easy research.

There does not appear to be much material on naturalisation in this series, since those files dealing with the Nationality and Citizenship Act were top-numbered into A446. However, some files on other subjects contain documents bearing on naturalisation.

There are few files in this series directly concerning aliens policies, since most were top-numbered into A446, including all of those on aliens registration.

**Aliens Classification Committee – Modification of Naturalization Policy –  
Enemy and Refugee Aliens, 1943–45      A445, 230/16/19**

This file contains the second report of the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee and the responses of the Security Service and the Department of the Interior to it. The latter is of particular interest, and the strong differences between the various government agencies are readily apparent here.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK  
ALLOCATIONS, 1953–      A446**

Recorded by:

**1953–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra and Sydney      2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

This series is the main correspondence series for the Department of Immigration and its successors from 1953. The series contains both case files and policy files. The latter are numbered above 65000, while case files are numbered below that figure. Despite heavy culling of files from this series, much valuable material remains. This series contains an extensive amount of material that has not yet been opened for public access, and it warrants considerable attention from researchers. The series contains many files on the adoption and amendment of the Nationality and Citizenship Act. Those listed below are particularly helpful.

This series contains a number of files relevant to the treatment and control of aliens. Unfortunately, some important material in this series has not survived, but files on aliens registration remain.

**Aliens Registration – General Policy – Part 4, 1955–59      A446, 1967/70457**

The previous parts of this file are numbered 1967/70454, 1967/70455 and 1967/70456. Those files cover the period 1947–55, while this one is of particular interest for its discussions between the Department of Immigration and ASIO in 1957 over the control of aliens. Differing assumptions about the allegiance and behaviour of aliens are evident between the parties here.

**SECRET CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK  
ALLOCATIONS AND 'S' (SECRET) PREFIX, 1972–      A6980**

Recorded by:

**1972–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Sydney      80.3 metres**

Material in this series bearing on aliens mostly concerns the Department of Immigration's relations with ASIO: these documents were kept in this series due to security classifications.

This series constitutes an invaluable and largely untapped source of material on the Department of Immigration's activities during the postwar period. The series was established in 1972 from the Department's existing secret and top secret files in A445 and A446. Accordingly, few documents with these classifications remain in those series. Material contained in this series stretches back to the inter-war years since the Department of Immigration took over various Department of Interior files.

**Alien Registration Utilisation of Records for Various Purposes, 1958–67  
A6980, S250154**

Memoranda in this file are concerned with the uses of aliens registration records. These included sending out letters to aliens encouraging them to take out naturalisation, as well as ASIO's security tasks. One memorandum canvasses

cheaper options for continuing registration since the cost of maintaining registration records had become too onerous.

**War Book File Number 1 – Policy, 1952–58      A6980, S250194**

This file contains correspondence between ASIO and the Department of Immigration over the control of aliens in the event of war. The War Book itself and the regulations to be introduced in the event of war are on this file.

**Aliens Registration – Request by Security Service for maintenance of records of aliens of special interest – Part 1, 1951–65      A6980, S250261 PART 1**

These files contain documents on the so-called 'special index' by which ASIO and the Department of Immigration cooperated to generate lists of aliens for internment from the aliens register. This process revolved around perceptions of the allegiance of particular categories of aliens, and these categories are laid out here, offering insights into ASIO's view of the international and domestic political situations.

**Aliens Registration – Request by Security Service for maintenance of records of aliens of special interest – Part 2, 1951–65      A6980, S250262**

**CASE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1946–**

**A3532**

**Recorded by:**

**Aliens Committee (CA 2082)**

**Canberra      0.5 metres**

A single folder comprises this series. The folder contains correspondence, memoranda and discussion papers from the Aliens Committee which operated during 1918. The Committee was established to consider whether aliens in Australia should be deported at the end of the war, whether restrictions should be imposed on their entry, whether changes to naturalisation policy were needed, and what should be done with their property. Records regarding the Committee subsequent to the presentation of its report can be found in series A2.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1904–20**

**A2**

**Recorded by:**

**1904–11: Prime Minister's Office (CA 588)**

**1911–20: Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra      30.1 metres**

This series contains the earliest correspondence records of the Prime Minister's Department. Only about ten per cent of the series is extant, since many files were either top-numbered into later series, or were destroyed. The series now mostly contains material from around the First World War, including much on the treatment of aliens reflecting the government's obsession with aliens of that time.

**Aliens – Possession of Freehold Property, 1917      A2, 1917/4122**

A memorandum in this file by RR Garran, Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, lays out the legal position in 1917 for the possession of land by aliens. 'Alien enemies' are differentiated from 'alien friends', the former being covered by the wartime regulatory regime.

**Aliens on wharves and ships, 1917–18      A2, 1918/1719**

Documents in this file concern government attempts to ensure that 'doubtful' aliens are not permitted on wharves or ships where they might sabotage Australian shipping.

**Aliens Committee, 1918–19      A2, 1919/590**

This file contains the report of the Aliens Committee which operated in 1918 and 1919, and Cabinet's comments on the report.

**Aliens Committee (Australia), 1919      A2, 1919/1780**

The Committee's report is also contained in this item, along with the Prime Minister's letter to the Premiers reporting the Committee's recommendations.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, SECOND SYSTEM, 1923–34  
A458****Recorded by:**

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra      49.9 metres**

This series continues the records of the Prime Minister's Department from A457. A new numbering system was adopted with this series, but it works similarly to the system in A457, again simplifying research. In this series naturalisation files are denoted by the number 158/1. Individual files are allocated letter prefixes, as in A457.

Files on the treatment of aliens are mostly organised under the number 150/1.

**Aliens Registration Act, 1920–26      A458, B150/1**

This valuable file contains important documents on the adoption of the Aliens Registration Act 1920, the breakdown of its system of registration, and efforts in 1924 and 1925 to establish a new system.

**Aliens – Restrictions Orders, 1920–36      A458, B150/1**

Among other documents, this file contains a copy of the report of the Aliens Committee.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES WITH VARIABLE ALPHABETICAL  
PREFIX AND GENERAL PREFIX 'SC', FOURTH SYSTEM, 1939–47      A1608****Recorded by:**

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra      20.8 metres**

This series contains classified material from the Prime Minister's Department dating from the Second World War. There are hundreds of items which bear on the control of aliens, and their contents are important for research in this area.

**General Control of Aliens – Policy, 1939–48      A1608, A19/1/1 part 1**

The contents of this file mainly concern the administrative arrangements for the registration of aliens during the Second World War. Many documents relate to the government's decision in September 1939 to introduce new regulations for the registration of aliens rather than to employ the *Aliens Registration Act 1939* which had been passed in June but had not commenced.

**War 1939 – Enemy Aliens Internment – Policy      A1608, L20/1/1 part 1**

Within this item is some interesting and assorted correspondence on the establishment of Australian internment policy at the beginning of the Second World War, and information on American and British policies which were used as models

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES (GENERAL), 1911–21****MP1049/1****Recorded by:**

**1911–15: Navy Office (I), Department of Defence (I) (CA 575)**  
**1915–21: Navy Office (II), Department of the Navy (I) (CA 13)**  
**1921: Navy Office (III), Department of Defence (II) (CA 2456)**

**Melbourne      12.8 metres**

This series consists of security-classified documents relating to a variety of naval functions, including aliens in Australia. The series is organised as an annual single number system with an 'O' infix. In addition to the single example given here, there are several more files bearing on aliens policies during and around the First World War.

**Aliens employed and living near naval bases – intelligence reports, 1914–18**  
**MP1049/1, 1914/0472**

This file contains a variety of reports on suspicious people near naval bases. One report of the Newcastle police (1916) advises details of individual Germans, Austrians, Norwegians, and Danes living on the mid-north coast of New South Wales. The report mentions the naturalisation status of each person and reports on their character. Several were recommended for internment.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'W' WAR PREFIX, 1914–17**  
**B543**

**Recorded by:**

**Department of Defence (I) (CA 6)**

**Melbourne      1.6 metres**

The files in this series relate to First World War matters other than the Australian Imperial Force. Among the topics dealt with in this series is the treatment of aliens.

**Instructions relative to the internment and treatment of alien enemies, 1914**  
**B543, W175/1/438**

This file contains a copy of a sixteen-page booklet. Some older drafts and proof copies are also on file.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES, 1917–29****MP367/1****Recorded by:**

**1917–21: Department of Defence (I) (CA 6)**  
**1921–29: Department of Defence (II) (CA 19)**

**Melbourne      40.3 metres**

The contents of this series relate to the administration of Australia's military forces. The series is organised as a multiple number series, the key to which is available in the National Archives Melbourne office. The numbers relevant here are 479 which denotes foreign matters, and 512 which denotes intelligence material. There are also some files on aliens registration which begin with the number 583.

**Inspection of aliens on coastline of New South Wales, 1918      MP367/1,**  
**512/3/824**

Within this file is a single compilation of aliens living on the New South Wales coast, including a paragraph of details on each enemy alien. To take one instance, Albert Shlefeldt was born in 1854 in Hanover, came to Australia 1878, was naturalised in New South Wales 1897, and had been previously naturalised in Victoria and South



Australia. Shlefeldt was regarded well since he had an Australian-born wife, a son in the Australian Imperial Force, and had contributed £9 000 to government war loans.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER (MELBOURNE) SERIES, 1922–60  
A705**

**Recorded by:**

**1922–39: Air Services Branch (CA 778)**

**1939–60: Department of Air (CA 35)**

**Canberra and Melbourne    66.5 metres in Canberra; 14.4 metres in Melbourne**

This series contains the main correspondence files of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) from 1922 to 1960, and until 1938 this included civil aviation matters. While the RAAF was not of great significance in aliens control matters, records on the Commonwealth's War Book are preserved here.

**War Book [paper] Number 8 – Control and Treatment of Aliens, 1926–28  
A705, 56/2/8**

The sole document in this item is Paper Number 8 of the Commonwealth War Book, which sets out policy regarding aliens in the event of war, including the responsibilities of individual government departments.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES (CLASSIFIED 301), 1935–58  
A816**

**Recorded by:**

**1935–39: Department of Defence (II) (CA 19)**

**1939–42: Department of Defence Co-ordination (CA 37)**

**1942–58: Department of Defence (III) (CA 46)**

**Canberra    85.8 metres**

This series contains all the classified correspondence of the Department of Defence during the period 1935 to 1958. The series is organised in a complicated numbering system, of which further details can be obtained from the database or the National Archives in Canberra. File numbers commencing with 54 are concerned with aliens and internment.

**Aliens Control – Ports at which Aliens may arrive and depart, 1939–43    A816,  
54/301/8**

This item contains copies of orders and other correspondence relating to restricted military locations. With respect to the file's title, another document specifies that aliens are permitted to depart or arrive in the Commonwealth by sea only through the major ports, or by air only through Sydney or Darwin.

**Treatment of Aliens, 1939–42    A816, 54/301/330**

This file contains cables and correspondence with the British government and Australian missions about alien control matters.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1939–42****MP508/1****Recorded by:****1939: Army Headquarters, Department of Defence (II) (CA 2671)****1939–42: Department of the Army (CA 36)****Melbourne 132.7 metres**

This series contains over 200 files on various topics bearing on the civic status of aliens, particularly the operations of the Aliens Tribunals, internment, the movement of aliens, and employment and work matters for aliens. As the date range for the series suggests, all these files date from the Second World War. Conveniently for researchers the series is organised as a multiple number series in which files on foreigners in Australia begin with the number 115. A full key to the series is available in the Melbourne office.

**Internment of Enemy Aliens, 1942 MP508/1, 115/703/553**

This file contains representations from members of the public over internment. Of most interest are a few petitions calling for the internment of enemy aliens. The largest was organised by the 'Diggers Association (Queensland)', and urged the internment of enemy aliens without exception.

**Registration of Aliens, 1942 MP508/1, 115/703/560**

Like the example immediately above, this file also contains correspondence with the public over internment policy. Among the parties calling for further internments was the Parents and Citizens Association of Murwillumbah Primary School.

**DEFENCE ARMY SERIES (401), 1936–45****MP729/6****Recorded by:****1936–39: Department of Defence (II) (CA 19)****1939–45: Department of the Army (CA 36)****Melbourne 26.3 metres**

This series employs a multiple number system in which most files on aliens topics are numbered starting with 65. Nearly fifty files begin with this number, while smaller numbers of files can be found under other subject numbers. See the item list in the National Archives Melbourne office for more information.

