

Iscah Migration Newsletter

Edition Number 236 | 21st February 2018

Hiya

A couple of days late, here is our latest accumulation of all the visa news and changes we are aware of over the last month.

This newsletter is published on the 3rd Monday of every month and we provide it free to our readers. If you have any queries, suggestions, wish to subscribe or unsubscribe then drop us an email to newsletter@iscah.com

On to February's news ...



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1) Parent Visa queue nearly 90,000

DIBP have released figures in relation to the Parent visa categories and associated backlogs –

The Parent visa outcome is comprised of two categories:

- Non-Contributory Parent; and
- Contributory Parent.

The Non-Contributory Parent category outcome for 2016–17 was 1345 places. Demand for places in the Non-Contributory Parent category decreased by 280 applications (or 9.7 per cent) between 30 June 2016 and 30 June 2017. As at 30 June 2017, 49,735 clients remain in the pipeline, a decrease of 1.1 per cent (or 557 applications) compared to the pipeline as at 30 June 2016.

The Contributory Parent category outcome for 2016–17 was 6218 places. Demand for places in the Contributory Parent category increased by 3312 applications (or 26.3 per cent) between 30 June 2016 and 30 June 2017. As at 30 June 2017, 38,508 clients remain in the pipeline, an increase of 28.9 per cent compared to the pipeline of 29,884 clients as at 30 June 2016.

(Source: DHA)

2) Skilled List changes 17th January 2018

These changes will only impact applications lodged on or after 17 January 2018. Applications lodged before this date will not be impacted.

Occupations added to the lists

The three occupations below, which were previously unavailable on either list, will be added to the STSOL. Details of any caveats applicable to these three occupations are also provided below.

Property Manager 612112
Psychotherapist 272314
Real Estate Rep 612115

Note: To align the Training (subclass 407) visa with other visa programs, a number of occupations which were previously not eligible for this visa will be available when the instrument comes into effect.

Occupations moved between the lists

The two occupations below will be moved from the STSOL to the MTLSSL. Details of any caveats applicable to these occupations are also provided below.

Horse Breeder 121316
Management Consultant 224711

Occupations removed from the lists

The two occupations listed below will be completely removed from the lists of eligible skilled occupations for all skilled visa programs on 17 January 2018.

Building Associate 312112
Hair/Beauty Salon Manager 142114

Occupations with caveat-only changes

The six occupations listed below will remain on their existing lists. A new and/or amended caveat will, however, be in effect as of 17 January 2018 as outlined below.

Accommodation and Hospitality Manager nec	141999
Management Accountant	221112
Massage Therapist	411611
Recruitment Consultant	223112
Supply and Distribution manager	133611
Taxation Accountant	221113

Further details are here -

www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/work/work/2018-changes-of-eligible-skilled-occupations

(Source: DHA)

3) Accountants take another big hit for 189 invitations

Accountants take another big hit for 189 invitations – (Iscah article #1 from 17/01/2018)

DIBP have nicely adjusted the way they will interpret the occupational ceiling of 4,785 places for 2017/18. It was thought that this was all for the 189 visa program. However they have now added a note specifically for Accountants to read

*Occupations that are subject to pro rata arrangements. For Accountants (2211) the occupational ceiling also reflects volumes in other skilled visa categories."

This is very important and mirrors what DIBP did at the start of the 2016/17 program year. On that occasion they boosted Accountants hopes by saying initially that the ceiling will rise to 4777 places. But then dampened that by saying (just for Accountants) that it will include visas granted for all points test categories (489, 189, 190) and Employer sponsored categories. The effect was a drop down to just 2,500 places. They look to have now done the same for 2017/18.

So in short the 4,785 places seem to be including ALL state sponsored 489 and 190 visas as well as RSMS (187) and ENS (186) visa Accountant grants. As they all come under the general interpretation of "other skilled visa categories"

That in effect will reduce the number of places for Accountants down from 4,785 to more likely around 2500-3000. (same as last program year)

Given that 2633 EOIs have been invited already, and DIBP invited ZERO in the last round, this looks awful for the rest of the program year.

Accountants further comment – (Iscah article #2 from 17/01/2018)

Now that DIBP have said the 4785 places will also include other skilled visas (the only occupation that has been treated like that both this year and last program year) the next question becomes how many places will be left for the 189 visas ?

We know already that 2633 have been invited for the 189s which gives only 2152 places left for presumably all the 186,187,189 190 and 489s under Accountants.

What will be left (if any) will then be available for any new 189 invitations between now and June 30th 2018. We have asked the department (both the 189 and company sponsored 186/187 policy sections) if this is correct. That is they are going to treat Accountants in the same restrictive way as they did last year. As their website now suggests.

They may not reply as is normal for them with any internal policy decision like this.

We have also put in a Freedom of Information request to DIBP to see what are the 186,187,190 and 489 visa grants so far. So we can get an idea on how places they may take away from the 189s. This generally takes around 4-6 weeks to get the results.

We will provide this information when we receive it and then what we think may be left for the 189s for Accountants.

