

Iscah Migration Newsletter

Edition Number 215 | 16th May 2016

Hiya All ,

Hope you had a great last month !

A Federal Election has been called in Australia for the 2nd July 2016 and so there will be very little changes in legislation/policy from DIBP between now and when we found out who our new government is. We will bring you everything we hear though.

Remember that this newsletter is sent out on the 3rd Monday of every month and to get on the permanent mailing list drop a line to newsletter@iscah.com . Ditto if you want to unsubscribe or have suggestions for content.

And so on we go to this month's aussie visa news ...



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1) New Skilled Occupation List released for 2016/17

DIBP have sprung a surprise and announced already the new SOL which is used for 485, 189 and 489 (family sponsored) visa applications. They have also released the CSOL which is used for 457, 186 and 190 visa applications.

Those who were worried that Accountant would come off the list would be relieved to see it and Internal Auditor remained. Interest will not lie in what are the occupational ceilings allocated for these occupations. Last years 2525 and 1000 respectively has created a logjam of EOIs in the system. It is noted that the major accounting bodies have recommended a rise in the numbers allocated to the occupation of Accountant.

Petroleum and Mining Engineer were dropped from the SOL against the recommendation of Engineers Australia. It will be interesting to see if State and territory governments now increase their state invites in these occupations for the 190 visa.

The additions to the SOL were Orthotist or Prosthetist and Audiologist.

Those occupations removed from the SOL were Petroleum Engineer, Metallurgist, Mining Engineer (excluding Petroleum), Dental Hygienist, Dental Prosthetist, Dental Technician, Dental Therapist, Environmental Health Officer, Occupational Health and Safety Advisor

There were no exclusions from the combined lists that make up the CSOL and so no changes to 457 and 186 eligibilities.

It is important now for those students studying in one of the removed occupations from the SOL who are completing their studies in July 2016 to try and obtain their results before 30th June 2016 so that they can lodge their 485 visa applications BEFORE their occupation drops from the SOL on the 1st July 2016. (note this 485 deadline does not affect degree, masters or PHD students who applied for their first student visa after 4th November 2011)

We are also still waiting for the skilled list that will be used for RSMS/187 (direct entry) applications from 1st July 2016.

The new SOL and CSOL are here www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2016L00800/Html/Text#
And a simpler SOL list is here www.iscah.com/wp_files/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/SCHEDULE-1.pdf

(Source: Iscah)

2) Iscah Visa Q&A videos

We are up to 9 videos now and they are packed with useful information about visa processes, policies, skills assessments, state sponsorships etc.

We plan to publish one each week and here are the latest over the last month :

Edition 9 - Happy Mothers Day and more of your skilled visa questions answered - RSMS, 187, 457s, Engineers, Aged Carers points test etc

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86uYKOb0nb4>

Edition 8 - Points test, RSMS, 457s, Accountants, Retail Managers, Engineers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBn8O62-ez8>

Edition 7 - Skilled visas, RSMS, ENS, points test, 457s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdcrAzob5MM>

Skill Assessments

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5oFGvBk11Q>

Check out the full list here on Youtube:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCG7m_j4lrmoEh2n7G4xEsHg?app=desktop

3) More checks by DIBP

The immigration department will receive a \$99.2 million boost to help weed out potential criminal and terror risks.

The federal government has announced a \$99.2 million boost for a visa risk assessment system to help the immigration department weed out travellers who pose criminal and terror risks.

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton told a national security conference in Canberra on Wednesday night that staff are good at detecting fraud but technology is leaping ahead.

"Risks will be more easily identified at the visa application stage before individuals reach the border," Mr Dutton said.

The Government says it will test changes to visa arrangements in key markets in a bid to boost visitor and investor numbers.

Under the system, staff will gain access to information to assess a traveller's broader risks, including whether they are likely to overstay their visa or work when they don't have that right.

One challenge facing staff was detecting circumstances where documents were genuine but the traveller was not.