**Internment matters, 1939 MP729/6, 65/401/7**

This item contains documents on the principles for deciding which aliens should be interned at the outbreak of the Second World War. 'The basic principle in connection with internment is that enemy aliens of military age, or any persons who are reasonably suspected as being likely to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety or the defence of the Commonwealth, or as being likely to cause disaffection, are regarded as suitable subjects for internment on the outbreak of war.' It is worth nothing that this principle underwent many alternations during the war, as internment policy was contested and reconsidered.

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1943–51****MP742/1****Recorded by:****Department of the Army (CA 36)****Melbourne 162.69 metres**

This series contains files relating to the administration of the Australian Army. The files bearing on aliens are mostly concerned with their employment and their

participation in the war effort. Like MP508/1 above, the series is organised as a multiple number system in which 115 indicates foreigners.

**Deportation of aliens at conclusion of hostilities, 1941–43      MP742/1, 115/1/23**

This small file concerns the deportation of interned aliens at the end of the war, and dates from before the appointment of the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee.

**Aliens in the AMF      MP742/1, 115/1/315**

The documents in this file relate to an attempt to compile a statement on the number of aliens who served in the Australian Military Forces during the war. Approximately 2 019 aliens who were never interned, and 630 ex-internees served in employment companies, and are broken down into nationalities. Unfortunately, further information was not compiled here.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH YEAR PREFIX, 1916–27, AND 'C' PREFIX, 1927–53      A367**

**Recorded by:**

**1916–19: Special Intelligence Bureau (CA 746)**  
**1919–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CA 747)**  
**1946–53: Commonwealth Investigation Service (CA 650)**

**Canberra      66.6 metres**

The Commonwealth Investigation Branch became a crucial element in the naturalisation approval process during the 1920s, responsible for interviewing and assessing applicants and making recommendations to the Department of Home and Territories on each application. The Branch's particular angle on the significance of naturalisation and the allegiance of applicants provides fascinating insights into naturalisation policy from the First until the Second World War. Documents on naturalisation policy and procedure are contained in the various parts and attachments of file C1145.

The Commonwealth Investigation Branch was crucial to Commonwealth policies concerning aliens between the wars, and valuable material is contained in this series. Files on aliens, including alien migration, begin with the number C3075.

**Aliens Registration Policy – Submissions of, 1920–22      A367, C3075A**

This file contains documents setting out the views of the Investigation Branch on the necessity of registering aliens, and controlling aliens more generally, and memoranda on the efforts of the Branch to put in place a system it regarded as adequate.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1941–49      A373**

**Recorded by:**

**1941–45: Security Service (CA 660)**  
**1945–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CA 747)**  
**1946–49: Commonwealth Investigation Service (CA 650)**

**Canberra      7.4 metres**

This series contains records created by the Security Service during and shortly after the Second World War. The Service became a central point for the assessment of naturalisation applicants, and had a wider role in determining naturalisation policy through its responsibility for aliens control matters. Many of the records in this series are correspondence and reports surrounding the deliberations of the Aliens

Classification and Advisory Committee. Files bearing on naturalisation are scattered throughout the series.

The Security Service was vital to the Commonwealth's policies on aliens during the Second World War, and there is much valuable material contained in this series. The examples listed below are only a few of the interesting files to be found in this series.

**Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee Report, 1942–43      A373, 4830/3A**

This file contains a report of the Committee plus correspondence between the Security Service and the Attorney-General over the report's recommendations. The Committee rejected the Security Service's views on the reclassification of aliens.

**Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee – Control of Aliens as a Post-War Security Measure, 1944      A373, 10511**

The contents of this file are principally concerned with whether aliens registration should be continued after the Second World War. The Secretary of the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee, NW Lamidey, helpfully lays out a whole history of aliens control from the First World War to 1944, and provides a useful overview of this period.

**SUBJECT FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1949–**

**A6122**

Recorded by:

**Australian Security Intelligence Organization (CA 1297)**

**Canberra      42.3 metres**

Unlike most government agencies which are required under the *Archives Act* to deposit all records more than 30 years old with the National Archives, ASIO's records are transferred to the National Archives only after a researcher requests files on a certain topic. Accordingly, this series consists of policy files opened at the request of researchers, and does not contain all of ASIO's holdings. The file numbering system is accordingly one imposed by the Archives. ASIO took an active role in naturalisation matters from soon after its establishment. It took over the vetting of applicants, and generally offered advice to the Department of Immigration on naturalisation policy.

**Defence Warfare Warbook and Preparations for War, Emergency Measures, Control of Aliens – General – Volumes 1, 1951–61      A6122, 1281**

These three huge files contain ASIO's records of its planning for the internment and control of aliens in time of war during the 1950s. Memoranda, correspondence and other documents offer insights into ASIO's policies and thinking, and its relations with the Department of Immigration over aliens matters. Given the excellent chronological organisation of the material in these files, they offer the best comprehensive set of documents on the subject. Read in conjunction with the Department of Immigration files on the subject, some of which were identified above, sufficient records exist to reconstruct this episode in Australian public policy.

**Defence Warfare Warbook and Preparations for War, Emergency Measures, Control of Aliens – General – Volumes 2, 1951–61      A6122, 1282**

**Defence Warfare Warbook and Preparations for War, Emergency Measures, Control of Aliens – General – Volumes 3, 1951–61      A6122, 1283**

**ALIEN REGISTRATION FORMS, 1914–18****MT269/1****Recorded by:****1914–16: Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****1916–18: Special Intelligence Bureau (CA 746)****Melbourne 4.9 metres**

This series contains what is probably the only complete record of aliens registered during the First World War. It consists of 49 bundles of papers in 28 boxes. Bundles are arranged by nationality, and the papers within them are organised alphabetically

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'V' (VICTORIA) PREFIX, 1924–62**  
**B741****Recorded by:****1924–45: Commonwealth Investigation Branch, Victoria (CA 907)****1945–60: Commonwealth Investigation Service, Victoria (CA 916)****1960–62: Commonwealth Police Force (II), Victoria (CA 955)****Melbourne 28.98 metres**

Like SP1714/1 above, this series contains the investigation and policy files of a state office of the Investigation Branch, in this case the Victorian office. Although it seems that policy files of the sort kept in New South Wales were never compiled or have not survived, some select documents on naturalisation can be located.

This series contains some files of particular interest on the topic of aliens during the inter-war years since the Investigation Branch Inspector in Melbourne throughout the inter-war years, RS Browne, was the most persistent advocate of the registration of aliens. Browne's views, which can be found in the files mentioned below and elsewhere in the series, are valuable for his forthright views on the dangers posed by an unsupervised alien presence in Australia.

**Alien Registration Correspondence Forms A42 Central Index, 1927–48**  
**B741, V/4882**

This file contains correspondence on the central index of A42 forms which RS Browne, Investigation Branch Inspector in Melbourne, maintained as a substitute for a more substantial system of aliens registration. He differed with the Branch's Director, HE Jones, over the benefits of this process.

**Alien Migration and Registration B741, V/5288**

This file also contains correspondence on the Investigation Branch's efforts to register aliens.

**REGISTER OF INTERNEES, 1919****C440****Recorded by:****Commonwealth Investigation Branch, New South Wales (CA 904)****All Offices Microfilm copy**

This series consists of a register of people interned in New South Wales during the First World War. It lists name, number, occupation, date of internment, date of release or death, and other details. A photograph number for each internee is also listed in the register allowing reference to a series of photographs (SP421/4) held in Sydney.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'Q' (QUEENSLAND) PREFIX,  
1924–61 BP242/1****Recorded by:**

**1924–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch, Qld (CA 753)**  
**1945–60: Commonwealth Investigation Service, Qld (CA 913)**  
**1960–61: Commonwealth Police Force (II), Qld (CA 952)**

**Brisbane 46.5 metres**

Like the series created by other state offices of the Investigation Branch, this series contains both policy and case files, and some useful material on the Investigation Branch's conduct of inquiries into naturalisation applicants.

**CASE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1946– J25****Recorded by:**

**1946–74: Department of Immigration, Queensland (CA 958)**

**Brisbane 1855.2 metres**

Misleadingly titled 'case files', this series also contains records concerning policy and the activities of the Queensland branch of the Department of Immigration, along similar lines to the NSW series C3939. The process of locating policy files is complicated by the enormous quantity of case files in the series, but useful material is preserved here.

**Alien Registration General/Policy (Aliens Act 1947), 1948–51 J25, 1949/830**

The contents of this file concern a conference of Department of Immigration officials on the administration of aliens registration since the Aliens Act 1947.

**INVESTIGATION CASE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'SS' PREFIX, 1942–46  
D1919****Recorded by:**

**1942–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch, SA (CA 905)**  
**1946: Commonwealth Investigation Service, SA (CA 914)**

**Adelaide 1.6 metres**

The files in this series were created mostly by the Security Service during the Second World War, and cover the range of its activities. Some earlier material from Investigation Branch files was also incorporated into the series.

**Alien Classification Committee, 1942–44 D1919, SS1006**

This absolutely invaluable file contains long formal reports of the views of the Security Service in each state on the matters under consideration by the Aliens Classification and Advisory Committee. Also informal letters between the officers of the Security Service commenting on the Committee's activities are found here. It does not appear that any of the material here has been preserved elsewhere in the National Archives collection. For insight into the Committee's deliberations and the many views on aliens matters within the Security Service and the Commonwealth more generally this file should be consulted.

## Aboriginal people and non-Europeans

The foregoing sections on assimilation and aliens demonstrate that eligibility for citizenship was closely related to matters of national identity throughout the seventy years with which this guide is concerned. In addition to the various conditions expected of aliens before they would be regarded or treated as Australian citizens, citizenship in Australia was also determined by a set of racial restrictions until the 1960s. These restrictions can be broadly divided between those affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those covering non-European immigrants to Australia, although linkages in the racial discourse and legal treatment were present.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were largely excluded from citizenship in Australia for a long period, and a well-researched literature has developed around this subject.<sup>44</sup> This section refers only briefly to material directly concerning Aboriginal citizenship matters, since a comprehensive guide to National Archives records held in Canberra on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was published in 1993.<sup>45</sup> Researchers with particular interests in this area should consult that guide. Its index is particularly useful on a wide range of topics. A range of racial discriminations was also applied to the civic status and rights of non-Europeans (other than Aboriginal people). The franchise and pensions are two significant areas in which the Commonwealth applied racial disqualifiers to citizenship rights. Many more covering certain occupations, licences, and property rights were applied by state governments.

The basis of many racial exclusions – covering both Aboriginal people and non-European immigrants – was the term 'aboriginal native'. Section 127 of the Constitution (prior to its repeal in 1967) stipulated that 'aboriginal natives' would not be counted in reckoning the population of the Commonwealth. Implied here was that the people concerned were aboriginal natives of Australia. In most other statutes a geographical concept was added, hence the Naturalization Act prohibited the naturalisation of 'aboriginal natives of Asia, Africa, or the Islands of the Pacific, excepting New Zealand'. Variants of this were employed in many statutes as the most reliable indicator of non-European race.<sup>46</sup> A recent study of the term observed:

The term 'native', it seems, was imbued with the idea of nativity, or birth in a particular place... 'Aboriginal', on the other hand, had a related meaning but in early Australian usage was given a different slant. Like the British 'native', aboriginal meant being the original inhabitant of a place or descendant thereof... When finally defined, aboriginal native was deemed a composite

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<sup>44</sup> Davidson, *From Subject to Citizen*, Chapter 6. John Chesterman and Brian Galligan, *Citizens without Rights: Aborigines and Australian Citizenship*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997. Pat Stretton and Christine Finnimore, 'Black fellow citizens: Aborigines and the Commonwealth Franchise', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 25, no. 101, October 1993, pp. 521–35.

<sup>45</sup> Ros Fraser, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Commonwealth Records*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1993.