Iscah today (21/02/2018)

Since we wrote those articles above, DHA have not invited any Accountants for 489 or 189 visas through skill select. We are close to obtaining through Freedom of Information the number of Accountants granted permanent visas in other categories last program year and this program year. We expect that will confirm that DHA have just about reached, if not exceeded, their migration numbers for Accountants for 2017/18. If so that may well mean no more Accountant invitations for the 2017/18 program year for 189 visas.

(Source: Iscah comments)

4) New NAATI process for 5 second language points

NAATI are the approval body for second language skills and have a new process for this test in place
Credentialed Community Language Test (CCL)

CCL process -

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/Joy5xTnG1l0Rp/>

CCL Practice tests –

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/VGo1Cd4Rzf7er/>

Here is a list of the languages and cities for NAATI's new testing process from March 2018

<https://www.naati.com.au/media/1706/ccl-test-location-infopdf.pdf>

And details of how to enrol

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/Joy5xTnG1l0Rp/>

(Source: NAATI)

5) Artificial Intelligence in visa processing

Newspaper article -

Australia's new visa system could use AI to spot dubious applicants so staff can focus on 'high risk clients'. The Department of Home Affairs is looking to artificial intelligence and machine learning to identify problems in visa applications.

The newly formed department last week asked the market for information about how these and other technologies could be used to augment and eventually automate human assessments of complex visa applications.

It is the next step in the department's once-in-a-generation overhaul of Australia's visa system, which will split the various components of its visa operations into eight separate bundles, and see market providers take on a larger role.

The RFI specifically relates to "assessments of temporary visa applications from all geographic locations against visa criteria (other than health and national security assessments)", as well as "longer-term, more complex visa products" at a later stage.

Visa processing is currently performed manually by departmental staff using some supporting technology to assess a range of information - the majority of which is gathered from paper visa applications - in order to make assessments against each criteria.

"Making these assessments, which form part of the information on which a decision to grant or refuse a visa is made, costs several hundred million dollars a year," tender documents state.

With the volumes of visa and citizenship applications expected to grow by around 50 percent to 13 million per annum over the next 10 years, the department is keen to move away from this "resource intensive approach".

The department expects that three broad types of solutions could be introduced to help deliver assessments: business process services, supportive technology such as robot processing automation and analytics, and emerging disruptive technology like AI and machine learning.

"The market consultation process shows that business process services could play a substantial role in any initial solution for assessments against visa criteria, with supportive technology improving productivity and accuracy over time," tender documents state.

While the department expects initial capability will involve "predominately human-delivered service solutions" using supportive technology, it is also looking at opportunities to "deploy disruptive technologies developed by niche providers".

"Disruptive technologies are maturing and may be ready to play a role in assessments against visa criteria by the time the first temporary visa product is launched in December 2019."

These solutions would assess an applicant's eligibility against a range of threshold questions in cases where straightforward approval cannot be granted and further assessment is required.

This could include making decisions around "the genuineness of the applicant's intention to depart Australia at the end of their visa, or the genuineness of a claimed spouse relationship", as well as whether the applicant has sufficient funds to support themselves, the agency said.

However, the assessments wouldn't constitute a decision - the department said it would retain ultimate responsibility for all rulings.

Increasingly automating application processing for the majority of clients who are low risk would allow staff to focus attention on "higher risk clients", the department said.

It has previously predicted that as many as 90 percent of all future visa applications will be decided through an automated platform.

The department expects to commence a procurement process later this year for new technologies that can assist in application assessments.

(Source: www.itnews.com.au)

6) Tax office to audit foreign visa holders

Australian tax office to audit 20 million foreign visa holders

SYDNEY (Reuters) - The Australian Taxation Office will investigate more than 20 million international visa holders and foreign students using data-matching audits to catch tax avoidance and enforce superannuation compliance, the agency said on Sunday.

The three-year data matching audit will cross-reference information from the Australian government's Home Affairs Department with Australian Tax Office (ATO) records.

"It is estimated that records of 20 million individuals will be obtained over the course of the three-year period," the ATO confirmed with Reuters on Sunday.

"These records will be electronically matched with ATO data holdings to identify non-compliance with obligations under taxation and superannuation laws."

Information on visa holders, foreign students, their sponsors, education providers and migration agents will be reviewed along with address records, travel movements and visa lodgments over financial years from 2017-18 and 2019-20.

If any discrepancies are found, the individual will have 28 days to respond to a request for information before administrative action is taken, said the ATO.

(Source: www.reuters.com)

7) Citizenship proposed changes June 2018

Turnbull government eyes off citizenship changes for first half of 2018

Something went wrong, we can't find this video

As thousands of migrants prepare to celebrate becoming Australian citizens this Australia Day, many others are concerned about their prospects of being able to do the same. With the parliamentary year set to begin in just over a week, the Turnbull government will have a second go at passing legislation to make it harder to officially become an Australian citizen.

The Senate killed off proposed citizenship changes late last year but the government has not given up hope of getting revised measures through parliament in the first half of 2018. The new roll-out date for the changes is 1 July.