"We have had instances where a criminal or person with terrorist intent has left or indeed entered the country using a relative's passport," Mr Dutton said.

(Source: www.sbs.com.au)

4) DIBP Boss claims they are not "Militarised"

The Immigration department has not been militarised, according to its boss Michael Pezzullo. The departmental secretary, who was revealed this week to have the confidence of only 30 per cent of his staff, says that change is unsettling and that some decisions will not please everybody in the department.

In a joint statement with Border Force Commissioner Roman Quaedvlieg, Mr Pezzullo said the dismal results of a staff Pulse survey, revealed this week by Fairfax Media, reflected "legitimate concerns" of his staff but the benefits of the merger with Customs were already being seen.

Staff complained in the survey of a "command and control" approach, a "military-style regime" and a culture of blame for failure that came from the top.

But Mr Pezzullo and Mr Quaedvlieg are unhappy with being accused, again, of militarising the department.

"We reject categorically the inaccurate and unhelpful meme that the department has a 'militarised' culture: the only staff required to be in uniform and to carry weapons are those whose duties require it and who are properly credentialed and trained," they wrote.

The two men also say the transition to a "fresh" culture will not occur overnight.

"Already we are seeing benefits in establishing blended teams of former Immigration and Customs who are working with new colleagues who bring specialist skills in areas such as intelligence, analytics, investigations and operations," they wrote.

"Effecting this workforce transition, and with it a fresh culture, will take time."

"Change is unsettling; it leads to uncertainty, so it is not unusual or unexpected to see survey results that bear out the legitimate concerns of our staff. Some decisions won't please everyone but that is not an excuse to resile from them.

"We need to work with our people to equip the organisation to meet the demands of the future.
(Source: www.smh.com.au)

5) Government's report on Economic impacts of Migration

The Australian government have released their report on "Economic Impacts of Migration and Population growth". The media release is here :

Migration has been an important influence on Australian society and the economy. Increasing skilled migration would make a positive overall contribution to Australia's future per capita income levels, according to a final report released by the Productivity Commission.

The report - Economic Impacts of Migration and Population Growth - responds to a request by the Australian Government to examine the impact of migration and population growth on Australia's productivity growth.

'Australia's migration program is increasingly focussed on skilled migration, which is generally improving the labour market outcomes for immigrants. However, the annual flow of immigrants is small compared with the size of the population and the workforce, so a relatively small contribution to the economy is to be expected. Furthermore, there are economy-wide consequences that can offset the labour market effects of immigrants', said Commissioner Judith Sloan.

To assess the effect of skilled migration, modelling was conducted to estimate the economic impact of a simulated increase in skilled migration of about 50 per cent on the level in 2004-05.

By 2024-25, the increase in income per capita, on average, is projected to be about \$400 (or about 0.7 per cent), compared with a base case scenario. Commissioner Sloan said 'in an exercise like this, many assumptions are required and not all of the potentially important aspects can be quantified. However, the results are consistent with studies in other countries as well as previous studies in Australia, and provide a guide to the likely economic effects.'

'Migration contributes to the economy in many ways. As well as the upskilling of the workforce, economies of scale and the development of new export markets would further add to the economic benefits of migration. Environmental issues associated with a larger population would need to be managed, however', according to Commissioner Sloan.

The Commission also found that the English language proficiency of immigrants is a key factor in determining their ease of settlement and their labour market success, particularly for skilled immigrants.

The full report is here :

www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/migration-population/report/migrationandpopulation.pdf

(Source: Australian Federal government)

6) Australian enhances visa programme with Singapore

The Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton today announced the introduction of two new visa initiatives that will enhance tourism, youth mobility and business links between Australia and Singapore.

The new visa arrangements have been developed as part of the Australia-Singapore Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Australia and Singapore have agreed to implement a Work and Holiday visa arrangement for young adults from both countries.