<sup>46</sup> *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902–18, Sugar Bounty Act 1905, Bounties Act 1907, Invalid and Old-Age Pensions Act 1908, Widows' Pensions Act 1942, Unemployment and Sickness Benefits Act 1944, Maternity Allowance Act 1912, Child Endowment Act 1941, Emigration Act 1910, and Passports Act 1920–38*. Tom Clarke and Brian Galligan, 'Protecting the Citizen Body: The Commonwealth's Role in Shaping and Defending an "Australian" Population', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 30, 1995, pp. 454–5.

term meaning a descendant of the original race of a particular region who was also born in that place.<sup>47</sup>

The significance of the term should not be exaggerated. While its application had important implications for access to the rights and status of citizenship, it never fitted neatly with the racial assumptions which underpinned policy objectives. As a legal indicator, it was reasonably reliable, but not infallible: its efficacy for racial specification was limited because those people who belonged to a non-European race according to prevailing racial ideas, but had been born in a place not regarded as the natural home of their race, were not aboriginal natives. In the case of the Naturalization Act the term provided only a minimum exclusion since the Commonwealth denied naturalisation to people of non-European race even if they were not aboriginal natives of somewhere other than Europe. Many of the records referred to below are fascinating for their attempts to translate racially discriminatory policy prescriptions into effective legal formulations.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1929–**

**A432**

Recorded by:

**Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)**

**Canberra and Sydney    2054.7 metres in Canberra; 352.6 metres in Sydney**

The records of the Attorney-General's Department are referred to in almost every section of this guide, and again there are many files in this series relating to the civic status and rights of Aboriginal people. A large number of files deal with Aborigines and the criminal law, while others are concerned with matters such as Aboriginal representation in parliament. Some files are very small, containing only a few folios.

**Hon. HS Gullett – Re enrolment of Aboriginal Natives on Electoral Rolls, 1929  
A432, 1929/220**

This item contains a 1929 opinion of the Attorney-General's Department, in which Robert Garran, the Solicitor-General, stood by his 1905 opinion that people of more than half Aboriginal 'blood' were not eligible for electoral enrolment.

**Aboriginal Natives of Australia – National Status, 1961    A432, 1961/3180**

The contents of this file were created by the Attorney-General's Department in the process of responding to requests for information from the Select Committee on the Voting Rights of Aborigines. Some deliberation occurred over the Commonwealth's constitutional powers, and the meanings of the terms 'Aboriginal native' and 'Aboriginal race'.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, THIRD SYSTEM, 1934–50**

**A461**

Recorded by:

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra    143.8 metres**

Like A457 and A458 this series is based on a multiple number system with a letter prefix denoting individual files. The contents of this series are more substantial than its two predecessors since much useful material was top-numbered into it.

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<sup>47</sup> Clarke and Galligan, 'Protecting the Citizen Body', pp. 455–6.



**Aboriginals – Policy, 1933–50      A461, A300/1 Part 1**

These files are the general policy records of the Prime Minister's Department on Aboriginal policy matters. The contents are diverse and of considerable interest, including policy statements on the administration of the Northern Territory, much material on policy regarding inter-racial marriage, and representations of Aboriginal organisations.

**Aboriginals – Policy, 1933–50      A461, A300/1 Part 2****Aboriginals – Policy, 1933–50      A461, A300/1 Part 3****Aboriginals – Policy, 1933–50      A461, A300/1 Part 4****Aboriginals – Policy, 1933–50      A461, A300/1 Part 5****Invalid and old age pensions for Aborigines, 1936–47      A461, N382/1/1**

This item contains correspondence on access by Aborigines to pensions, maternity allowances and similar social benefits.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH OCCASIONAL 'G' (GENERAL REPRESENTATIONS) INFIX, 1956–      A463****Recorded by:**

**1956–71: Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra and Sydney      543.7 metres in Canberra; 184 metres in Sydney**

This series deals with topics directly under the control of the Prime Minister, and reflects the coordinating role of the Prime Minister's Department with its diverse array of topics. Among these topics are some files on citizenship and naturalisation matters. Given the nature of the role of the Prime Minister's Department, these files do not provide the insight into policy deliberations which can be found in the records of agencies with direct responsibility for policy formulation.

**Voting rights for Aborigines, 1961–62      A463, 1966/793**

The report of the Select Committee on Aborigines and the franchise is found here, in addition to a copy of its minutes and proceedings. There is also a considerable amount of policy correspondence from 1960, and an assortment of public representations on the issue.

**MENZIES AND HOLT MINISTRIES – CABINET FILES 'C' SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1958–67      A4940****Recorded by:**

**Secretary to Cabinet/Cabinet Secretariat (I) (CA 3)**

**Canberra      77.8 metres**

This series contains Cabinet files arranged by subject. Typically files include Cabinet submissions and associated correspondence between the responsible department and the Cabinet office.

**Voting rights for Aborigines, policy, 1961–62      A4940, C3496**

The Report from the Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines (1961) is contained in this file, as are the deliberations and Cabinet submission which followed the report. One Cabinet document claims that:

The exclusion [of the bulk of the Aboriginal population from the franchise] is based not on grounds of colour, but because to the aborigines, living outside the general community in a tribal or nomadic style, the general Australian society and its conduct of Government has been largely irrelevant.

**PAPERS OF THE COMMITTEE, 1961****AA1982/247****Recorded by:****House of Representatives Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines (CA 3195)****Canberra 1.8 metres**

This Committee was charged with inquiring into the question of whether the entitlement to enrol and vote under the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918–53 should be extended to all, or certain categories of, Aboriginal people. The Committee travelled the country, interviewing 327 witnesses.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'E' PREFIX, 1901–A406****Recorded by:****1901–16: Department of Home Affairs (I) (CA 8)****1916–18: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)****1918–73: Chief Electoral Office (CA 558)****Canberra and Sydney 205.2 metres in Canberra; 10.3 metres in Sydney**

Material in this series relates to the organisation of elections and referendums. While the next chapter deals with electoral rights in more detail, it is worth noting the many files in this series dealing with racial eligibility requirements for the franchise.

**Whether half-caste Aboriginal Natives of Queensland over 21 are precluded from having their name on the roll, 1905 A406, E1905/9383**

An inquiry from the Chief Protector of Aborigines in Queensland to the Attorney-General's Department initiated this file. The Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, RR Garran, recommended that half-castes not be disqualified from enrolment since they were not 'aboriginal natives' within the meaning of the Constitution, but that all people in whom Aboriginal 'blood' preponderates be disqualified.

**Enrolment. Status of Asiatics, Aboriginal Natives of Asia, Africa, etc, 1915–46 A406, E1945/1 Part 1**

These large files are packed with legal opinions over general policy and specific cases, and policy documents bearing on racial limitations on the enrolment of non-Europeans. Papers by AP Elkin on Aborigines and the franchise may also interest some researchers.

**Enrolment. Status of Asiatics, Aboriginal Natives of Asia, Africa, etc, 1915–46 A406, E1945/1 Part 2**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38****A1****Recorded by:**

**1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)**  
**1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15);**  
**1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)**  
**1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**

**Canberra 445.7 metres**

This series contains the general filing of the Department of External Affairs (I) and its successors. It includes a diverse array of topics, including many files on the administration of immigration, naturalisation, and passports. Research in this series is time-consuming, since it is organised as an annual single number series, and files tend to deal with individual inquiries and responses, rather than themes over a period of time.

As with many topics previously discussed in this volume, the A1 series is an invaluable source of information. Given the responsibilities of the various departments which created the series, it contains a range of files on the civic status of non-Europeans in Australia and Aboriginal people.

**Interpretation of the Words 'Aboriginal Native', 1904 A1, 1904/4979**

The documents in this small file relate to an opinion that Joseph Bakhsh could not be naturalised since he was of Syrian origin and was an 'aboriginal native' of Asia within the meaning of the Naturalization Act 1903.

**Disabilities of Aliens and Coloured Persons in the Commonwealth and its Territories, 1920–21 A1, 1921/13034**

This valuable file was cited above in respect of disabilities applied to aliens in Commonwealth and state law. The same document prepared by EL Piesse, head of the Pacific Division of the Prime Minister's Department, also details the disabilities applied to 'coloured persons'.

**Aboriginal Natives Claim for Federal Enrolment, 1924 A1, 1924/28379**

The contents of this file relate to a 1924 test case in which Mitta Bullosh, 'an Aboriginal Native of India', won a ruling from a police magistrate that he be enrolled to vote. The Electoral Office decided to appeal, and a number of press clippings surrounding the case and the Commonwealth's response are on file.

**Enrolment of Half Castes. Question of, 1928–34 A1, 1934/4190**

In 1929 the Department of Home Affairs asked the Attorney-General for a more definite interpretation of 'aboriginal natives' in the Constitution and the Electoral Act. The Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, RR Garran, replied that his 1905 decision on the topic was quite clear, and dismissed the suggestion that the terms 'mulatto', 'quadroon', and 'octoroon' (which he described as 'American') might be legally useful. Other papers on this file date from 1934, and relate to discussions over the voting of half-castes; one document states that compulsory enrolment and voting was not enforced in respect of half-castes.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, CLASS 1 (GENERAL, PASSPORTS), 1939–50****A659****Recorded by:**

**1939: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**  
**1939–45: Department of the Interior (II) (CA 31)**  
**1945–50: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra 101.3 metres**

This series initially contained the general correspondence files of the Department of the Interior, but after the establishment of the Department of Immigration in 1945 the series was instead devoted to the new department's passport and general files. Accordingly, the contents of the series are somewhat mixed, although recent identification work by the National Archives has made access much easier for researchers.

**Australian Aborigines' League, 1936–41 A659, 1940/1/858**

In this file is a long and detailed correspondence between the Commonwealth government and the Australian Aborigines' League on the treatment of Aboriginal people. Among the many papers here are commentaries from 'an Educated Aboriginal' on Commonwealth policy and the position of Aboriginal people.

**Nationality Act – Attorney-General's Opinion, 1920–43 A659, 1943/1/1330**

This file is packed with opinions on the Naturalization Act and the Nationality Act. Many of the opinions relate to individual cases, while others address broader policy matters. Some opinions date back as far as 1904.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1946–****A431****Recorded by:**

**Department of the Interior (II) (CA 31)**

**Canberra 285.4 metres**

This series contains the main policy and correspondence files for the administration of the Australian Capital Territory, and for the Northern Territory between 1946 and 1951.

**Representation of Aborigines in Commonwealth Parliament, 1933–49 A431, 1949/1591**

The contents of this file relate to a 1933 proposal for Aborigines to be represented in parliament. The file contains a petition from South Australian churches and public organisations on this matter, and a 1938 Cabinet submission from the Minister for the Interior, J McEwan, recommending that no action be taken.

**Australian Half-caste Progressive Association. Appeal for full citizenship rights for Aborigines, 1951–53 A431, 1951/889**

This small file contains some press clippings, and reports on public meetings calling for citizenship for Aboriginal people in 1951.

**Citizen Rights for Aborigines – Northern Territory, 1951–53 A431, 1950/597**

A variety of material relating to citizenship rights for Aboriginal people is found on this file. There are reports of public meetings, pamphlets from the Aborigines' Uplift Society, a Cabinet submission on extending the franchise to Aborigines in the military, and many public representations.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1951–75****A452****Recorded by:****1951–68: Department of Territories (I) (CA 60)****1968–73: Department of External Territories (II) (CA 1284)****Canberra 894.4 metres**

With the creation of the Department of Territories in 1951, the responsibility for managing Australia's territories was passed from the Department of Interior to the new department. This series contains the main correspondence files of the new department. The files dated between 1951 and 1956 relate exclusively to the Northern Territory, whereas after 1956 the series contains files on all of Australia's internal and external territories.

**Council for Aboriginal Rights – General file, 1952–60****A452, 1957/479**

This item contains correspondence between the Council for Aboriginal Rights and the Department of Territories over the administration of the Northern Territory and the treatment of Aboriginal people. Some interesting documents bear on policies of assimilation.

**Citizen rights for Aborigines – Northern Territory (General representations), 1954–56 A452, 1957/535**

As the title suggests, this file contains representations from various groups in Australia and overseas, and Paul Hasluck, the Minister for Territories, is found explaining and defending many aspects of the Commonwealth's treatment of Aborigines generally and in the Northern Territory.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1915–78****F1****Recorded by:****1915–27: Office of Administrator, Northern Territory (I) (CA 1072)****1927–31: Office of Government Resident, North Australia (CA 1071)****1931–73: Administrator, Northern Territory (II) (CA 1070)****Darwin 949.6 metres**

This series is the main policy and general file series for the Commonwealth's administration of the Northern Territory.

**Pension Rights for Aborigines Northern Territory, 1942–54****F1, 1950/607****Welfare Branch – General Assimilation Problems, 1954–55****F1, 1954/1013****Franchise for Aborigines, 1961–64****F1, 1961/1961****Legal Status of Aborigines – Citizenship Ceremonies for wards on enfranchisement, 1957–63 F1, 1964/2309****CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ALPHABETICAL SERIES, 1927–42****A981****Recorded by:****Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)****Canberra 147 metres**

This series created by the second Department of External Affairs employed a relatively simple alphabetical title system, in which files are organised and named by subject. This has led to some inconsistency in how files from the series are cited.