"We've made a couple of changes based on the feedback we've received, and off the back of those changes, we hope that it will go through the parliament," Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs Alan Tudge told SBS News this week. "This bill is designed to ensure that new citizens have every chance to seize the great opportunities which Australia has to offer, but they'll only be able to seize those opportunities if they have a basic understanding of English and if they're integrated into the community."

The Turnbull government's plans were first announced in April 2017. They included making permanent residents wait four years instead of one to apply for citizenship and requiring them to pass a university-level English language test.

Tony Burke, Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Australia, told SBS News: "As long as the government is bringing back a proposal that is deliberately designed to prevent people who would make good Australians from ever becoming citizens, then Labor's going to stand opposed to it."

"People approach me about citizenship more than any other issue and they say the fact that legislation was defeated has given them hope," he said.

What about those already in the queue? Without support in parliament, the government has admitted it will need to make concessions to pass the legislation. Until then, all applications will continue to be assessed under the current requirements. The crucial Nick Xenophon Team voting block has told SBS News it will not budge unless the government promises to re-model its proposal so that it does not affect migrants who are 'already in the queue' and have obtained permanent residency.

NXT also wants plans to cap the number of times applicants can sit the citizenship test to be scrapped and for English language requirements to be kept at the same level as they are now. Mr Tudge has confirmed to SBS News the government is willing to reduce the English language requirements from 'competent' to 'modest' and make sure the changes do not affect people who have already lodged citizenship applications before 1 July this year.

As for restrictions on the number of times applicants can sit the citizenship test, he hinted that there could possibly be room to move on that too.

"We're willing to take a look at that but at the end of the day we've put forward some sensible amendments and we hope that these will go through the parliament now," Mr Tudge said.

(Source: www.sbs.com.au)

8) Business bags Tony Abbott's "badly informed" anti-immigration call

Business leaders have rejected calls by former prime minister Tony Abbott to cut our immigration intake to lower house prices, claiming the suggestion is misguided and fails to recognise the economic prosperity created by migrants.

Businessman Tony Shepherd said rising house prices got blamed on everything from immigration, negative gearing to Martians and dismissed Mr Abbott's call to "take the pressure off housing prices and make it easier for locals to get jobs by scaling back immigration".

"Immigration is not putting pressure on house prices, immigration is reducing the impact of an ageing population by improving our demographic," Mr Shepherd said.

Tony Abbott wants the Coalition to cut immigration to help house prices. Nick Moir

"The causes [of high house prices] are twofold," the former Coalition audit commission chairman said.

"Demand exceeds supply in Sydney and to a lesser extent in Melbourne. There is no shortfall in house lots in Wagga and prices are a lot lower.

"Secondly, state and local government charges, the tortuous and costly planning process, particularly in metropolitan areas, add thousands of dollars to the cost of new houses and the failure of government to keep lot supply in line with demand. The GST added 10 per cent to the cost of all new houses, too."

Badly informed, wrong target

Chief executive of the Australian Industry Group Innes Willox was equally critical of Mr Abbott's suggestion to radio 2GB host Ray Hadley on Monday when Mr Abbott claimed "the government would get credit" for a Trump-like anti-immigration stance in the lead up to the next federal election.

The Turnbull government introduced a much tougher citizenship test last year but faced a backlash from business after it scrapped the 457 visa scheme for temporary skilled migrants.

From left, AI Group chief Innes Willox, Tony Shepherd and First State Super chief executive Michael Dwyer were part of an Australian business delegation to a Syrian refugee camp in 2016. Supplied

"This is a case of identifying the wrong target to solve a housing affordability issue which data indicates is currently settling," Mr Willox said. "To hack into the immigration program risks hacking into Australia's growth prospects and would send a terrible signal to people around the world about Australia being open for business."

Chief executive of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry James Pearson, an immigrant to Australia with his parents from Britain when he was eight, said business was strongly supportive of a skilled migration program.

"Being able to attract the best and brightest from overseas is the best prescription we have for staying competitive in a rapidly changing world," he said. "It is really important that we hold our politicians to account in the lead up to the federal election ... a lot of the attacks on immigration are really badly informed."

'You can't let it get out of hand'

Treasurer Scott Morrison says you can't let immigration get out of hand. Alex Ellinghausen

Treasurer Scott Morrison, who was Mr Abbott's immigration minister, was quizzed on Mr Abbott's comments and appeared to play down the prospect of a policy change, claiming the Coalition had significantly reduced overseas migration from Labor's peak of 300,000 a year.

"You've got to keep a close eye on it, you can't let it get out of hand," Mr Morrison told Sky News. "We run a strong program that is focused on skills, which means we invite people to come into the country to make a contribution and not take one."

Mr Willox said 620,000 Australian businesses were started by migrants who employed 1.4 million workers and "continue the tradition of enterprise and risk taking by our migrant population".

