



MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia-New Zealand Travel Bubble Welcome and ISS Australia ready to help with any International Parental Child Abductions

The Australian organisation that assists with the safe return of internationally abducted children has welcomed the Australia-New Zealand travel bubble and stands ready to assist if it leads to any short-term spike in international parental child abductions.

International Social Service Australia (ISS Australia) welcomes the Australia-New Zealand travel bubble and the opportunity for long-separated families to reunite across borders.

“It is truly wonderful to see families who have been separated reuniting across the Tasman sea, thanks to the good management of the COVID-19 virus across these two nations. Around half a million New Zealand citizens live in Australia and having family visitation across the Tasman is so important to their well-being as well as for Australians living in New Zealand”, said ISS Australia CEO Peter van Vliet.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has had an often devastating impact for families separated across borders, including the tens of thousands of Australians living overseas. It is great to see borders slowly beginning to open up again and people reuniting as the world begins to defeat the virus.

“However, the opening of borders between Australia and New Zealand may also see a spike in international parental child abductions and ISS Australia stands ready to assist if this occurs”, said Mr van Vliet.

ISS Australia has a legal and social work service that assists parents dealing with international parental child abduction (IPCA). IPCA occurs when a parent takes a child to another country without the other parent’s consent or against an order of a court or refuses to return a child from overseas after an agreed period of time.

The 1980 Hague Convention ensures the prompt return of children who have been abducted from their country of habitual residence from Hague Convention countries which includes New Zealand.

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MEDIA: For more information or to arrange interviews please contact Peter van Vliet on 0488 769 097.



About International Social Service Australia: ISS Australia is the independent Australian arm of the ISS network, spanning over 130 countries worldwide. It provides social work, legal and mediation services to families and children across international borders including assistance for families experiencing international parental child abduction, facilitating international kinship care and other international child welfare matters, international post adoption and general family tracing and reunification, and international family mediation. ISS Australia receives government funding for some services, but relies on fees, donations and other income to continue providing the full range of services. Visit www.iss.org.au/