Here the number of each file is given as indicated in the database. The meanings of the examples given here are 'MIG' – 'Migration', and 'INDI' – 'India'. See the item lists in the Canberra office for a full list of the titles and their meanings.

**Migration Restriction      A981, MIG 1 part 1**

This item is mostly composed of papers prepared by EL Piesse, head of the Pacific Branch of the Prime Minister's Department, on racial discrimination, immigration policy, and Australia's relations with Japan. The papers were prepared for the Australian delegation to the League of Nations. One of these papers, concerning the disabilities imposed on aliens and 'coloured' people in Australia has already been referred to in the guide, and is also found here. The file also contains a wider range of material on race and immigration.

**Rights and disabilities of Indians in Australia, 1917–35      A981, INDI 16 Part 1**

The contents of these files relate to the access of Indians to equal citizenship rights throughout the British Empire. There is a substantial correspondence between the Commonwealth and the states over this, and Australia's compliance with the League of Nations 1923 recommendations on the treatment of foreign nationals. Of particular interest are documents in the second part concerning the claim by Mitta Bullosh, a native of Karachi, to enrol to vote (see also A1, 1924/28379 on this). JG Latham wrote (in a handwritten note) to the Prime Minister, SM Bruce, urging him to consider dropping the Commonwealth's appeal against a police magistrate's ruling that Bullosh be enrolled. Bruce took the matter to Cabinet which decided to abandon the appeal. Robert Garran's response to this action implies some unhappiness with the decision.

**Rights and disabilities of Indians in Australia, 1917–35      A981, INDI 16 part 2**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1948–89**

**A1838**

**Recorded by:**

**1948–70: Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)**

**Canberra      3433.9 metres**

This vast series contains the policy records of the Department of External Affairs, and its successors, from 1948 until 1989. The series is organised as a multiple number series, making research relatively easy, although some topics were allocated additional numbers once the original numbers were exhausted, meaning that there may be two sections of numbers for a single subject. Some material was top-numbered within the series, which creates confusion in researching some subjects.

This Department of External Affairs series contains a great quantity of material bearing on the development and adoption of international instruments on human rights. Among this material are files on racial discrimination in Australia, both in the treatment of Aboriginal people, and policies covering non-European immigrants.

**Publicity – racial discrimination, 1961–62      A1838, 555/1/125 part 1**

**Publicity – racial discrimination, 1961–73      A1838, 555/10/9 part 2**

**Aborigines – Inter-Departmental Committee on Racial Discrimination, 1960–64  
A1838, 557/5 part 1**

**United Nations – Human Rights – Discrimination and minorities – convention  
on racial discrimination, 1964–69      A1838, 929/5/6 Part 1**

**United Nations – Human Rights – Discrimination and minorities – convention on racial discrimination, 1964–69      A1838, 929/5/6 Part 2**

**United Nations – Human Rights – Discrimination and minorities – convention on racial discrimination, 1964–69      A1838, 929/5/6 Part 3**

**United Nations – Human Rights – Discrimination and minorities – convention on racial discrimination, 1964–69      A1838, 929/5/6 Part 4**

**United Nations – Human Rights – Discrimination and minorities – convention on racial discrimination, 1964–69      A1838, 929/5/6 Part 5**

**United Nations – Human Rights – Discrimination and minorities – convention on racial discrimination, 1964–69      A1838, 929/5/6 Part 6**

**United Nations – Human Rights – Discrimination and minorities – convention on racial discrimination, 1964–69      A1838, 929/5/6 Part 7**

**CORRESPONDENCE, AGENDA, TRANSCRIPTS OF PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS OF WELFARE CONFERENCES, 1937–67      B331**

**Recorded by:**

**1937–57: Central Board for the Protection of the Aborigines (CA 2013)**

**1957–67: Aborigines Welfare Board (CA 2014)**

**Melbourne      0.5 metres**

This series comprises documents surrounding meetings of Commonwealth and state government authorities on Aboriginal welfare. Some of the material is contained in bound volumes.

**Commonwealth–States Conference on Native Welfare, Sept 1951: Statement of Citizenship Status, 1951      B331, 3**

Commonwealth governments in September 1951. The decisions of the conference and details of its resolutions are on file.

## Women

Australian citizenship during the period with which this guide deals possessed a gendered character. If this were not clear enough in the colonial history of Australia, and the British law which it inherited, then it was soon spelt out in the Senate. British law specified that a married woman's nationality was always that of her husband, and accordingly, a woman acquired her husband's civic status and lost her own upon marriage, and if her husband at any time altered his nationality by naturalisation, her civic status also changed. The Naturalization Bill 1903 was consistent with British law on this point, and it included a prohibition on the naturalisation of married women. One Senator claimed that the measure placed women 'in a distinctly inferior position', which was 'outrageous' given that the parliament had extended the franchise to women in the previous session.<sup>48</sup> Another added:

We do not take away a man's citizenship if he commits a felony. We do not take away his citizenship if he commits a murder. Certainly, we hang him, but until we take away his life he is still a citizen. But if a woman, born a British subject, with all the rights which that implies, marries a foreigner, no matter what his position or intelligence may be, she will forfeit her rights of British citizenship and become a foreigner.<sup>49</sup>

The Senate deleted the prohibition, although the nationality of married women remained linked to their husbands. The issue was taken up by women's organisations over the following decades, and the Commonwealth government was lobbied to seek the equality of women in nationality arrangements.

Australia supported the Hague Convention on Nationality (1930) which stipulated that women would not lose their nationality unless they gained that of their husband, and that a woman's nationality would not be changed during marriage without her consent.<sup>50</sup> The Convention was intended mainly to deal with the problem of women becoming stateless where they lost their nationality on marriage and did not gain that of their husband, but it fell short of the government's position at the League of Nations in 1931 where Australia argued for the 'equality of the sexes in matters of nationality'. However, it was not until 1936 that the principles of the Hague Convention were applied in Australian law. Another ten years passed before the Nationality Act was amended such that British nationality could be retained by a woman upon marriage to an alien. Finally, the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948 treated men and women equally for the purposes of determining civic status.

The nationality of women was a major issue for citizenship in Australia, and some interesting sources on this topic are listed below. Yet, this was not the only aspect of citizenship in Australia specific to women, and some of the other records referred to below may provide starting points for research in this area. Moreover,

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<sup>48</sup> George Pearce, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, Senate, 2 July 1903, vol. 14, p. 1703.

<sup>49</sup> Josiah Symon, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, Senate, 2 July 1903, vol. 14, p. 1744.

<sup>50</sup> International Convention on certain questions relating to the Conflict of Nationality Laws, The Hague, 12 April 1930, articles 8–10. A copy can be found at NAA: [A446, 1964/46452](#).



the gendered character of citizenship is evident not only in these records which deal specifically with aspects of women's citizenship, but in the masculine constructions of citizenship evident in records cited throughout this guide.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38****A1****Recorded by:**

**1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)**  
**1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)**  
**1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)**  
**1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**

**Canberra 445.7 metres**

This series contains the general filing of the Department of External Affairs (I) and its successors. It includes a diverse array of topics, including many files on the administration of immigration, naturalisation, and passports. Research in this series is time-consuming, since it is organised as an annual single number series, and files tend to deal with individual inquiries and responses, rather than themes over a period of time.

This series contains useful material on the civic position of women

**Imperial Naturalization Act (Rights of Women under) National Status of Australian Women Married to Foreigners, 1911–14 A1, 1914/20769**

This item contains correspondence between various women's organisations and the Commonwealth government over the nationality of married women, and the Commonwealth's position at the 1911 Imperial Conference. Vida Goldstein is among the notable correspondents with the Commonwealth on the subject.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, FIRST SYSTEM, 1915–23****A457****Recorded by:**

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra 18.3 metres**

This series contains general files of matters considered by the Prime Minister's Department during and shortly after the First World War. Helpfully, it is organised in a multiple number system, making research relatively simple. A list of the meaning of the numbers in the system is available in the reading room at the National Archives in Canberra. Several files on naturalisation dating from the period just after the First World War can be found in this series. Files on naturalisation are readily located by the number 111/2, to which letter prefixes are affixed; for instance, item R111/2 is titled 'Naturalisation Czecho-Slovaks'.

This series includes a large number of files containing representations from the public to the Prime Minister. Among them is at least one file on the nationality of women. Further investigation might reveal more useful material on this subject.

**Naturalisation Policy – Unofficial representations, 1922 A457, J111/2**

This file also contains correspondence between women's organisations and the Commonwealth government over the nationality of married women, this time from 1922 in relation to the Imperial Conference that year.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH OCCASIONAL 'G' (GENERAL REPRESENTATIONS) INFIX, 1956– A463****Recorded by:****1956–71: Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)****Canberra and Sydney 543.7 metres in Canberra; 184 metres in Sydney**

This series deals with topics directly under the control of the Prime Minister, and reflects the coordinating role of the Prime Minister's Department with its diverse array of topics. Among these topics are some files on citizenship and naturalisation matters. Given the nature of the role of the Prime Minister's Department, these files do not provide the insight into policy deliberations which can be found in the records of agencies with direct responsibility for policy formulation.

This Prime Minister's Department series contains some material relating to the citizenship of women between the 1950s and 1970s. Other material bears on equal pay and other women's issues of the 1960s.

**Legislation relating to political rights and status of women in private law, 1966–70 A463, 1966/3899**

The correspondence in this file derives from the Prime Minister's request for comment from the states on a UN report on the Effect of Resolutions and Recommendations of the Commission on National Legislation Relating to Political Rights and the Status of Women in Private Law, and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES WITH ALPHABETICAL PREFIX, 1928–56 A518****Recorded by:****1928–41: Territories Branch, Prime Minister's Department (CA 822)****1941–51: Department of External Territories (I) (CA 42)****1951–56: Department of Territories (I) (CA 60)****Canberra 241.6 metres**

This series was raised in the Territories Branch of the Prime Minister's Department, and became the main policy series for the administration of Australia's external territories, particularly Papua New Guinea

**Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1953 A518, AK856/1/3**

In this item is correspondence from the Australian delegation which participated in the drafting of the convention, and some cables on problems in the way of Australia's ratification of it. A copy of a United Nations printed booklet on the 'Convention on the Political Rights of Women' is on file.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS, 1953– A446****Recorded by:****1953–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)****Canberra and Sydney 2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

This series is the main correspondence series for the Department of Immigration and its successors from 1953. The series contains both case files and policy files. The latter are numbered above 65000, while case files are numbered below that figure. Despite heavy culling of files from this series, much valuable material remains. This series contains an extensive amount of material that has not yet been

opened for public access, and it warrants considerable attention from researchers. The series contains many files on the adoption and amendment of the Nationality and Citizenship Act. Those listed below are particularly helpful.

This series also contains significant material on the citizenship of women. This material includes records from the 1930s and 1940s which were top-numbered into this series.

**Nationality of Married Women, 1941–64      A446, 1960/67025**

This file contains documents dating from the mid-1940s when provisions covering the nationality of women were considered by the government and a parliamentary committee. An extract from the 1937 Imperial Conference papers on the subject is on file, as are Arthur Calwell's Cabinet submission for a separate Australian nationality (referred to in Chapter 2), documents from the preparation of amendments to the Nationality Act, and the parliamentary committee's report.

**Convention on Nationality of Married Women, Part 1, 1947–56      A446, 1962/67117**

This large item contains a variety of letters, cables, drafts, memoranda and United Nations reports on the nationality of married women.

**Convention on Nationality of Married Women, Part 2, 1956–70      A446, 1962/67118**

Documents on this file originated from the Department of Immigration's consideration of the principles of the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women which Australia acceded to in 1961. Australian law was mostly consistent with the provisions of the Convention, and accordingly only minor changes were needed to cover people who were (under Australian law) British subjects without citizenship.

**Nationality of Married Women 1930 Convention, 1932–34      A446, 1964/46452**

The contents of this item relate to Australia's position at the Hague conference which considered the nationality of married women, and subsequent amendments to the Nationality Act designed to give effect to the Hague Convention.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ALPHABETICAL SERIES, 1927–42      A981**

**Recorded by:**

**Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)**

**Canberra      147 metres**

This series, described in more detail in the previous section, contains External Affairs records from the 1930s during which the nationality of women was a topic of international legal consideration. There are a considerable number of files on this topic, all of which can be found under the file numbers LEAGUE INTER L.

