

## Alien registration records held in Perth

### Registering aliens in time of war

The threat posed by world war during the twentieth century has twice caused the Commonwealth Government to require all aliens (ie non-British residents) living in or entering Australia to register with local authorities.

The first period of compulsory registration arose during World War I with the introduction of the War Precautions (Alien Registration) Regulations 1916 which required aliens to register with customs officials or the local police. These Regulations remained in force until they were replaced by the *Aliens Registration Act 1920*. The Act was suspended in 1926 and eventually repealed in 1934.

With the outbreak of World War II registration of resident aliens was again compulsory, this time under provisions of the *Aliens Registration Act 1939*. This legislation required the creation of a register of aliens in each State. These measures continued beyond the war with the replacement of the *Aliens Registration Act* by the *Aliens Act 1947*.

### Record holdings

The National Archives in Perth holds records relating to both periods of compulsory alien registration. Use the information that follows to select records that will be relevant to your research.

### World War I and the inter-war years

Details of aliens residing in and entering the Commonwealth during World War I were recorded by customs officials or local police on Form of Application for Registration (Form A1 for those residing in the Commonwealth and Form A2 for new arrivals). The forms were then forwarded to the Intelligence Section, General Staff, 5th Military District in Perth. Now held by the National Archives in series [PP14/3](#), the forms are arranged alphabetically within nationality and record the alien's name, date of birth, nationality, occupation, date of arrival and physical characteristics.

Aliens entering Australia at this time were required to land at one of eleven approved ports (Albany, Broome and Fremantle in Western Australia). Aliens holding a Certificate Exempting From Dictation Test, listed in the National Archives in series [K1145](#), could land at any port.

After the war, aliens arriving in Australia were required to complete a Personal Statement by Alien Passenger, Form A. These forms were completed and collected by the customs officers at the port of embarkation and record the alien's name, nationality, date and place of birth, date and port of arrival in Australia, name of ship, occupation, and age and place of birth of spouse and children. Holdings in Perth are arranged alphabetically within nationality groupings within series PP246/4.

## World War II and later

The registration process required aliens to submit a number of 'RA' (Registered Alien) documents. The range of forms to be completed included the following.

Form number	Form title
<b>RA</b>	Information from Aliens over Sixteen Entering the Commonwealth
<b>RA1</b>	Application for Registration Form
<b>RA2</b>	Application for Registration by Alien Entering Australia
<b>RA3</b>	Notice of Change of Occupation or Employment
<b>RA4</b>	Notification of Departure from Australia
<b>RA5</b>	Notice of Change of Residence
<b>RA6</b>	Notification of Marriage
<b>RA7</b>	Notification of Naturalisation
<b>RA9</b>	Application for Issue of New Certificate

The most commonly used form was the Application for Registration by Alien Entering Australia (Form RA2), which in practice appears to have been issued for both resident aliens and aliens leaving the Commonwealth. The RA2 form varied slightly in format over time but recorded the same details about aliens entering Australia. These details included name, address, nationality, date and place of birth, occupation, place and dates of birth of spouse and children, name of ship or aircraft registration, date and place of arrival in Australia. A passport-sized photograph of the applicant was attached to the majority of forms. Several of the forms (including the RA1, RA5, RA7 and RA9) were discontinued during the 1950s.

Held as record series K1331, the alien registration forms are arranged in alphabetical order by surname and grouped either in yearly runs or by nationality.

Alien registration documents for this later period may also be found in immigration case files. For more information on immigration records in Perth please see *Fact sheet 185 – Migrant selection documents held in Perth*.

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### World War I period

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Register of aliens maintained under War Precautions Regulations 1916</u>	1916–20	PP14/3
<u>Certificates of Exemption from Dictation Test</u>	1901–55	K1145
<u>Aliens declarations, Form A (No. 42)</u>	1924–48	PP246/4

### World War II period

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Alien registration documents</u>	1916–65	K1331
<u>Alien registration nominal index cards</u>	1964–71	PP513/2
<u>Registers of alien registration certificates issued in Western Australia</u>	1948–59	PP513/6

### For more information

You can use RecordSearch to find out about the agencies that created the records and to locate more records on your subject. Database searches on series K1331 and the name of the person you are interested in may identify the records you are seeking.