



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

FUTURE OF THE APOSTILLE CONVENTION AND THE E-APP TOMORROW AND BEYOND

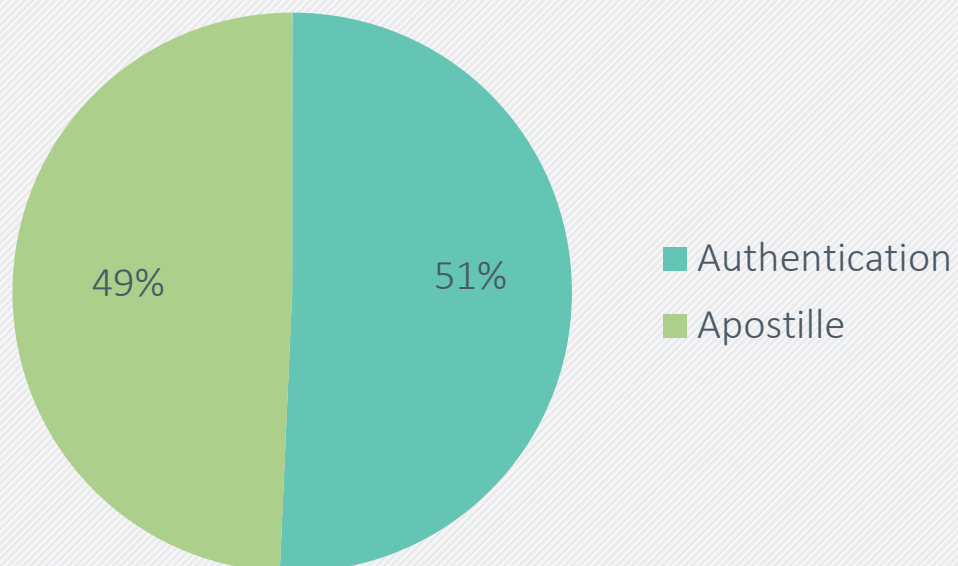
Prepared by John Fisher

Presented Tuesday November 1, 2016

APOSTILLE CONVENTION, SETTING THE SCENE IN AUSTRALIA

APOSTILLE, SETTING THE SCENE IN AUSTRALIA

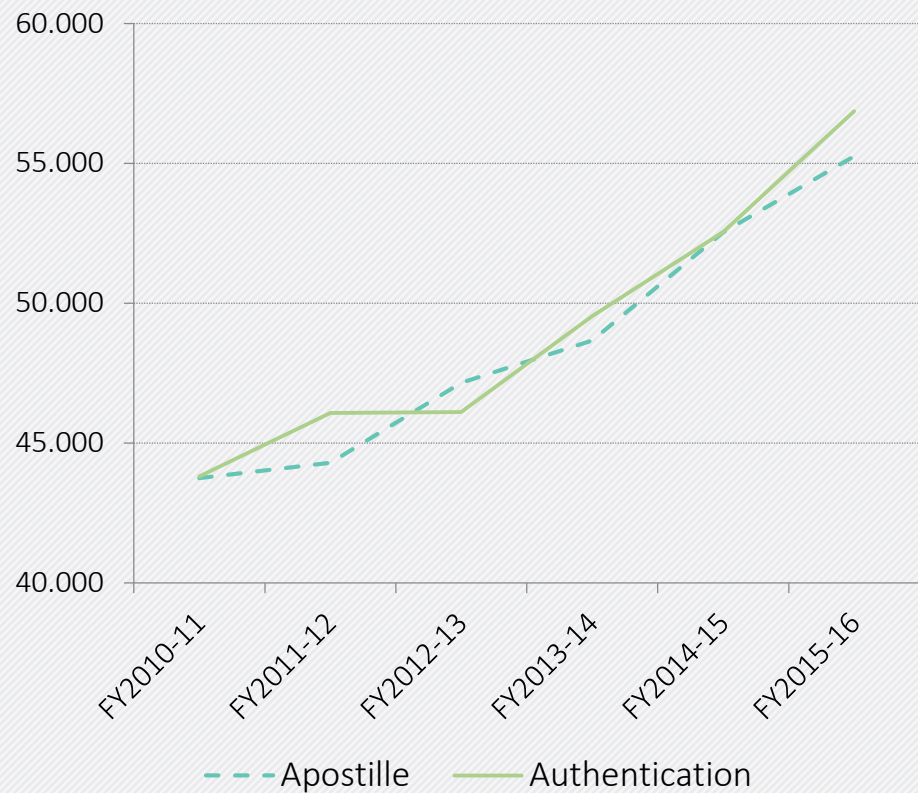
APOSTILLES V AUTHENTICATIONS – LAST 12 MONTHS



Total number of apostilles issued by Australia in the last 12 months was 55,256 compared to 56,864 Authentications.