"This reciprocal Work and Holiday arrangement with Singapore will allow residents aged 18 to 30 years to travel, live, work and study in each other's country." Mr Dutton said. "This new arrangement will promote cultural exchange and strengthen people-to-people links by creating opportunities for young people to travel and undertake short-term work and study to supplement their holiday experience."

The Work and Holiday arrangement will make available 500 places in each country per year with the potential for growth in future years. This brings Australia's overall Working Holiday Maker visa programme to a total of 39 partner countries.

In addition to the Work and Holiday visa initiative, the Australian Government will also soon introduce an option of a long validity, multiple-entry visitor visa for Singaporean nationals to visit Australia – an extension of the current one-year visa.

"Singapore is one of the top countries for visitors to Australia, with more than 203,000 visitor visas granted in 2014-15, up 4.6 per cent compared to 2013-14," Mr Dutton said.

"The new visitor visa arrangement will further boost tourism and business links between Australia and Singapore and allowing for a longer validity period will encourage repeat visits and align with the Government's agenda to reduce unnecessary red tape."

The option of a long validity, multiple-entry visitor visa for Singaporeans will be targeted at frequent short-term travellers to Australia. The Department of Immigration and Border Protection will continue to work closely with its counterparts in Singapore to implement the arrangements as soon as possible.

(Source: DIBP)

7) Long Term visa for wealthy Indian Travellers

NEW DELHI: Australia has announced the trial of a three-year multiple-entry visitor visa for India to be implemented by July 2016, in a bid to make high-spending Indian travellers repeat visits. The trial which targets frequent short-term travellers to Australia, will allow entry into Australia multiple times on the same visa with each stay valid for up to three months. This move came just ahead of the holiday and travel season in India.

India is among three other countries - Thailand, Vietnam and Chile, where Australia is doing this trial. The trial applies to eligible applicants within the tourist and business visitor visa streams. The move comes as Indians have emerged among the top spenders in the continent. Australia has witnessed a continued rise in tourists from India. In calendar year 2015, over 2.3 lakh Indians went to Australia -- a 19% rise from previous year -- and spent 5,500 crore rupees there -- a 38% higher than that in 2014, according to Tourism Australia.

"India has also improved its ranking to become the eighth largest market for arrival and tenth largest market for spend in Australia," Tourism Australia said.

Commenting on the three-year visa, Australia's High Commissioner to India Harinder Sidhu said, "Australia welcomes the tremendous interest Indians have in visiting Australia for tourism and business. With India among Australia's nine key tourism markets, the trial will naturally drive our tourism growth from this part of the world," Ms Sidhu said. The trial will make it easier for Indian visitors to make repeat visits. Travellers will not need to re-apply for visa within the three-year period."

The announcement was made as part of the Australian Government's 2016-17 Budget to boost Australia's future tourism growth.

Head of Thomas Cook, a leisure travel company, Rajeev D Kale said, "The three-year multi-entry Australia visa is a forward looking strategy and will effectively serve to catalyse demand for Australia, a destination that is already seeing strong uptake from Indians for leisure, in addition to b-leisure and VFR (Visual Flight Rules). The sheer diversity of destination Australia calls for repeat visits and this three-year visa is indeed a boon to Indians and its 30-day stay per visit will go a long way to incentivise longer stays."

(Source: Times of India)

8) Government revisiting Unpopular "backpacker tax"

The federal government is considering changes to the planned "backpacker tax", which was set to kick in for working holiday visas on July 1, to ensure the tourism industry has enough workers at a time of major growth.

"There have been a number of legitimate concerns that have been raised," Tourism and International Education Minister Richard Colbeck said at Tourism Australia's Destination Australia conference in Sydney on Wednesday.

Northern Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles, industry groups like Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF) and senior Labor Party members including Shadow Tourism Minister Anthony Albanese have publicly lobbied against changes announced in the last federal budget.