**League of Nations. International Law. Nationality – Dominion Nationals including Married Women, 1926      A981, LEAGUE INTER L 11**

This item is fairly small, containing notes and papers from the Committee on Nationality of the 1926 Imperial Conference, which discussed the nationality of women. The second and third parts of this item are identified as LEAGUE INTER L 12 Parts 2 and 3, and deal with the period 1930 to 1937. The final part is a huge item of considerable research value since it contains reports, transcripts, correspondence, and pamphlets from the 1930s on the nationality of women. Also in this file are printed reports of the League of Nations on the 'Nationality of Women' and the 'Status of Women', the latter of which includes a detailed statement on the status of women in the Commonwealth and each state.

**External Affairs Department. League of Nations. International Law. Status of Women. Inquiry by Equal Rights. International 1, 1935–39 A981, LEAGUE INTER L 16 Part 1**

Both parts of this file are of considerable size, although there is some repetition of material. Among the documents on file are long reports on the status of women in Britain and Australia prepared by women's organisations in their efforts to convince the League of Nations of the need for the equality of women to be enshrined in international law. The list of legal areas in which men and women were treated differently is considerable: domicile, property, divorce, guardianship, appointment to public office, bankruptcy, maintenance, nationality, the franchise, prostitution, insurance, work in mines, 'bastardy', income tax, the criminal law, and sexual offences.

**External Affairs Department. League of Nations. International Law. Status of Women. Inquiry by Equal Rights. International 1, 1935–39 A981, LEAGUE INTER L 16 Part 2**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1948–89**

**A1838**

**Recorded by:**

**1948–70: Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)**

**Canberra 3343.9 metres**

This vast series contains the policy records of the Department of External Affairs, and its successors, from 1948 until 1989. The series is organised as a multiple number series, making research relatively easy, although some topics were allocated additional numbers once the original numbers were exhausted, meaning that there may be two sections of numbers for a single subject. Some material was top-numbered within the series, which creates confusion in researching some subjects.

This series contains an extensive quantity of material on international conventions impinging upon civic and human rights.

For a more comprehensive treatment of this material see the section on international human rights instruments in Chapter 4. Here, some specific material on the civic status of women is worth noting.

**Draft Convention on Political Rights of Women A1838, 931/5/1 Part 1**

**Draft Convention on Political Rights of Women A1838, 931/5/1 Part 2**

**Draft Convention on Political Rights of Women A1838, 931/5/1 Part 3**

**Draft Convention on Political Rights of Women A1838, 931/5/1 Part 4**

**Draft Convention on Political Rights of Women A1838, 931/5/1 Part 5**

## 4 The Substance of Citizenship

A chapter dealing with the rights and obligations attached to, or implied by, citizenship might be expected to be the most significant section of a guide to records on citizenship in Australia. However, researchers may be disappointed to learn that the rights and obligations which they regard as crucial components of citizenship were not treated as such by the Commonwealth government. Citizenship in Australia has never been clearly defined by reference to a set of rights and corresponding obligations. In law, rights and obligations are established by the various statutes and regulations of the Commonwealth and state parliaments, and the decisions of many courts. Many more rights which citizens claim have no firm basis in law; for instance, insofar as the freedoms of speech and association exist in Australia, they rest on complex legal foundations and are qualified in important respects. Much continues to rely on the common law, which once embodied the many conventions which constituted citizenship in the British Empire.

Moreover, citizenship remains a relatively new concept, even given the antiquity of its etymology and the long history of political theories on the relations between individual and state. Over the past few decades, citizenship has been invested with a series of new and sometimes conflicting meanings both in the domains of scholarly research and national politics. Many of these meanings diverge significantly from the understandings of citizenship which guided earlier policymakers, and the researcher is often presented with mismatching concepts of what citizenship means.

As a result of these factors this chapter does not specifically cover such citizen rights as freedom of speech, but has these three sections: rights and obligations, movements and passports, and international instruments on human rights.

### Rights and obligations

Records in the custody of the National Archives were created by various Commonwealth departments in the course of their administrative duties, and accordingly these files bear only on those aspects of citizenship which became the subject of Commonwealth policy and administration. Coherent records on civic rights are hard to find. The franchise is the only major exception, since the electoral system was defined in law and administered by Commonwealth agencies. No coherent body of material exists on freedom of religion, or freedom of assembly, or trial by jury, to name just a few of the many concepts commonly understood as integral to citizenship. Federalism further complicates citizenship in Australia by splitting jurisdiction over many citizenship matters between the federal and state governments.

The domains of economic and social rights which have assumed significance in theories of citizenship since the Second World War offer the intrepid researcher scope for investigation, but rights to social security, education, work and health care appear more ephemeral (elements of the brief moment of the welfare state)

than enduring dimensions of citizenship. It remains unclear whether these matters were ever treated as rights by the Commonwealth, and researchers have yet to explore just how they were conceived by the Commonwealth government. The wide ambit of an exploration of economic and social rights, and the dearth of research into the records of the various health, education and social security departments, precludes this guide from directing the researcher to specific records in this area. Researchers will need to devise their own research strategies based on the particular rights in which they are interested.

Another body of records relevant to the substance of citizenship is the many record series created by civil intelligence and security agencies. These agencies conducted operations which were often at odds with notions of freedom of speech, expression and association. Their opponents often claimed that important political rights were ignored by these organisations. The battle over the banning of the Communist Party of Australia in the early 1950s is a case in point. Moreover, the work of these agencies – and the policies of the Commonwealth government for the suppression of dissidents generally – often conflicted with principles that might be regarded as inherent to a democratic citizenship, in the supposed cause of national security. Censorship offers an analogous area in which the limited scope of citizenship rights in Australia is clear. Inquiry into these subjects draws attention to the many ways in which the Commonwealth has attempted to constrain the action of citizens, and where important arguments between the state and its citizens over citizenship rights have taken place.

Commonwealth policymakers had a much clearer idea of the obligations of the citizen to the state, than they did of citizenship rights. Throughout most of the period with which this guide deals it was the responsibilities, obligations and expectations of citizens that figured most prominently in Commonwealth government activity. The point is well made by a document written for the 1955 Citizenship Convention. The paper is titled 'Notes on the Responsibilities and Privileges of Australian Citizenship', and was intended as a pamphlet which could be given to applicants for naturalisation, so that they might understand the meaning of citizenship in Australia. Responsibilities were listed first and referred to the obligation of citizens to obey the law (although non-citizens were to do this too), to enrol on the electoral register and vote, and to perform jury duty when required. The most extensive description though was given to the notion of allegiance and the duty of military service:

The first duty of all Australian citizens is to be loyal to Her Majesty the Queen, who is the supreme head of the Government of Australia. In any war in which Australia may be engaged, Australian citizens should be prepared to serve loyally in the Armed Forces, or to give faithful service in any other work to which they may be directed by the Government of Australia. Applicants for naturalization will be required to renounce their allegiance to their former country, and to swear allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, before they are naturalized.<sup>51</sup>

For the Commonwealth, allegiance was always the most significant element of citizenship in Australia; indeed it was the very basis of citizenship. This is clear throughout the history of naturalisation policy, and the Commonwealth's various pronouncements on the meaning of citizenship. During times of perceived threat or

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<sup>51</sup> Paper, 'Notes on the Responsibilities and Privileges of Australian Citizenship', [1955], NAA: [A446, 1955/67340](#).

war, the question of allegiance was explicitly at the fore of Commonwealth policy. Aliens and citizens alike were appraised and treated around various beliefs about allegiance. Ultimately, the meaning of allegiance was revealed as a willingness to serve the state in time of war. Allegiance aside, the sum of the paraphernalia on the duties of citizenship amounted to little more than obeying the law (something not limited to citizens in any case) and voting at elections (which was dealt with in the previous section) even though voting was compulsory from the 1920s.

Given these limitations on the substance of citizenship, the contents of this section are focused fairly narrowly on the franchise, with an assortment of records on civil and political rights and their abrogation by security agencies. In this section the guide can offer only a start, and researchers who are interested in exploring the substance of other citizenship rights will need to devise their own strategies to locate and interpret relevant records. The section also refers researchers to some important sources on allegiance, although the records on naturalisation and aliens elsewhere in the guide are very valuable on this theme.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1929–****A432****Recorded by:****Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****Canberra and Sydney 2054.7 metres in Canberra; 352.6 metres in Sydney**

This series which has been referred to on several occasions above, contains files from the Attorney-General's Department on a wide range of legal matters connected to the rights and duties of citizenship.

**Australian Communist Party and Others v. Commonwealth and Others – High Court Action – Validity of Communist Party Dissolution Act 1950, 1950–57  
A432, 1955/425 Part 1**

The attempt by the conservative government to ban the Communist Party of Australia in the early 1950s raised important constitutional issues on freedom of speech and association. There are many files in this series on the legal and constitutional aspects of this episode.

**Australian Communist Party and Others v. Commonwealth and Others – High Court Action – Validity of Communist Party Dissolution Act 1950, 1950–57  
A432, 1955/425 Part 2**

**Human rights matters functions of Attorney-General's Department, 1960–72  
A432, 1961/3003**

The contents of this file relate to a discussion between the Attorney-General's Department and the Department of External Affairs over which should deal with human rights matters.

**SPECIAL FILES, 'SF' PREFIX, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1952–****A467****Recorded by:****Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)****Canberra 32 metres**

This series is comprised of bundles of papers on a diverse range of topics, assembled in the Attorney-General's Department. Special file 42 is devoted to files

on communist activities in Australia and the Commonwealth government's responses to it.

**W27889 Reimposition of the ban on the Communist Party, 1945–48    A467, Bundle 90/SF42/7**

**BILL FILES, 1901–                      A2863**

**Recorded by:**

**1901–70: Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)**

**Canberra and Sydney    298.6 metres in Canberra; 117.9 metres in Sydney**

This series contains a file for each bill introduced to the Commonwealth parliament since 1901. The files are numbered according to act number where enacted; lapsed bills numbered sequentially thereafter. The contents of the files vary considerably: some contain only drafts of the bills, while others contain substantial correspondence. Files are extant on the Naturalization Acts 1903, the Nationality Act 1920, the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948, and each of their many amendments. Two items are of particular interest.

There is a file within this series for each Commonwealth statute. A few examples of legislation dealing with citizenship rights follow.

**Commonwealth Electoral Act 1902, 1900–02                      A2863, 1902/19**

**Commonwealth Electoral Act 1911, 1901–11                      A2863, 1911/17 Part 1**

**Commonwealth Electoral Act 1911, 1901–11                      A2863, 1911/17 Part 2**

**Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, 1907–18                      A2863, 1918/27**

**Constitution Alteration (Post War Reconstruction and Democratic Rights) Bill, 1943–44                      A2863, 1944/53**

This file contains drafts of the bill itself, its second reading speech, and some amendments proposed to it. The bill proposed a referendum to add, among other things, freedom of speech and expression to the Constitution.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH 'E' PREFIX, 1901–  
A406**

**Recorded by:**

**1901–16: Department of Home Affairs (I) (CA 8)**

**1916–18: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)**

**1918–73: Chief Electoral Office (CA 558)**

**Canberra and Sydney    205.2 metres in Canberra; 10.3 metres in Sydney**

Material in this series relates to the organisation of elections and referendums. This series is the most significant for research into electoral rights throughout the period with which the guide deals, but there is no comprehensive item list for it. Researchers interested in investigating the contents of the series will need to refer to its indexes.

**Enrolment. Status of Asiatics, Aboriginal Natives of Asia, Africa, Australasia and Islands of the Pacific except New Zealand. Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines, 1929–61    A406, E1957/1 part 2**



**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38****A1****Recorded by:**

**1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)**  
**1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)**  
**1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)**  
**1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**

**Canberra 445.7 metres**

This series contains the general filing of the Department of External Affairs (I) and its successors. It includes a diverse array of topics, including many files on the administration of immigration, naturalisation, and passports. Research in this series is time-consuming, since it is organised as an annual single number series, and files tend to deal with individual inquiries and responses, rather than themes over a period of time.

**Electoral Act – Amendment as regards Rights & Obligations of Naturalized citizens of enemy origin, 1916 A1, 1916/22047**

This item is composed of documents surrounding a July 1916 Cabinet decision that all people of enemy origin (whether naturalised or not) should be disfranchised, with the exception of those who were members of an Australian parliament for the life of such parliament.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH OCCASIONAL 'G' (GENERAL REPRESENTATIONS) INFIX, 1956– A463**

**Recorded by:**

**1956–71: Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra and Sydney 543.7 metres in Canberra; 184 metres in Sydney**

This series deals with topics directly under the control of the Prime Minister, and reflects the coordinating role of the Prime Minister's Department with its diverse array of topics. Among these topics are some files on citizenship and naturalisation matters. Given the nature of the role of the Prime Minister's Department, these files do not provide the insight into policy deliberations which can be found in the records of agencies with direct responsibility for policy formulation.