APOSTILLE, SETTING THE SCENE IN AUSTRALIA

APOSTILLES V AUTHENTICATIONS – OVER THE LAST 6 YEARS

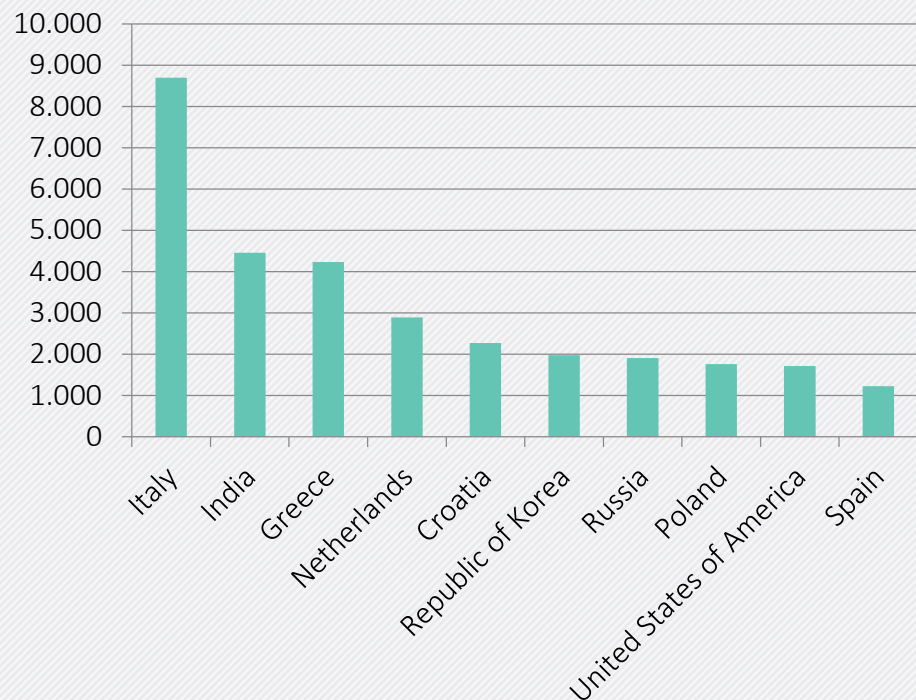


- The issuance of Apostilles and Authentications have respectively increased by 23% and 30% over the last 6 years.
- The number of Australians traveling overseas continues to increase (+34% over the last 6 years).
 - More than 10m passengers departed from Australia in the last twelve months.
- The apostilles issued by Australia are destined for the full range of convention countries.