According to the backpacker tax set to take effect on July 1, working holidaymakers would be required to pay 32.5 per cent tax from the first dollar earned rather than having an \$18,000 tax-free threshold. They would also have to pay a 35 per cent tax on the employee superannuation contributions they receive when they leave the country. The measure was forecast to raise \$540 million over four years.

Even before this was announced, the number of working holiday makers was falling. In the 2014-15 financial year, 173,491 visas were granted, down 5.4 per cent from the prior year. Many of the visa holders work in the hospitality sector, which is short of labour.

"The tax arrangements require further discussion so we don't lose market share in this space," Mr Colbeck said.

He said Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull had tasked him with finding a revenue-neutral solution in consultation with the employment, agriculture and industry ministers to take to Treasurer Scott Morrison for Cabinet approval and possible inclusion in the upcoming budget.

"We will be coming to you to talk to you about your thoughts around this process," Mr Colbeck told tourism industry leaders. "We obviously need to get this done quickly but I think it is an important initiative. We need to make sure we don't create a tax advantage for particular workers on a particular visa."

TTF chief executive Margy Osmond said Mr Colbeck, who attended an industry roundtable last week, should be applauded for raising the issue with Cabinet colleagues.

He said the cost of working holiday visas, which has also been criticised as being higher than other countries, was not being reviewed at this time. Mr Giles had called on the federal government to lower the price of the visas from the current \$440 to be more competitive against Canada's \$150 fee. Mr Colbeck said the potential changes to the backpacker tax demonstrated the federal government recognised the importance of the tourism industry to the economy.

(Source: www.smh.com.au)

9) More details of the new Student visa regime \ from 1st July 2016

DIBP have released more details of the new student visa regime from 1st July 2016 below : (a simpler version should be available shortly)

Contents - Legislative instruments for new Student Visa framework

The new framework has two visas: Subclass 500 (Student) and Subclass 590 (Student Guardian). There is a new Schedule 1 (Item 1222) Student (Temporary) (Class TU) and new Schedule 2 for Subclass 500 (Student) and Subclass 590 (Student Guardian).

Financial Capacity for Student and Student Guardian visas

Legislative Instrument - IMMI 16/018 - F2016L00639 - Migration Regulations 1994 - Specification of Evidence of Financial Capacity for Subclass 500 (Student) Visas and Subclass 590 (Student Guardian) Visas, specifies the amount of funds required to demonstrate sufficient funds for student, family unit members, spouse and parent annual incomes; and timeframe

Item 1 (a) - Student visa Subclass 500 - demonstrate sufficient funds to meet the following: travel expenses, and living costs and expenses as specified in Item 4 for the first 12 months of applicant's stay annual course fees for the first 12 month of the applicants stay.

Item 1(b) - Accompanying family members of Student visa applicant travel expenses, and living costs and expenses for the first 12 months of applicant's stay, and all school fees as specified in Item 6 for each school aged dependent child. OR the primary applicant's parents, spouse or partner has a personal annual income specified in Item 7 or Item 8 OR The applicant has provided a completed AASES form as defined in Reg 1.03

Item 2 (a) - specifies the financial capacity required for secondary applicants making a combined application with the primary Student applicant in Item 1

Item 2 (b) - specifies the financial capacity required where the Student family members' application is not combined with the primary applicant's application

Item 3 (a) - Student Guardian visa Subclass 590: travel expenses living costs and expenses in Item 4 of this Instrument for the first 12 months of applicant's stay

Item 3 (b) - Accompanying family members Student Guardian visa applicant: travel expenses living costs and expenses in Item 4 of this Instrument for the first 12 months of applicant's stay OR the primary applicant's spouse or partner has a personal annual income specified in Item 7 or Item 8 of this Instrument

Item 4 - Specifies the following annual living costs: Student: \$19,830 Student Guardian: \$19,830 Spouse or de-facto partner: \$6,940 Any dependent children: \$2,970