The renewed immigration debate came amid the release of the CGU Migrant Small Business Report on Tuesday which showed that a third of Australian small businesses were run by migrants with the potential to create up to 200,000 new jobs in the next five to 10 years. Last year, migrant success stories Qantas chief executive Alan Joyce, former BHP chairman Jac Nasser and property billionaire John Gandel were appointed to the Queen's Birthday top honour, the Companion of the Order of Australia (AC).

Karla Spetic runs her own fashion label.

Migrant success stories

The CGU report found migrant small business owners were outperforming on a range of measures: eight in 10 (83 per cent) started their first business after moving to Australia, 51 per cent had a degree or higher (compared with 38 per cent of non-migrant business owners) and 42 per cent were working more than 40 hours a week (compared with 35 per cent for non-migrant business owners).

Examples provided in the report included Lorenzo Perafan and his wife who had embraced their Colombian heritage to run Kogi Coffee in Bondi.

Fashion designer Karla Spetic moved with her mother as refugees from Dubrovnik, Croatia, in 1993 and now ran a successful fashion label.

Niklas Olsson also moved to Australia from a small country town in Sweden and was influential in the founding of major online fashion retailer THE ICONIC.

(Source: www.afr.com)

9) Australian treasurer slaps down Abbott over push to slash immigration

Treasurer issues lengthy rebuttal of former PM's proposal, saying it would cost budget \$1bn a year
Scott Morrison says reducing Australia's immigration intake would 'cut off your nose to spite your face'.
Photograph: Mike Bowers for the Guardian

Scott Morrison has warned that Tony Abbott's proposal to slash migration by 80,000 people would cost the budget \$4-5bn over four years.

On Wednesday the treasurer and former immigration minister launched a lengthy rebuttal of the former prime minister's attempts to link migration to cost-of-living pressures, warning it would "cut off your nose to spite your face".

Abbott has campaigned to cut migration since 2017 but received a boost when the home affairs minister, Peter Dutton, suggested in February that Australia must reduce its intake of migrants "where we believe it's in our national interest". On Tuesday Abbott advocated a target of 110,000 migrants a year, down from 190,000.

Morrison said the permanent migration intake was "exactly the same as it was" when Abbott was prime minister" and had remained the same since 2011.

"I don't recall any discussion that that should be lowered and I do recall housing affordability being a significant issue at that time," he said at a doorstep in Melbourne.

"Where the increase in population growth has come from is the more temporary migration," he added, citing a rebound in international students and people on extended holidays in Australia.

"If you cut the level of permanent immigration to Australia by 80,000, that would cost the budget, that would hit the bottom line, the deficit, by \$4bn to \$5bn over the next four years.

"If you did what Tony Abbott suggests, then you would only reduce the proportion that was skilled migration and you'd have a bigger proportion which was family migration – which ultimately gets more dependent on welfare."

"People who come as skilled migrants pay taxes," he said. "They make a net contribution to the economy." Morrison said the skilled migration program was demand-driven, aiming to fill skill shortages in critical sectors of the economy. He said he had no problem with having the debate but "the debate needs to be informed by the facts".

Abbott's speech to the Sydney Institute on Tuesday claimed that cutting migration would improve "stagnant wages, unaffordable housing and clogged infrastructure".

"It's a basic law of economics that increasing the supply of labour depresses wages, and that increasing demand for housing boosts price," he said.

The population argument was kicked off when the new Liberal senator Jim Molan said in his first speech that migration was "in excess of the capacities of our cities to absorb".

Asked what Abbott and Molan were doing, Morrison replied: "I don't know what Tony Abbott's doing but Jim's a good friend of mine and Jim's comments I think were quite different to the former prime minister's."

At a doorstep in Rockhampton, Bill Shorten said Labor wanted to “tighten up” visa requirements so employers hire Australians. “As for the rest of the debate, Morrison’s torpedoed Abbott, Abbott’s trying to ambush Turnbull – it’s just another day at the office for the [Liberal-National parties].”

Abbott’s comments on immigration have also been criticised by an Australian National University demographer, Liz Allen, who told the Australian Financial Review that the optimal rate of immigration for the Australian economy was 160,000 to 210,000 people a year.

“Tony Abbott is suggesting a suboptimal level of immigration, whereby we might actually see more adverse consequences of immigration intake than benefits,” she reportedly said.

“The contributions migrants make has a positive net effect, that is migrants aren’t costing Australia more than they are contributing in terms of economics and culture.

“Population is merely highlighting policy failures over decades. Infrastructure funding has not kept pace with population needs, regardless of whether we have strength in growth.”

(Source: www.theguardian.com)

10) Temporary closure of 188/132 state nomination applications

Immigration SA would like to inform our valued stakeholders of some important changes effective immediately:

- Subclass 188/132 state nomination applications are temporarily closed as we have exceeded the number of places available to us by the Department of Home Affairs. We expect to re-open late March/early April 2018 when additional places are released.
- Applications that have commenced but not completed or submitted on the Immigration SA website, will no longer be able to be accessed.
- Applications that have been submitted will be processed as per the stated processing times listed on the Immigration SA website and in accordance with priority processing arrangements.
- Subclass 892/893/888/405 applications are unaffected by the above closure and can continue to be submitted online.