This series contains various files on civic rights matters from the 1950s and 1960s. As with most Prime Minister's Department files, the contents usually relate to policy coordination and correspondence with the states rather than to policy formulation.

**Film and television censorship – Policy, 1948–60 A463, 1956/1174**

**Rights of naturalised Australians under State laws, 1963 A463, 1963/1782**

**Rights of naturalised Australians under Commonwealth laws – Survey, 1963 A463, 1963/1867**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS, 1953– A446**

**Recorded by:**

**1953–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra and Sydney 2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

The contents of this series relate to the functions of the Department of Immigration, and rights of movement are dealt with specifically in the next section. However, the

series warrants mention here for its records on various citizenship rights and duties. The department formulated much publicity material on citizenship which is valuable to researchers, but it was also involved in the consideration of various civic and human rights issues for the administration of immigration policy.

The contents of this series relate to the functions of the Department of Immigration, and rights of movement are dealt with specifically in the next section. However, the series warrants mention here for its records on various citizenship rights and duties. The department formulated much publicity material on citizenship which is valuable to researchers, but it was also involved in the consideration of various civic and human rights issues for the administration of immigration policy.

**UN principles on freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, 1962–66  
A446, 1963/45037**

This file contains a United Nations study of the right to freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and exile. The Department of Immigration was invited by the External Affairs Department to comment, and its considerations centred on the issue of the judicial review of administrative decisions.

**Rights of naturalised persons under Commonwealth and State laws, 1963–85  
A446, 1978/78986**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH YEAR PREFIX, 1916–27, AND  
'C' PREFIX, 1927–53                      A367**

**Recorded by:**

**1916–19: Special Intelligence Bureau (CA 746)  
1916–19: Special Intelligence Bureau (CA 747)  
1916–19: Special Intelligence Bureau (CA 650)**

**Canberra      66.6 metres**

Interesting records on the Commonwealth's powers and the rights of its citizens are found in the various series created by civil security and intelligence organisations. The Investigation Branch was keenly involved in the suppression of people regarded as a threat to national security between the wars. Both case and policy files in this series are of interest, and researchers should also refer to the series created by the state offices of the Investigation Branch, which were cited in Chapter 2.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1941–49**

**A373**

**Recorded by:**

**1941–45: Security Service (CA 660)  
1945–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch (CA 747)  
1946–49: Commonwealth Investigation Service (CA 650)**

**Canberra      7.4 metres**

Like A367 above, this series contains files on the scope of the Commonwealth's powers. The contents of this series are of particular interest given the debates over civil liberties which occurred during the Second World War, and also include material on understandings of allegiance during wartime, and the duties of citizens and aliens to conduct work for the Commonwealth's war effort.

**SUBJECT FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1949–****A6122****Recorded by:****Australian Security Intelligence Organization (CA 1297)****Canberra 42.3 metres**

Unlike most government agencies which are required under the *Archives Act* to deposit all records more than 30 years old with the National Archives, ASIO's records are transferred to the National Archives only after a researcher requests files on a certain topic. Accordingly, this series consists of policy files opened at the request of researchers, and does not contain all of ASIO's holdings. The file numbering system is accordingly one imposed by the Archives. ASIO took an active role in naturalisation matters from soon after its establishment. It took over the vetting of applicants, and generally offered advice to the Department of Immigration on naturalisation policy.

The records of ASIO are also of considerable interest for the researcher working on citizenship rights. ASIO was often accused of infringing the rights of people it regarded as potential threats to national security, and its many vetting, surveillance and suppression activities provide fascinating material for investigation.

**MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS, HEADQUARTERS EASTERN COMMAND, 1870–1967****SP1141/1****Recorded by:**

**1918–21: 2<sup>nd</sup> Military District, New South Wales (I) (CA 6335)**  
**1921–39: 2<sup>nd</sup> District Base, Australian Military Forces (CA 4334)**  
**1939–42: Eastern Command (I), AMF (CA 1876)**  
**1942–46: NSW Lines of Communication Area, AMF (CA 1877)**  
**1946–67 Eastern Command (II), AMF (CA 1878)**

**Sydney 11.2 metres****Note re Freedom of speech, 1918 SP1141/1, S12/1/31****CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1948–89****A1838****Recorded by:****1948–70: Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)****Canberra 3433.9 metres**

The records of the Department of External Affairs on citizenship matters generated by its role in negotiating instruments of international law is dealt with in a separate section below. However, the series warrants mention here since the department's work involved consultations with Commonwealth government departments, and state governments through the Prime Minister's Department, on matters which can rightly be considered the substance of citizenship.

**Economic & Social Council. Trade Union Rights. Freedom of Association,**  
**1947–50 A1838, 855/20/9 Part 1**

**Economic & Social Council. Trade Union Rights. Freedom of Association,**  
**1947–50 A1838, 855/20/9 Part 2**



## Movement and passports

Australian citizenship developed as a subset of the wider category of British subject as a consequence of the Commonwealth's need to distinguish those people who belonged permanently to it from those who did not. The distinction separated those people who were entitled to enter and reside in Australia and could not be deported, from those who had no right of entrance or residence and could be deported. The Commonwealth's population policies operated from the basis of this distinction. The rights of entrance and residence were not always recognised by the Commonwealth, but the High Court limited the government's powers in several celebrated cases, largely enshrining the rights of entrance and residence to all people who were born in Australia or had become 'members of the Australian community' by virtue of long residence (as well as by naturalisation for aliens). Some important records on this subject are identified below.

The right to leave the Commonwealth was more qualified. The *Emigration Act 1910* imposed controls over the exit of Aboriginal people, and passports and immigration legislation during and shortly after the First World War introduced controls over the exit of both aliens and British subjects. Permission to exit Australia was refused infrequently (except in wartime), but enough people were denied permission to cast doubt on whether a right to exit Australia existed. The passport became the crucial document for exiting just as much as entering Australia. Prior to the First World War passports were irregularly used for travel between countries: only two countries in Europe required them (Russia and Turkey). In Australia passports were issued concurrently by the states and the Commonwealth until 1915, but in that year the Commonwealth took sole responsibility for the issue of passports and made regulations under the *War Precautions Act* in 1916 which prohibited the entry or exit from Australia without a passport. These requirements were given permanent statutory form in 1920. Requirements for visas were introduced shortly thereafter to provide the government with the power to permit or deny each individual act of a person crossing the Commonwealth's external border.

While it is often believed that the passport is a right of citizenship this is not the case. The Commonwealth refused to issue passports to certain people for political reasons during the inter-war years and the Cold War, and at various points passports have also been refused for 'moral' reasons when applicants were attempting to abandon their partners or children. More routinely, permission to leave the country is not granted to people accused or under investigation of major crimes. Nonetheless, the passport remains a portable sign of citizenship invoking consular protection and a practical accreditation for travel abroad.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1903–38****A1****Recorded by:**

**1901–16: Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)**  
**1916–28: Department of Home and Territories (CA 15)**  
**1928–32: Department of Home Affairs (II) (CA 24)**  
**1932–39: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**

**Canberra 445.7 metres**

Many files in this series relate to movement policy, and a considerable number of case files for passports and permission to enter and exit Australia can also be located in this series.

**Deportation and exclusion of aliens – laws regarding, 1918 A1,  
1918/14635**

This item contains documents in which AA Hunt, Secretary of the Department of Home and Territories, affirms the Commonwealth's right to deport any alien.

**Issue of passports to young single women, 1929 A1, 1929/3913**

As an example of moral prohibitions on exit from Australia, this file contains a single memorandum from 1929 in which the Department of Home Affairs advised Collectors-of-Customs that passports should not be issued for young single women to travel overseas unless they were certain of the nature of their trip.

**Communists – Amending Immigration Act for deportation of, 1932 A1,  
1931/9483**

Documents in this file outline the Commonwealth's powers of deportation in 1932

**PASSPORTS – MAIN FILE, 1912–16****MP56/6****Recorded by:**

**Department of External Affairs (I) (CA 7)**

**Melbourne 0.2 metres**

This series is comprised of a single item titled 'Passports – Main File' which contains the Department of External Affairs' records on passports policy just prior to the First World War.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, CLASS 2 (RESTRICTED IMMIGRATION), 1939–50  
A433****Recorded by:**

**1939–45: Department of the Interior (II) (CA 31)**  
**1945–50: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra 12.6 metres**

**Deportations under s. 8A of Immigration Act, 1940–47 A433, 1946/2/5**

Among documents in this file is an opinion of the Crown Solicitor on the Commonwealth's powers to deport an immigrant of long residence.

**Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council – Proposed Amendments of  
Immigration Act and Enactment of Aliens Act, 1947–48 A433, 48/2/950**

This file includes a memorandum on the Commonwealth's deportation powers and the possibilities for increasing them.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, CLASS 1 (GENERAL, PASSPORTS), 1939–50****A659****Recorded by:**

**1939: Department of the Interior (I) (CA 27)**  
**1939–45: Department of the Interior (II) (CA 31)**  
**1945–50: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra 101.3 metres**

This series initially contained the general correspondence files of the Department of the Interior, but after the establishment of the Department of Immigration in 1945 the series was instead devoted to the new department's passport and general files. Accordingly, the contents of the series are somewhat mixed, although recent identification work by the National Archives has made access much easier for researchers.

This series contains passport files from 1945 to 1950. The series contains mostly case files, but some policy material can also be located.

**SECRET CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS AND 'S' (SECRET) PREFIX, 1972–****A6980****Recorded by:**

**1972–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra 80.3 metres**

**Wilfred Burchett, 1941–61 A6980, S200614**

The case of Wilfred Burchett is a fascinating example of the use of the Commonwealth's powers to attempt to constrain the movement of an Australian citizen on political grounds. The Commonwealth repeatedly refused to grant passport facilities to Burchett or his family on the grounds that he was a communist and in 1961 decided that Burchett would not be admitted to the country. This decision was recognised as in conflict with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and was almost certainly unconstitutional. The government's efforts to prevent Burchett from re-entering Australia contrasted with its general Cold War policy of refusing people it regarded as communists permission to leave Australia.

**Passport Facilities – refused and cancelled, 1954–72 A6980, S250159**

This item contains policy documents and correspondence surrounding the government's policy to deny passports to people regarded as communists (and therefore a risk to security) during the 1950s and 1960s.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1929–****A432****Recorded by:**

**Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)**

**Canberra and Sydney 2054.7 metres in Canberra; 352.6 metres in Sydney**

**Passports Act 1920. Power of the Minister to withhold the issue of passports, 1928–37 A432, 1937/287**

This document contains a 1934 memorandum in which the policy regarding the refusal to issue passports is outlined. The reasons given for refusing passports were: (a) single girl wanting to accompany man on trip abroad, (b) insufficient funds and possibility of becoming stranded abroad, (c) persons wishing to proceed abroad for purpose of being married against the wishes of her parents, (e) persons wishing to proceed abroad without consent of husband or wife, (f) persons wanted by police or concerned in legal proceedings, (g) persons of 'weak mentality'.

**Passports Act 1938–48 Discretion of Minister to Withhold Travel Documents, 1950–53      A432, 1950/1115**

The contents of this item are about a Department of Immigration request for the Attorney-General Department's legal opinion on the Minister's power to withhold the issue of a passport to people considered communists. The questions and reply are detailed, and an interesting historical article on passport law is also on file.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH YEAR PREFIX, 1916–27, AND 'C' PREFIX, 1927–53      A367****Recorded by:**

**1916–19: Special Intelligence Bureau (CA 746)**  
**1919–46: Commonwealth Investigation Branch 747 (CA 747)**  
**1946–53: Commonwealth Investigation Service (CA 650)**

**Canberra      66.6 metres**

**Passports – General Matters, 1920–40      A367, C1225**

This long and detailed file contains the records of the Investigation Branch on the issue of passports during the inter-war period. The CIB was concerned that passports be used to control entry and exit, and to maintain information on the people entering Australia. The Commonwealth's policies on issuing passports, and the scope of their validity, are covered here.

