

RSTP would like to wish everyone a happy and a healthy New Year! We hope that you are well rested from the holidays and enjoying a great start to the year. On behalf of the RSTP, we look forward to working with you in 2014. Happy New Year!

News and Announcements

[Update on the proposal to change the age of dependent children](#) – In May 2013, CIC announced that starting on January 1, 2014 the age of dependent children would be changed from under 22 to under 19. To date, the proposal **has not been implemented**. Below is the official CIC message on the issue:

“A proposal to reduce the age of dependents from under 22 to under 19 was pre-published in the *Canada Gazette* Part I on May 18, 2013, along with the proposed regulatory changes to the PGP [Parent and Grandparent Sponsorship] program. The proposal to change the age of dependent children will not be coming into force at the time the PGP program re-opens on January 2, 2014.”

RSTP will be following this matter and will update the SAH community of any developments.

Settlement Corner

[RSTP Resource: Managing Expectation Tool Kit](#)

As many sponsors have had a number of arrivals during the past few months, we would like to remind all SAHs about the tool kit that was created by the RSTP last year; it is called **Managing Expectations** and its objective is to increase the users’ knowledge base about expectations and where they come from, to contribute to the discussion about setting realistic expectations and to provide some tools that can be used in the training and preparation of sponsoring groups. The *orientation checklist* in the last chapter of this document, provides a list of important items that sponsors are recommended to cover during the first few days after the sponsored person’s arrival, after the first week, and after the second or third week. Please click [here](#) to access this tool kit or visit the RSTP website at www.rstp.ca.

Emerging refugee crises

As we start 2014, UNHCR appeals for more funding for two emerging refugee crises: in South Sudan and Central African Republic.

“The situation has continued to deteriorate in South Sudan, where fighting has spread to seven of the country’s 10 states. The number of South Sudanese fleeing to neighbouring countries has quickly increased, and now totals some 43,000 people.” As of January 8th, “32,443 South Sudanese had arrived in Uganda, 4,754 in Kenya’s Kakuma Refugee Camp, some 6,000 in Ethiopia and at least several hundred in Sudan, with unconfirmed reports of thousands having fled there. Uganda is now seeing between 4,000 and 5,000 South Sudanese arriving every day. [...] some 232,000 people have been forced to flee their homes and are now displaced internally. This includes 60,500 people sheltering at 10 UN bases.”

In the Central African Republic (CAR), the number of people displaced within the country has now surpassed 935,000. “Since March last year, some 75,000 refugees have fled CAR to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of Congo, Chad and Cameroon – bringing the global number of refugees from CAR to some 240,000 by end of December.”

Podcast: *The Global Governance of International Migration: What Next?*

“Do we need more global governance of international migration? If so, why and what should it aim to achieve? How, if at all, should international migration be integrated in the post-2015 development agenda?” To find out the answers to these and other questions about global governance of migration by listening to the panel discussion hosted by Kellogg College (University of Oxford).

The podcast is available [here](#).

Upcoming events

Centre for Refugee Studies Seminar: *Sexuality, Asylum and Transit: Thinking Through the Experiences of Iranian Queer Refugees in Turkey*

Date: January 15, 2014
11:30 am - 13:00 pm
Location: York University,
Toronto ON
For more details click [here](#)

CCR Overseas Protection and Sponsorship Working Group meeting

Date: February 28, 2014
9:30 am – 5 pm
Location: Salvation Army,
160 Jarvis Street, Toronto, ON

If you have any PSR news on cases or arrivals that you would like to share with the SAH community, please send a message to info@rstp.ca and we will gladly include it in our next bulletin.

Inquiries & Responses

You asked... How many letters should we expect from CPO-W after case submission?

Our response... According to the CPO-W Process Diagram that was shared by the CPO-W, sponsors should expect the following correspondence:

- an e-mail from the CPO-W at the stage when the applicant’s data has been entered into the GCMS data base (it is a “do not reply” e-mail that has a G#), and
- a letter of approval after the decision on the sponsorship undertaking has been made

You asked... How do we know when the case was transferred to the visa office?

Our response... Once the CPO-W has made a decision on the sponsorship undertaking, and has mailed the approval letter to the SAH, they transfer the application to the responsible Visa Office in GCMS and at the same time they mail the hard copy to the CIC NHQ in Ottawa for transfer to the Visa Office.

You asked... How is application processing time calculated?

Our response... According to recent information shared with us by the CPO-W, their average processing time is currently 10 for SAH-submitted applications. With regards to processing times, as you know the CIC website still cites 30 business days which is not reflective of the current situation. The overseas processing time starts from when a visa officer overseas starts processing an applicant’s file until the case has received its final decision.

You asked... Would it be possible to get the latest version of the Pre-departure orientation from CIC and IOM especially for the BVOR applicants?

Our response... In terms of pre-departure orientation from the IOM, RSTP organized a webinar with Louise Belanger from the IOM who talked specifically about their Canadian Orientation Abroad (COA) program. The COA presentation slides indicate that the BVOR program is mentioned very briefly. Louise explained that the COA is provided to all resettled refugees at the same time, without detailing at great length what is BVOR, GAR and PSR and how these differ from one another. The information that COA Trainers received from the CIC does not necessary indicate that someone has been sponsored through the Blended VOR Program. RSTP has electronic copies of the COA presentation slides that can be obtained by SAHs upon request.