We will advise when the online applications for subclass 188/132 have been re-opened. During this time we encourage applicants to continue to research the benefits of living and doing business in South Australia by undertaking an exploratory visit in preparation for their future application.

(Source: South Australian government)

11) Engineers registration in QLD and maybe other states soon

Iscah comment - Engineers registration is required in QLD and likely to be required in other states soon. We interpret this as only for the company sponsored 187, and state skills sponsored 489 and 190 visas.

QLD government website information -----

It is a requirement of the Professional Engineers Act (QLD) that professional engineering services in Queensland or for Queensland are carried out by a Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland (RPEQ) or alternatively by a person who carries out the services under the direct supervision of a RPEQ who is ultimately responsible.

BSMQ requires offshore applicants applying under engineering occupations to obtain evidence of registration (where specified against their occupation on the QSOL) with the Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland (BPEQ). If you are an onshore applicant and do not have BPEQ registration, you can only currently work in a professional engineering role in Queensland under direct supervision of a RPEQ who is ultimately responsible.

Queensland is currently the only Australian jurisdiction to apply a comprehensive registration system for engineers. However, other states are said to soon follow suit.

There are currently 26 areas of engineering recognised by BPEQ. BPEQ works with professional organisations to define these areas of engineering, which range from aeronautical to civil engineers, chemical to naval architects. The registration system ensures a high standard of practice exists within Queensland across all areas of engineering.

If you are required to have the BPEQ registration, you must obtain it prior to lodging an Expression of Interest in SkillSelect.

For more information about BPEQ registration, please contact them:

Street Address: Level 15, 53 Albert Street Brisbane 4000

Contact Number: 07 3210 3100

Email: admin@bpeq.qld.gov.au

Website: www.bpeq.qld.gov.au

Please note that onshore and offshore applicants must still have a skills assessment from the relevant assessing authority. A Skills Migration Assessment does not meet the assessment criteria for RPEQ registration. See Engineers Australia for more information about skills assessments and the National Engineering Register.

(Source: Queensland State Government)

12) Iscah's estimated waiting time for a 189 EOI invitation other states soon

Here are Iscah's latest estimates of how long we think you will have to wait for a 189 invitation (as of 7th Feb 2018). Depending on when you lodged your EOI, what the effect date is and the occupation.

These estimates are heavily influenced by the number of invitations that DIBP/DHA issue each round, the limitations against some of the pro rata occupations, and a number of other factors listed here - www.iscah.com/use-189-eoi-predictions/

Here are our predictions –

http://www.iscah.com/wp_files/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/InviteEstimatesFeb2018.png

13) Austria and Czech republic join the Work and Holiday scheme

Legislation to allow Austria and Czech republic legislation to join the Work and Holiday 462 program has been introduced –

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2018L00098/Explanatory%20Statement/Text>

14) Employer Sponsored visas from March 2018

As most people would know, the immigration department will make significant changes to company sponsored visas from March. The most significant of which is 2 years work experience required for the temporary visa and 3 years work required for the new permanent visa.

What has been important is seeing what transitional requirements or exemptions will be given to those people who have already applied for the permanent visa (and not yet granted) or those who held or had applied for a 457 visa on 18th April 2017. When the changes were first announced.

DIBP/DHA have continually amended some of the important advice around this and we would like to bring two points to your attention. Both good news if our interpretation is correct.

DIBP website - No transitional arrangements are in place for Direct Entry (DE) stream applicants who are expected to meet the requirements in place at time of application. New requirements will not be applied to pipeline applications.

Iscah comment - we take this as confirming that if you have applied for a direct entry 186 or 187 (RSMS) application that has not yet been decided, that if your occupation comes off the list in March 2018, you can STILL be approved.

DIBP Website - Client held a subclass 457 visa on 18 April 2017 and continues to hold this visa or a 457/TSS visa/related bridging visa at time of application
or Client lodged a subclass 457 visa application on or before 18 April 2017 which was subsequently granted and continues to hold this visa or a 457/TSS visa/related bridging visa at time of application.

New requirements apply subject to the transitional provisions outlined below:

- occupation list requirements will not apply;
- the age requirement will remain at less than 50 years of age with existing age exemptions still available;
- and
- the minimum period an applicant is required to have been employed in their nominated occupation as the holder of a subclass 457 or TSS visa will remain at two years.

Iscah comment - We interpret this as if you have applied for a 457 before 18 April 2017 (even for an occupation only on the STSOL such as cook, restaurant manager etc) you can still apply for a permanent visa after 2 years. Even if you have to apply for a further extension of your 457/TSS visa. This will be especially important for those 457 holders who only were given 18 months on their 457 visa from new start up companies.

We will have to see the legislation when it is tabled in parliament but at least it now gives some hope to those two groups of people that they will be protected from these harsh changes.