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Item 5 - Specifies the following sources of evidence of financial capacity: money deposit with a financial institution loan with a financial institution government loans scholarship or financial support

Item 6 (a) & (b) - Specifies for each school age child seeking to satisfy secondary criteria the following amounts: annual minimum amount for schooling \$8000 per annum, unless enrolled in a State or Territory school where the fees have been waived due to the primary applicant's status as a doctoral degree student, Foreign Affairs student, Defence student or Commonwealth sponsored student

Item 7 (a) & (b) - Specified annual income to satisfy Items 1,2, and 3 of this Instrument: \$60,000 for an individual Subclass 500 applicant, or \$70,000 if, one or more members of the applicant family unit are seeking to satisfy the secondary criteria for the Student visa, or, Subclass 590 Student Guardian visa applicant.

Item 8: Specifies as evidence of personal income: Official Government documentation has been issued in the 12 months immediately before the application was made.

This Instrument commences on 1 July 2016

(Source; Migration Institute Australia summary)

NOTE: More DIBP info on the new Student Framework from 1st July 2016

http://www.iscah.com/wp_files/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/SSVF-General-info-A.pdf

10) Proposal for Joint Australia/New Zealand tourist visa

The Australian Tourism and Transport Forum and the Tourism Industry Association NZ have joined forces to lobby the government for a Trans-Tasman visa.

The visa would allow international travellers a single application process and fee for one passport to visit the two countries.

The groups have written to the Immigration and Tourism Ministers in both countries, requesting the visa be introduced by the end of 2016.

Tourism and Transport Forum chief executive Margy Osmand said the visa was "about growing the pie". "We're both long-haul destinations," she said.

"Let's invite people down here, give them a joint-visa so they can visit both countries and stay a little longer."

"The reality is that if you are coming halfway around the world to Australia or New Zealand you want to make it worth your while, just as travelling to Europe we visit a multitude of countries on that continent, not just one."

It is proposed the visa would be similar to the European Schengen zone, which allows largely unrestricted travel among countries.

The single Trans-Tasman visa was introduced last year for three months during the 2015 Cricket World Cup.

"Lots of hurdles get raised about the systems not being compatible but we just keep coming back to the point that it was tried out during the cricket world cup for three months and it worked," Tourism Industry Association NZ chief executive Chris Roberts said.

It was snapped up by nearly 8000 people with 40 per cent of those visitors were from China, despite the country having no competing team.

Those pushing for a Trans-Tasman visa say they think it will be most popular among Asian tourists.

(Source: www.sbs.com.au)

11) "Allocation" dates after visa lodgement

After DIBP invites skilled applications through the EOI system, and then a visa is lodged, a DIBP case then has to be allocated to a case officer to work on.

The below table included these latest "allocation" dates .

GSM allocation dates

The tables below list the earliest lodgement dates for applications that have been allocated to processing teams. You can use this information to determine when your application will be allocated and to ensure your application is complete and ready for assessment.

GSM SkillSelect allocation information

Please note that Migration Programme planning levels take precedence over priority processing arrangements in determining the order in which applications are considered. Allocations occur in accordance with the requirements of these planning levels. This means that when necessary applications in Priority Group 4 are allocated ahead of Priority Group 3.

PRIORITY PROCESSING INFORMATION FOR GSM SKILLSELECT APPLICATIONS

Visa subclass	Priority group 3	Priority group 4
189 Skilled – Independent	N/A	9 March 2016
190 Skilled – Nominated	3 March 2016	N/A
489 Skilled – Regional	3 March 2016	6 December 2015

N/A - indicates that the relevant visa subclass is not specified for this priority group
Further information about Processing of State, Territory and Regional Nominated General Skilled Migration visas and Priority processing groups and order of processing applications is available on our website.