APOSTILLE, SETTING THE SCENE IN AUSTRALIA

APOSTILLES – DESTINATION COUNTRY

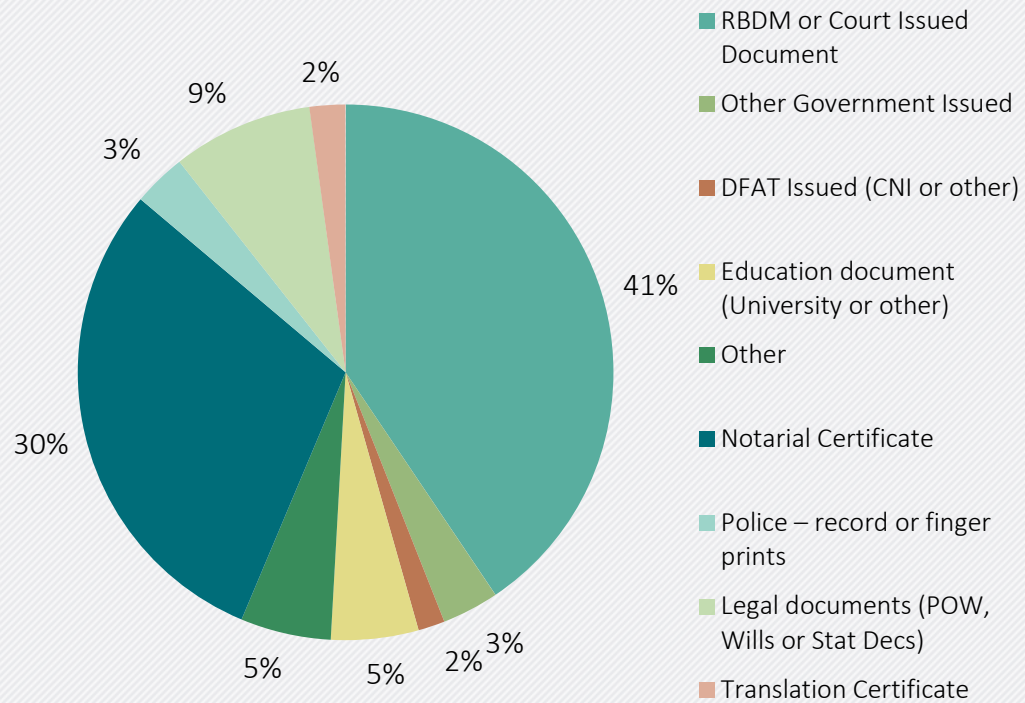
Top 10 destination countries



- Top 10 destination countries represent 56% of the total number of apostilles issued.
- The reasons for apostilles varies.
- Historically high migration to Australia from countries like Italy, Greece.
- Leads to larger numbers of identity documents destined for those countries.
- Most required for succession laws related to property, citizenship for children, inheritances etc.

APOSTILLE, SETTING THE SCENE IN AUSTRALIA

APOSTILLES – TYPE OF DOCUMENTS



– Probably a similar story for many convention countries.

– Also related to foreign student numbers in Australia. Source countries feature highly.

CHALLENGES FOR AUSTRALIA

CHALLENGES FOR AUSTRALIA AND FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

- Demand far out pacing resources available to deliver the services
- Low understanding of the Apostille process among Australian organizations
 - this pushes clients into Australian embassies and consulates to service documents destined for use in Australia (not Apostilles – but notarisation).
 - these should be certified/witnessed by local notary and then engage the apostille convention of the host country (where applicable).

E-APOSTILLE IN THE FUTURE

E-APOSTILLE IN THE FUTURE

E-REGISTER



Verify an Australian Apostille issued from the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Verify apostille details

Fields marked with * are required.

Only Apostilles issued on or after 14 December 2015 can be verified on this site.
[See Part 6 of the Certificate for the issue date].

Apostille number *

e.g. AAAA-A1-1111

Date of issue *

dd/mm/yyyy

Australia's e-Register was implemented on 13 December 2014

E-APOSTILLE IN THE FUTURE

E-REGISTER

- It reduces the number of times a foreign entity contacts offices in Australia or overseas to query whether an Apostille is genuine.
 - difficult to quantify how much of an impact this has had on resources.
- To implement the register and prevent against phishing exercises, Australia had to change the entire process of issuance.
- Many apostilles were being processed manually with ink stamps.
- The new process involves a system generated, random unique apostille number for each document.
- These details are fed into a central world wide database which can then be used as source data for the E- register.

WHERE TO NEXT?

WHERE TO NEXT? CLOSING REMARKS

- Next phase is intended to incorporate total automation of the apostille process for certain types of documents.
- Still at the planning stage but will include
 - Online smart forms, including online payment, automated verification of the content of underlying documents (where possible) and digital keys to affix the apostille.

WHERE TO NEXT?

CLOSING REMARKS

- It's likely to only capture two categories of documents:
 - civil status documents issued by the various registries of births deaths and marriages, and
 - Australian court issued documents.
- These make up roughly 40% of all apostilles issued by Australia.

WHERE TO NEXT? CLOSING REMARKS

- In most cases these documents are currently issued on physical paper.
 - to implement an e-apostille policy will require changes to Australia's public policy concerning copy documents (where the document can be verified using digital verification methods).
 - Whether to allow scanned versions rather than certified copies has still not been tested.

WHERE TO NEXT?

CLOSING REMARKS

- Some of the additional drivers to implement these changes
 - the Australian Government has a strong focus and mandate to reduce red tape for the community, and
 - to digitize the way the community engages with Government.
- E-Apostille addresses both of these aims.
- In addition, Australia's Foreign Minister is a champion for innovation.
 - So the challenge lies in further developing Australia's public policy to permit the development of the e-Apostille and to keep up with modern developments and technology.

WHERE TO NEXT?

CLOSING REMARKS

- The technical tools already exist to permit e-Apostilles as we have seen by the increasing number of States who have engaged it.
- There are other initiatives in Australia which go further than the Apostille Convention.
 - In many cases, providing verification, which in our experience is what organisations and governments are looking for.
- Label-free visas which can be verified online.
- Document Verification Services to confirm the authenticity of birth certificates and other civil status documents.

WHERE TO NEXT? CLOSING REMARKS

- National student Identification Numbers which will eventually provide life long histories of all education courses undertaken by a student in Australia.
- In some cases, these systems have replaced the need for the Apostille Convention between Australia and some countries.

WHERE TO NEXT? CLOSING REMARKS

- A key partner for Australia in the development of the e-Apostille is Australia's Notary Society.
 - without their engagement, the changes in Australian public policy would not be widely understood.
- We need trust in the society, and it needs trust in Government.
 - This requires ongoing communication.
 - Australia is very fortunate in that regard



Australian Government

Department of
Foreign Affairs and Trade