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/work/newsletters/january-2018>

(Source: DHA and Iscah comment)

15) Iscah's estimated waiting time for a 189 EOI invitation

Another very small round of invitations overnight for the 21st February

Our observations include that :

- Total invites look again at around 300
- There seem to be no Accountants invited
- All other pro rata occupations had a maximum ceiling of only 25% of their normal round invitations

To produce our results we collect data from our own clients, online forums, other online sources, and feedback from our FB and newsletter followers. As well as using mathematical logical assumptions we know in the past to be correct.

Iscah estimated invitation dates after Skillselect round of :	EOI points score			All EOIs to this effect date we believe have been invited	
	65 points	70 points		75 points	80 points © Iscah2018
21st February 2018					
2211 Accountants	6/10/2015	24/10/2016	3	18/10/2017	11/12/2017
2212 Auditors	27/07/2015	26/12/2016	5	26/09/2017	18/01/2018*
2334 Electronics Engineer © iscah 2018	18/09/2017	9/11/2017*	6	20/02/2018*	20/02/2018*
2335 Ind, Mech, Prod Engineers	27/04/2017	4/11/2017*	7	20/02/2018*	20/02/2018*
2339 Other Engineering Professionals	3/01/2017	30/10/2017	8	31/01/2018	20/02/2018*
2611 ICT Business Analysts © iscah 2018	11/08/2016	13/09/2017	9	22/01/2018*	20/02/2018*
2613 Software Applications Programmer	18/04/2017	30/10/2017	10	13/02/2018*	20/02/2018*
2631 Computer Network Professionals	4/03/2017	30/10/2017	11	30/01/2018	20/02/2018*
ALL the NON-pro rata occupations	28/09/2017	9/11/2017*	12	20/02/2018*	20/02/2018*
Assumptions - Accountants received 0 invites. All other pro rata occupations were only invited up to a maximum of 25% of their normal round quota. 300 total invitations					
* Iscah estimates of CHANGED DATES from the latest round have an asterisk next to them * and are in dark GREEN					

(Source: Iscah)

16) Parliament to discuss parent visa Bill this week

The availability of this new parental visa is subject to the passage of the Migration Amendment Bill through the Parliament.

The Federal Government last year unveiled a new temporary sponsored visa for the parents of migrants that will allow them to stay in Australia for a continuous period of up to ten years.

The announcement of a parental visa allowing continuous long-term stay was first made by the coalition in the run-up to the 2016 federal election which followed a sustained campaign by members of the Indian community.

The government expected the visa which is subject to the passage of the Migration Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2016, to be available to the people by the end of last year. But the Bill couldn't be debated in Parliament.

The bill has already been passed by the lower house and is now listed for a debate in the Senate on Wednesday.

Temporary sponsored visa for parents

In May last year, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs Alex Hawke unveiled a visa for parents of migrants allowing them a continuous stay of up to ten years.

The visa will be available for the parents of Australian citizens, permanent residents and eligible New Zealand citizens.

Under this new visa, applicants can seek a three-year visa for \$5,000 or a five-year visa for \$10,000, with the opportunity for a single renewal for another five years at the same price.

The financial burden of healthcare for migrant parents will be shouldered by their children under the new visa, with sponsors legally required to pay for their private health insurance.

The objective of our campaign was to have a visa for the parents of those migrants who can't afford the expensive permanent contributor visas or those who don't meet the balance of family test for the permanent parental visa. But if you calculate, this new visa will be nearly as expensive as the contributory visa.- Arvind Duggal who spearheaded a campaign for a long-stay parental visa.

High cost

Migrant communities campaigned for many years for a parental visa that allows the parents a continuous stay, like the ones in the US and Canada, without having to leave Australia after 12 months.

However, many migrants find the new visa "too expensive" and say they are disappointed with the new scheme.

"How many of us can afford to pay \$10,000 in visa fees and then also add insurance premiums. It's simply unaffordable," says Adelaide resident Arvind Duggal who spearheaded a campaign for a long-stay parental visa.

The Federal Government made good on its promise of a parental visa made before last year's federal election. However, Mr Duggal says the government's new visa doesn't meet the objectives of the campaign he and other members of the Indian community ran.

"The objective of our campaign was to have a visa for the parents of those migrants who can't afford the expensive permanent contributor visas or those who don't meet the balance of family test for the permanent parental visa. But if you calculate, this new visa will be nearly as expensive as the contributory visa," he told SBS Punjabi.

However, the Government says the new visa was formulated after a wide public consultation. "Most visa holders will never have paid tax in Australia but will benefit from using existing infrastructure, including transport, emergency services, energy, public hospitals and communications," Assistant Immigration Minister Alex Hawke said while addressing a query on the high visa fee. He said the new visa was beneficial for both the visiting parents and their families in Australia.

"The visa holder can stay in Australia for five years continuously, thereby saving on the cost of airfares that would be incurred over a similar period of interrupted stay... In situations where parents assist with minding the grandchildren, there are also potentially significant savings on the cost of childcare," said Mr Hawke. Most visa holders will never have paid tax in Australia but will benefit from using existing infrastructure, including transport, emergency services, energy, public hospitals and communications.- Assistant Minister for Home Affairs, Alex Hawke
'Government broke parent visa promise'

Before the coalition promised a five-year visa for parents during the run-up to the 2016 election, Labor considering a strong demand from the migrant communities promised to introduce a visa allowing three-year continuous stay for parents of migrants.