**SUBJECT FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1949–      A6122****Recorded by:**

**Australian Security Intelligence Organization (CA 1297)**

**Canberra      42.3 metres**

Unlike most government agencies which are required under the Archives Act to deposit all records more than 30 years old with the National Archives, ASIO's records are transferred to the National Archives only after a researcher requests files on a certain topic. Accordingly, this series consists of policy files opened at the request of researchers, and does not contain all of ASIO's holdings. The file numbering system is accordingly one imposed by the Archives. ASIO took an active role in naturalisation matters from soon after its establishment. It took over the vetting of applicants, and generally offered advice to the Department of Immigration on naturalisation policy.

**Protective Security Memoranda, 1945–54      A6122, 1425**

These files contain ASIO's protective security memoranda which stipulated vetting policy. Many of these memoranda concern the security checking of applicants for passports, and the grounds on which the issue of a passport would be denied.

**Protective Security Memoranda, 1945–54      A6122, 1426**

These files contain ASIO's protective security memoranda which stipulated vetting policy. Many of these memoranda concern the security checking of applicants for passports, and the grounds on which the issue of a passport would be denied.

**Travel policy – validation of Australian passports for Communist countries, 1951–63      A6122, 1873**

The contents of this file relate to the government's policies for the issue of passports, and the restriction of their validity in certain cases.



**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ALPHABETICAL SERIES, 1927–42****A981****Recorded by:****Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)****Canberra 147 metres**

This series created by the second Department of External Affairs employed a relatively simple alphabetical title system, in which files are organised and named by subject. This has led to some inconsistency in how files from the series are cited. Here the number of each file is given as indicated in the database. The meanings of the examples given here are 'MIG' – 'Migration', and 'INDI' – 'India'. See the item lists in the Canberra office for a full list of the titles and their meanings.

Files dealing with passport matters are conveniently numbered with the term PASSPORTS and a numeral imposed by the National Archives. On the database 'PASSPORTS' has been reduced to 'PAS'.

**Passports. Empire Wide, 1929–39 A981, PAS 18**

This item contains correspondence on whether passports can be withdrawn from their holders and cancelled. Another document sets out the passport and endorsement requirements for entry to Britain and the dominions.

**Passports – General II, 1922–27 A981, PAS 54 part 2**

According to the file cover Part 1 of this file was destroyed. Nonetheless this part contains some assorted correspondence on cancelled passports, and on Australia's passport and visa requirements.

## International instruments on human rights

Concepts of universal human rights and of specific civic rights are closely related, although there are some important distinctions in their application. The development of international human rights law during the twentieth century has been of great significance in the conduct of international affairs, and in conditioning the behaviour of states. To some extent the sovereignty of states is undermined by concepts of universal human rights, particularly as citizens begin to appeal directly to international bodies with their grievances.

Since the Second World War a large number of instruments covering human rights, to which Australia is a party, have been developed under the auspices of the United Nations. At the general level these instruments include the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948), and the Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) with their various protocols. More specific instruments include the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948), the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade (1956), three Conventions on Nationality and Statelessness (1957–66), the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952), and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1966). Of course, there are many more instruments than those listed here which bear on the relationship between citizen and state.

The Commonwealth's records dealing with the negotiation of human rights instruments, and Australia's accession to them, were created principally by the Department of External Affairs, the Attorney-General's Department, and the Prime Minister's Department. The records of these departments are described below, as are some files from the Department of Immigration. That department, like many others, administered matters affected by human rights agreements, and both adjusted its policies in the light of those agreements and sought to influence the Commonwealth's position in negotiations developing human rights conventions. Researchers may find similar material from other departments where their activities were affected by international human rights law.

### **CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, 1948–89**

**A1838****Recorded by:****1948–70: Department of External Affairs (II) (CA 18)****Canberra 3433.9 metres**

This huge series contains the main correspondence and policy files of the Department of External Affairs between 1948 and 1970. The series is organised in a multiple number system, but became complicated by the practice of reassigning numbers with new meanings, and top-numbering files and documents within the series. The value of this series for research into Australia's position on human rights conventions and treaties, and the considerations of Australian law and policy which went alongside that, is unsurpassed.

It is not possible to list here every group of files dealing with human rights conventions, but several are worth identifying. Files beginning with the number 856/13 deal with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Files

beginning with the number 929 relate to human rights conventions. Files on racial discrimination matters were described in the previous chapter.

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 1** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 1A** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 2** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 3** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 3A** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 4** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 5** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 6** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 7** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 8** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 9** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 10** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**Human Rights Commission. Freedom of Information Part 11** A1838, 856/13/1/1

**ECOSOC Human Rights Subcommittee on discrimination and minorities**  
A1838, 856/13/1/2

**Human Rights – International Bill of Rights – Drafting Group, 1947–48**  
A1838, 856/13/2

**Human Rights – International Bill of Rights – Report of Drafting Group, 1947**  
A1838, 856/13/2/1

**Human Rights – Seminar on protection of human rights in criminal law and procedure, 1957–59** A1838, 856/13/5/3

**ESC Commission – Human Rights – Covenant and Implementation of**  
A1838, 856/13/7 Part 1

**ESC Commission – Human Rights – Covenant and Implementation of**  
A1838, 856/13/7 Part 2

**ESC Commission – Human Rights – Covenant and Implementation of  
A1838, 856/13/7 Part 3**

**ESC Commission – Human Rights – Covenant and Implementation of  
A1838, 856/13/7 Part 4**

**ESC Commission – Human Rights – Covenant and Implementation of  
A1838, 856/13/7 Part 5**

**ESC Commission – Human Rights – Covenant and Implementation of  
A1838, 856/13/7 Part 6**

**Human Rights Covenants – General, 1955–61      A1838, 929/4**

This file is not as voluminous as it seems, since Parts 2 to 17 probably never existed. The first part is the file described immediately above. The numbering seems to be an administrative error at the time of the creation of Part 18.

**Human Rights Discrimination in Education      A1838, 929/4/1 Part 1**

**Human Rights Discrimination in Education      A1838, 929/4/1 Part 2**

**Human Rights Discrimination in Education      A1838, 929/4/1 Part 3**

**Human Rights Discrimination in Education      A1838, 929/4/1 Part 4**

**Human Rights – discrimination of minorities – political rights, 1957–74  
A1838, 929/4/2 Part 1**

This file contains correspondence surrounding the United Nations study of discrimination in the area of political rights. A study of Australia was conducted by a UN rapporteur, and the report can be found here.

**Human Rights – Discrimination in religious rights, 1956–76      A1838, 929/4/3  
Part 1**

**Human Rights – Discrimination in religious rights, 1956–76      A1838, 929/4/3  
Part 2**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES, 1929–      A432**

**Recorded by:**

**Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)**

**Canberra and Sydney      2054.7 metres in Canberra; 352.6 metres in Sydney**

Throughout this guide researchers have been directed to this series, due to the central role of the Attorney-General's Department in citizenship matters. The Department also had an important role in Australia's consideration of international human rights conventions. A few relevant files are identified here. There are many more in the series, including files on annual meetings of the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

**Convention for the treatment of foreign nationals, 1928–30      A432,  
1929/3224**

**Constitutional power of the Commonwealth to give effect to the conventions  
of the International Labour Office, 1935–38      A432, 1935/1745**

**Labour Conventions and External Affairs power, 1944–46      A432, 1946/884**

**UN Conventions on Human Rights 1946–50, 1950      A432, 1947/725 Part 3**

**UN Conventions on Human Rights 1946–50, 1950      A432, 1947/725 Part 4**

**ILO – Discrimination in employment and occupation: ILO Convention No. 3,  
1956–63      A432, 1963/3257**

**UN Draft Convention on elimination of racial discrimination, 1964–71      A432,  
1964/3071 Part 1**

**UN Draft Convention on elimination of racial discrimination, 1964–71      A432,  
1964/3071 Part 2**

**UN Draft Convention on elimination of racial discrimination, 1964–71      A432,  
1964/3071 Part 3**

**UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1965–70      A432, 1965/3094**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, THIRD SYSTEM, 1934–50  
A461**

**Recorded by:**

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra      143.8 metres**

Like A457 and A458 this series is based on a multiple number system with a letter prefix denoting individual files. The contents of this series are more substantial than its two predecessors since much useful material was top-numbered into it.

The Prime Minister's Department had a coordinating role in the development of human rights instruments and in considering their impact on Commonwealth and state legislation and policy. The files found in this series, and in A462 and A463, reflect this role, containing a diverse array of material. The number 327 indicates that the files deal with constitutional and legal matters.

**Human Rights – International Bill, 1949      A461, A327/1/8**

**Human Rights, International Bill of (1948). Drafts, plus reps on various aspects  
by women's organisation & others, 1947–49      A461, G327/1/8**

The documents on this file include United Nations reports on this subject, cables between Canberra and Australia's delegation, and various public representations and the government's replies.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, MULTIPLE NUMBER SERIES, FOURTH SYSTEM, 1951–55  
A462**

**Recorded by:**

**Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra      49.2 metres**

This series continues the records of the Prime Minister's Department after A461. Like its predecessors, it is organised as a multiple number series.

This series contains several files of interest in this section. Only a few files are presently listed on the database, but a full inventory is available in the reading room at the National Archives in Canberra. Files starting with 575 include several on

human rights matters, while those beginning with 576 relate to the International Labour Organization.

**International covenant on human rights – Drafts, 1949–56      A462, 575/1**

This item contains correspondence between the Commonwealth and the states over the draft Declaration on Human Rights (1949). Many public representations regarding human rights are on file, as well as a Department of External Affairs report on the draft covenants on human rights in 1955.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH OCCASIONAL 'G' (GENERAL REPRESENTATIONS) INFIX, 1956–      A463**

**Recorded by:**

**1956–71: Prime Minister's Department (CA 12)**

**Canberra and Sydney      543.7 metres in Canberra; 184 metres in Sydney**

This series deals with topics directly under the control of the Prime Minister, and reflects the coordinating role of the Prime Minister's Department with its diverse array of topics. Among these topics are some files on citizenship and naturalisation matters. Given the nature of the role of the Prime Minister's Department, these files do not provide the insight into policy deliberations which can be found in the records of agencies with direct responsibility for policy formulation.

This series is probably the most useful of the Prime Minister's Department series for research into international conventions and instruments, since most human rights instruments were developed during the 1950s and 1960s. It covers a longer period than A462, and some earlier material was incorporated into this one.

**United Nations – Draft declaration on the rights of the child, 1957–60      A463, 1957/2557**

**United Nations – Declaration and draft convention on elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, 1964      A463, 1964/1826**

**United Nations draft covenant on human rights, 1960–68      A463, 1965/4844**

The contents of this file were created by the Commonwealth government seeking the views of the states on the draft human rights covenants then under negotiation. Various drafts of the covenants are on file.

**CORRESPONDENCE FILES, ANNUAL SINGLE NUMBER SERIES WITH BLOCK ALLOCATIONS, 1953–      A446**

**Recorded by:**

**1953–74: Department of Immigration (CA 51)**

**Canberra and Sydney      2708.3 metres in Canberra; 700 metres in Sydney**

This series, created by the Department of Immigration and referred to repeatedly in this guide due to the scope and value of its contents, contains interesting material on the Department's consideration of policies against emerging international conventions on human rights. Only a small proportion of this series is on the database, and other finding aids need to be consulted to undertake thorough research.

**UN Draft Convention on human rights – Part 4, 1955–63      A446, 1962/66342**

This file contains Australian commentary on the draft covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights. The Department of

Immigration objected to certain provisions which might impair its ability to administer immigration policy.

**United Nations Organization. Elimination of Racial and Religious Discrimination Part 1, 1949–63      A446, 1963/45192**

**Draft convention on human rights – Part 4, 1963–68      A446, 1970/76776**

This item contains a Department of External Affairs report on the two human rights covenants following their adoption at the United Nations. In the report is a list of articles and Australia's voting position on each. Australia opposed a number of articles including those on self-determination, compulsory primary education, and the prohibition of advocacy of racial, national and religious hatred. Various drafts and associated materials are also on file.

**TALKS SCRIPTS – GENERAL SUBJECTS, 1951**

**SP369/1**

**Recorded by:**

**Australian Broadcasting Commission (CA 251)**

**Sydney      1.6 metres**

This series contains the scripts of radio talks given on ABC radio during 1951 on a wide variety of topics.