GSM priority exempt allocation information

Subclasses 489 – Renewal, 489 – Subsequent Entrant and 887 Skilled - Regional are exempt from the priority processing direction and applications are processed in the order in which they were received

PROCESSING INFORMATION FOR GSM PRIORITY EXEMPT APPLICATIONS

Visa subclass	Application date
489 Second Provisional Stream (Renewal)	16 March 2016
489 Subsequent Entrant	16 March 2016
887 Skilled – Regional	17 November 2015

This page no longer includes information about the pre SkillSelect visas (subclasses 175, 176, 475, 487, 495, 496, 885 and 886) because these applications have either been finalised, capped and ceased, or are currently allocated to a visa processing team.

12) Changes to AITSL (Teachers assessment body) requirements

Notification of Changes to AITSL Assessment Criteria

Effective 22 April 2016

Early Childhood (Pre-Primary school) teacher professional criterion

AITSL will now consider supervised teaching practice with children across the Birth to 8 years age range, completed as a compulsory component of a relevant initial teacher education qualification, towards meeting the supervised teaching practice requirements of the Professional criterion for Early Childhood (Pre-Primary School) Teacher (ANZSCO 241111).

English language criterion for all school teacher occupations

AITSL will now accept suitable Academic IELTS Test Report Forms for tests undertaken during the 24 month period prior to submitting an AITSL skills assessment application. This is in keeping with the use of Academic IELTS for teacher registration purposes and the period IELTS can be verified.

(Source: AITSL)

13) Registration of relationships for Visa purposes

For many visa applications, DIBP require a partner included in the application to prove they are either married or have been living together for 12 months in a defacto relationship. For example this is requirement for a partner, business skills, employer sponsored (permanent), GSM and student visa.

A reminder that some states and territories allow you to REGISTER a defacto relationship where you have lived together for LESS than 12 months. DIBP then will accept this lesser period.

The organisations to contact in the participating regions are :

Victoria – Births, Deaths and Marriages

Tasmania – Relationship Register

Queensland – Births, Deaths and Marriages

NSW – Births, Deaths and Marriages

ACT – Partnership Register

14) Skill Select 27th April 2016

The table below shows the number of invitations issued in the SkillSelect invitation round on 27 April

Invitation process and cut offs

The highest ranked clients by points score are invited to apply for the relevant visa. For clients who have equal points scores, the time at which they reached their points score for that subclass (referred to as the visa date of effect) determines their order of invitation. Expressions of Interest with earlier dates of effect are invited before later dates.

Visa subclass	Points score	Visa date of effect
Skilled - Independent (subclass 189)	60	16 April 2016 7.48 am
Skilled - Regional Provisional (subclass 489)	70	18 April 2016 12.04 am

Due to the continuing high numbers of EOIs received for the below occupations, invitations for these occupations will be issued on a pro rata basis in each monthly invitation round over the 2015-16 programme year. These arrangements are subject to change throughout the programme year. SkillSelect first allocates available places to Skilled – Independent (subclass 189) visas and then remaining to Skilled – Regional (subclass 489) (Provisional – Family Sponsored) visas. If all places are taken up by subclass 189 visas then there will be no invitations issued for subclass 489 visas in these occupations:

- ICT Business and Systems Analysts
- Accountants
- Software and Applications Programmers.

The points score and the visa date of effect cut-off for the above occupations in the 27 April 2016 invitation round is as follows. Below points score and visa date of effect is for Skilled Independent (subclass 189).

Points scores and the visa dates of effect cut off for the above occupations in the 27 April 2016 invitation round.

Points	Description	Points score	Visa date of effect
2211	Accountants	70	16 April 2016 4.19 pm
2611	ICT Business and System Analysts	70	15 April 2016 10.54 pm
2613	Software and Applications Programmers	65	15 March 2016 3.43 pm

Note: the following occupation groups have reached their ceilings and no more invitations will be issue during the 2015-16 programme year:

2212 – Auditors, Company Secretaries and Corporate Treasures
2339 – Other Engineering Professionals

Okay folks, all done again.
Have a great month and talk to you all
on Monday 20th June !

Cheers



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