After the unveiling of the new visa, the Federal opposition said it is disappointed by the Government's "broken promise" on the parental visa.

"Before the election, Peter Dutton promised this visa would include a bond rather than a fee and made no mention of a visa cap, or that couples would need to choose between their parents and in-laws as part of a limit to one set of parents," Shayne Neumann, Shadow Minister for Immigration and Border Protection told SBS Punjabi.

Mr Neumann said the visa policy Labor had announced was better than what the government has come out with.

"Labor supports children having the opportunity to temporarily reunite with their parents and we took a policy to the Federal election which we believe was better and fairer," he said.

(Source: www.sbs.com.au)

17) Immigration minister will cut migration "if required"

Peter Dutton has signalled he is willing to swing an axe through Australia's migration intake if it is considered in the nation's best interests.

The coalition government has already cut the annual migration program to 190,000 places from more than 300,000 under Labor.

"If we have to bring it back further, if that's what's required and that's what's in our country's best interests, that is what we will do," the Home Affairs Minister told 2GB radio on Thursday.

New Liberal senator Jim Molan has used his first speech in parliament to warn Australia's culture and infrastructure may not be able to handle any more legal migrants. The retired major general, a co-author of Operation Sovereign Borders, said Australia was definitely approaching its migration limits if it had not already exceeded them.

Mr Dutton said some capital cities had struck the right balance with roads, rail and other public infrastructure to cope with population growth, but others had been a disaster. He said while the government was willing to tighten migrant intakes, it was also focused on encouraging people out into the regions.

"We do have problems where people are concentrating in and around Sydney, in and around other capital cities including Melbourne, and we need to try and disperse people out," Mr Dutton said.

"You've got some regions where the abattoirs just can't work without that foreign workforce, or people coming in on a temporary basis, or migrants moving into that area."

(Source: www.9news.com.au)

18) Auditors and Other pro rata occupations in Skill Select round of 7th February 2018

In The official results of 7th Feb, Accountants again received no invitations. Also all the other non pro rata occupations were limited to a maximum of just 25% of their normal invitations. Presumably to give a chance to some of the non pro rata occupations to receive a 189 invite.

Further the published last invitation for Auditor of 80 points on 28/11/2017 looks like an unaccepted previous invitation that has gone back into the pool again and being reinvited two months later. This is because we know from the Skill Select round held on the 18th January 2018 that ALL the 80 pointers were invited up to that date. So the REAL current invitation date for Auditors is 80 points at 17/1/2018.

(Source: Iscah)

19) Immigration South Australia – High Points category update

The High Points category has been successful in attracting high quality applicants to South Australia for Supplementary Skilled List (SSL) occupations and occupations on the State Nominated Occupation List which are listed as 'Special Conditions Apply'. Immigration SA has received a high volume of applications for the high points category and will be monitoring applications received over the coming weeks. We would like to advise prospective applicants and migration agents that the following steps will be taken: - Once we are close to reaching the 'high points' category quota, the minimum points requirement will be automatically increased to 90 points. - Once the quota is reached, the 'high points' category will be closed for the rest of the 17/18 program year (until 30 June 2018). Notification of this closure will be posted on our website. From today, the occupations listed below are no longer available for nomination under the high points category (this applies to applications submitted on or after 19 February 2018):

132211 Finance Manager
221111 Accountant (General)
221112 Management Accountant
221113 Taxation Accountant
221213 External Auditor
222112 Finance Broker
222199 Financial Brokers nec
222211 Financial Market Dealer
222299 Financial Dealers nec
222311 Financial Investment Adviser
222312 Financial Investment Manager
225113 Marketing Specialist

The other three categories for accessing the SSL and Special Conditions occupations will still be available for applications.

(Source: South Australian government and MIA)

20) DHA update on the company sponsored visa changes for March 2018

DHA update on the new company sponsored (temporary & permanent) visas from March 2018 onwards
<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/WorkinginAustralia/Pages/Newsletters/february-2018.aspx>

In essence nothing has changed from the January 2018 update. But it is a useful summary.

(Source: DHA)

21) Latest visa processing times

Latest visa processing times after visa lodgement

<http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about/access-accountability/service-standards/global-visa-citizenship-processing-times>

(Source: DHA)

22) DHA Official skill select results for 7th February 2018

The table below shows the number of invitations issued in the SkillSelect invitation round on 7 February 2018.