# Appendixes

## Appendix 1 Key Government Agencies

### **Attorney-General's Department, 1901– (CA 5)**

The Attorney-General's Department was one of the seven departments established at Federation, and was charged with responsibility for providing legal advice to all parts of the Commonwealth government and for drafting legislation. The legal opinions of the Attorney-General's Department often had significant implications for civic matters. The department also took a considerable interest in internal security matters, and supervised the activities of the Commonwealth Investigation Branch, ASIO, and other security agencies at various times. The department's files are located in Canberra.

### **Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO), 1949– (CA 1297)**

ASIO was established by prime ministerial directive in 1949 to take charge of civil security in Australia and the protection of the Australian government from internal and external threats not related to the criminal law. ASIO undertook a range of vetting and surveillance activities in the 1950s and 1960s relevant to citizenship, and was involved in the registration of aliens and plans for internment in the event of war. Some of these activities were taken over from the Commonwealth Investigation Service, along with many of its records. Due to the sensitivity of ASIO's activities its records are often subject to exemptions under the Archives Act which limit public access, however many significant records have been released. All files available for public access are located in Canberra.

### **Cabinet Secretariat (I) / Secretary to Cabinet, 1906–68 (CA 3)**

Prior to the Second World War systematic recording of Cabinet agenda, deliberations and decisions did not occur, and accordingly poor Cabinet records remain from this period. However, during the war a new system improved the records kept by Cabinet, and in 1949 Prime Minister Ben Chifley established a full cabinet secretariat. Comprehensive and well-organised Cabinet records have been maintained since that time. In 1968 the Cabinet Secretariat became the Department of the Cabinet Office, but this lasted only until 1971 when it was amalgamated with the Prime Minister's Department.

### **Chief Electoral Office, 1901–73 (CA 558)**

The Chief Electoral Office was responsible for Commonwealth electoral matters from Federation until 1973. Its records include a general correspondence series which spans the period (A406), and electoral maps and rolls.



**Commonwealth Investigation Branch, 1919–46 (CA 747)**  
**Commonwealth Investigation Service, 1946–60 (CA 650)**

The Investigation Branch was formed in 1919 from the remnants of several wartime civil security organisations, and it inherited many wartime Military Intelligence and censorship records. The Branch conducted a range of investigatory duties connected with civil security, including the vetting of applicants for naturalisation and passports, and some immigration applicants. It maintained a very active interest in the conduct of aliens in Australia, and was responsible for the registration of aliens in the 1920s, and ongoing investigations into aliens resident in Australia during the inter-war period. During the Second World War it was displaced from some security functions by the establishment of the Security Service. Following the war the two were merged in the Commonwealth Investigation Service which lost most of its security functions, and some of its staff, to the Australian Security Intelligence Organization in 1949 and 1950. The remainder of the Service was absorbed into the Australian Federal Police in 1960. The Investigation Branch maintained offices in each state capital except Hobart. The small number of staff during the inter-war years corresponded regularly over the Branch's activities, and accordingly in addition to the central files located in Canberra, good records are available on many topics in the state offices of the NAA.

**Department of the Army, 1939–73 (CA 36)**

The Department of the Army was created in 1939 and took over the administration of the Australian Army from the Department of Defence (I). It continued to exercise this function until 1973 when the Whitlam government reorganised military administration.

**Department of Defence (I), 1901–21 (CA 6)****Department of Defence (II), 1921–39 (CA 19)****Department of Defence Co-ordination, 1939–42 (CA 37)****Department of Defence (III), 1942– (CA 46)**

One of the Commonwealth's original departments, the Department of Defence (I) assumed control of all military and naval matters from the states on 1 January 1901. In 1905 Military and Naval Boards were established within the department, and in 1915 a separate Department of the Navy (I) was created from the Naval Office in the department. The two departments were amalgamated again in 1921, thereby creating the Department of Defence (II). During 1938 and 1939 various functions of the department were stripped and allocated to new departments such as the Department of Civil Aviation, and the remainder was divided into separate departments of Air, Army, Navy and Defence Co-ordination. The latter continued for three years with responsibility for military policy and administration, the War Book, and coordination of the constituent parts of the military, although some administrative functions were passed to other departments. In 1942 the department was renamed the Department of Defence (III) to more properly reflect its role. The department remained largely unaltered until the 1970s. The records of these departments are located in Melbourne and Canberra.

## **Department of External Affairs (I), 1901–16 (CA 7)**

The Department of External Affairs (I) was one of the seven departments established at Federation in 1901. Its main responsibilities were for migration, naturalisation, passports, territories, and external (meaning predominantly imperial) relations. The department initially acted as the Prime Minister's Office, until in 1904 a separate office was established within the department to conduct prime ministerial correspondence. That office was constituted as a full department in 1911, and the department's 'external' role quickly diminished. In 1916, the department was reconstituted as the Department of Home and Territories. While the department was located in Melbourne, the majority of its surviving records are now preserved in Canberra. The department had no branch offices, and its records are organised principally into several large series, the most important of which is series A1.

## **Department of External Affairs (II), 1921–70 (CA 18)**

The Department of External Affairs (II) was established as a small office within the Prime Minister's Department for the conduct of external relations. In 1935 it separated from the Prime Minister's Department, and by the 1940s was quickly expanding as Australia moved to establish diplomatic missions around the world. During the postwar period the department's responsibilities took in the conduct of Australia's relations with foreign states and multilateral organisations, and the protection of Australian interests and citizens abroad. In 1970 the department was renamed the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Department's records are located in Canberra, and are mainly organised in successive multiple number series.

## **Department of External Territories (I), 1941–51 (CA 42)**

## **Department of Territories (I), 1951–68 (CA 60)**

## **Department of External Territories (II), 1968–73 (CA 1284)**

The Territories Branch of the Prime Minister's Department was constituted as the Department of External Territories (I) in 1941, and charged with the administration of Australia's external territories. In 1951 responsibility for the Northern Territory was added to the department, and it was renamed the Department of Territories. The department continued with responsibility for most Australian territories, until 1968 when the administration of the Northern Territory was returned to the Department of the Interior (III), and the department was again renamed the Department of External Territories (II). There are two aspects to the records of these departments which are relevant to the guide: the administration of the Northern Territory where the Commonwealth was responsible for the whole civic relationship in the absence of a state tier of government, and the citizenship status of the people living in Australia's external territories.

## **Department of Home Affairs (I), 1901–16 (CA 8)**

The first Department of Home Affairs was established in 1901 and took responsibility for electoral and franchise matters, along with astronomy, census and statistics, and public works. The department was abolished in 1916 and its functions passed largely intact to a new Department of Home and Territories.

**Department of Home Affairs (II), 1928–32 (CA 24)**

The Department of Home and Territories was effectively renamed the Department of Home Affairs in 1928, all its functions continuing intact with the exception of administration of the territories of New Guinea, Papua and Norfolk Island. The department lasted only a short time before again being reconstituted, this time as the Department of the Interior (I).

**Department of Home and Territories, 1916–28 (CA 15)**

The Department of Home and Territories was formed from the amalgamation of the Department of Home Affairs (I) and the Department of External Affairs (I). It continued to hold most functions exercised by its predecessors, including immigration restriction, electoral and franchise matters, passports, naturalisation, and territories. The department's most important record series, A1, continued from the Department of External Affairs (I), and was continued by the Department of Home Affairs (II) when that department replaced Home and Territories in 1928.

**Department of Immigration, 1945–74 (CA 51)**

The Department of Immigration assumed control of most immigration, naturalisation and passports matters from the Department of the Interior (II) in 1945, and the staff and records of Interior dealing with these matters were also transferred. Immigration also took control of the tasks of interviewing applicants for immigration, naturalisation and passports from the Commonwealth Investigation Service in 1949. Immigration was integral to the establishment of Australian citizenship by the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948, and the department conducted citizenship policy in the form of migrant settlement, assimilation, and naturalisation policies. The department maintained large offices in each of the state capitals, and the records of these offices are now located in state offices of the NAA. While policy files are concentrated in Canberra, large numbers of case files and records on the specific activities of state branches in areas such as assimilation are available in the states.

**Department of Information, 1939–50 (CA 34)**

The Department of Information was established in September 1939 to mobilise support for Australia's war effort, and it held responsibility for propaganda and censorship. The department also took over the government's shortwave capabilities, and film and photographic resources for publicity purposes.

**Department of the Interior (I), 1932–39 (CA 27)****Department of the Interior (II), 1939–72 (CA 31)**

The Department of the Interior (I) was created from an amalgamation of the Departments of Home Affairs (II), Transport (I), and Works and Railways, and continued virtually all of their functions. As such the department was responsible for immigration, naturalisation, passports, elections and franchise, and the registration of aliens. In 1939 the department was reconstituted but was essentially the same as its immediate predecessor, and continued to hold responsibility for all

functions relevant to this guide until the establishment of the Department of Immigration in 1945. At that time the administration of immigration, passports, naturalisation and aliens was transferred to the new Department of Immigration.

### **Department of Labour and National Service, 1940–72 (CA 40)**

The Department of Labour and National Service was conceived to bring together all the elements of labour relations and supply so as to ensure effective conduct of the war effort. For several years after the war the department also held responsibility for migrant worker matters and their assimilation in industry. However it lost this function in 1953 to the Department of Immigration, and continued with responsibility for industrial relations and employment matters until its abolition in 1972.

### **Good Neighbour Council of the ACT, 1950–80 (CA 2980)**

### **Good Neighbour Council of Victoria, 1950–80 (CA 3491)**

### **Good Neighbour Council of Western Australia, 1950–79 (CA 7268)**

The Good Neighbour Movement was established by the first Citizenship Convention in 1950, and the Commonwealth provided substantial funding throughout its existence, although it operated as an autonomous body. The state Councils (e.g. ACT, Victoria and Western Australia) and their local committees aimed to assist with the assimilation and settlement of immigrants. Its members were drawn from a wide variety of community and business organisations, and the Councils conceived of themselves as coordinating bodies.

### **Navy Office (I), Department of Defence (I), 1911–15 (CA 575)**

### **Navy Office (II), Department of Navy (I), 1915–21 (CA 13)**

### **Navy Office (III), Department of Defence (II), 1921–39 (CA 2456)**

Before 1911 the Navy Office referred to the office of the Naval Board which had been created in 1905, and its records were integrated with those of the Department of Defence. Then in 1911 the Board was reconstituted, the office moved, and the Navy Office commenced its own records management. In 1915 a separate Department of the Navy was established and the Navy Office became its central administration. After the war that department was abolished and the Navy Office returned to the Department of Defence (II) where it remained until the Second World War.

### **Prime Minister's Department, 1911–71 (CA 12)**

The Prime Minister's Department began as an office within the Department of External Affairs established in 1904. The department held a wide range of responsibilities which expanded substantially during WM Hughes' tenure as Prime Minister with his arrogation of authority. Its functions relating to citizenship included the administration of passports during the First World War, and the department was closely involved in a variety of alien control policies including internment, even though it did not possess sole responsibility. Immigration encouragement and assistance were conducted by the department for much of the 1920s. The department's importance receded following the Second World War,

although it remained a central point for the coordination of much government activity until its amalgamation with the Department of the Cabinet Office in 1971. Many of the department's file series are well-organised and records can be easily located.

### **Security Service, 1941–45 (CA 660)**

The Security Service was established during the Second World War to augment civil security, since the military regarded the Commonwealth Investigation Branch as ineffective. The Service was staffed predominantly by military officers, and established roles for itself in conducting a range of security investigations, including ones into applications for immigration, emigration, naturalisation, passports and visas. Its roles overlapped with, and sometimes duplicated, those of the Investigation Branch. Further, the Security Service was well-resourced, and central in matters relating to the control of aliens including internment. The Service was reorganised in 1942 following a change of government, and was placed under the control of the Attorney-General, although it continued to cooperate closely with military security organisations. The Service was amalgamated with the Commonwealth Investigation Branch at the end of the war to form the Commonwealth Investigation Service. The Security Service maintained branch offices in the state capitals, and important records which have not survived in Canberra are preserved in some states.

### **Special Intelligence Bureau, 1916–19 (CA 746)**

The Special Intelligence Bureau was established during the First World War to conduct inquiries into sedition and espionage, and more generally to observe the activities of aliens in Australia. At the end of the war it was merged into a new Commonwealth Investigation Branch in the Attorney-General's Department. Its files and staff were largely taken over by the Branch.

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## Appendix 3 Guides to the collection

The National Archives of Australia creates and maintains guides to records in its collection to help researchers identify and locate records relevant to their research. These guides are available on the [National Archives' website](#).

## Appendix 4 Addresses and hours of opening

For contact details of the National Archives of Australia, see the National Archives of Australia [contact us page](#).