Invitations issued on 7 February 2018

Visa subclass	Number
Skilled - Independent (subclass 189)	300
Skilled - Regional Provisional (subclass 489)	5

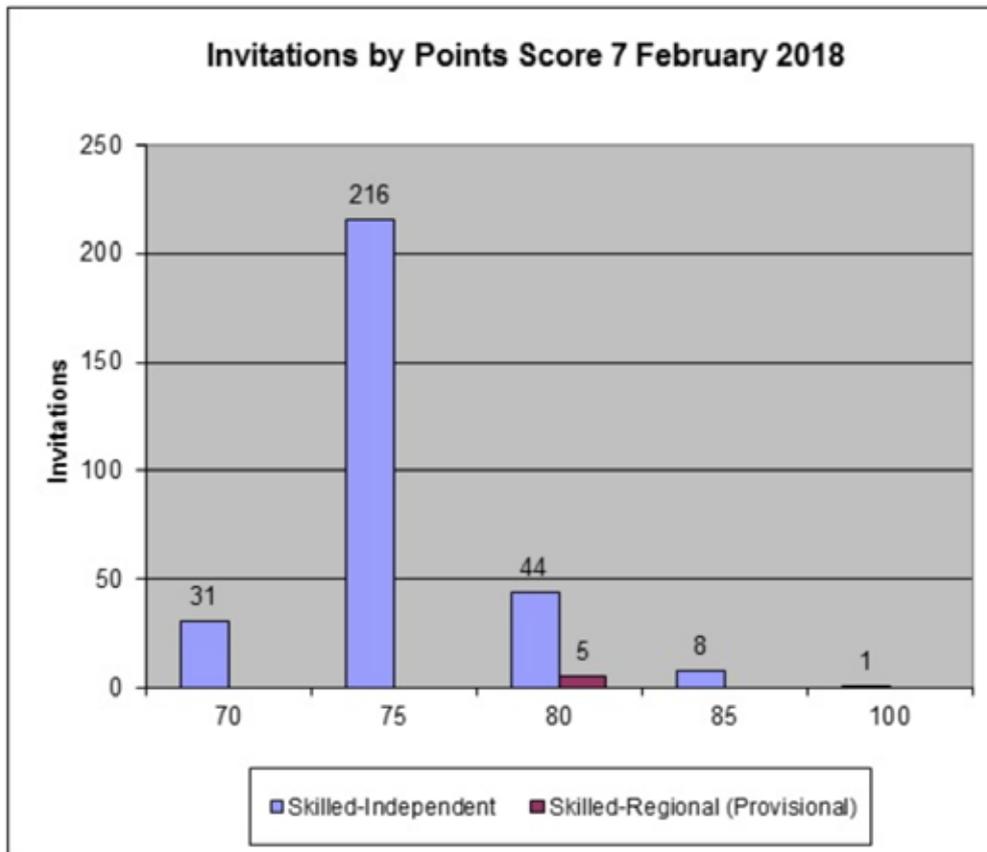
During 2017-18 program year the following numbers of invitations have been issued: Invitations issued during 2017-18 program year

Visa subclass	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Total
Skilled - Independent (subclass 189)	2000	2000	3500	2500	1400	600	600	300					12900
Skilled – Regional Provisional (subclass 489)	210	256	93	57	10	10	10	5					651
Total	2210	2256	3593	2557	1410	610	610	305					13,551

The above figures do not include invitations issued for State and Territory Government nominated visa subclasses. State and Territory Governments nominate throughout the month for specific points tested skilled migration and business innovation and investment visas. Separate results for these visa subclasses are provided monthly.

7 February 2018 results

The following graph shows the points for clients who were invited to apply in the 7 February 2018 round.



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 date of effect) determines their order of invitation. Expressions of Interest with earlier dates of effect are invited before later dates.

SkillSelect first allocates available places to Skilled – Independent visas (subclass 189) and then the remaining to Skilled – Regional (Provisional) visas (subclass 489). If all places are taken up by subclass 189 visas then there will be no invitations issued for subclass 489 visas in these occupations.

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. SkillSelect first allocates available places to Skilled – Independent visas (subclass 189) and then the remaining to Skilled – Regional (Provisional) visas (subclass 489). If all places are taken up by subclass 189 visas then there will be no invitations issued for subclass 489 visas in these occupations.

Invitations issued on 1 March 2017

Visa subclass	Points	Date of effect
Skilled - Independent (subclass 189)	70	31/10/2017 6.14 pm
Skilled - Regional Provisional (subclass 489)	80	3/01/2018 2.25 am

Due to high levels of demand, and in keeping with previous years, the below occupation groups will be subject to pro rata arrangements to ensure availability of invitations across the programme year.

Point scores and the visa dates of effect cut off for the pro rata occupations in the 7 February 2018 invitation round.

ID	Description	Points score	Date of effect
2211	Accountants	N/A	N/A
2212	Auditors, Company Secretaries and Corporate Treasurers	80	28/11/2017 3:58 pm
2334	Electronics Engineer	70	25/10/2017 7:21 pm
2335	Industrial, Mechanical and Production Engineers	70	31/10/2017 2:37 PM
2339	Other Engineering Professionals	75	31/01/2018 9:03 PM
2611	ICT Business and System Analysts	75	22/01/2018 7:06 PM
2613	Software and Applications Programmers	75	31/01/2018 1:52 PM
2631	Computer Network Professionals	75	30/01/2018 3:01 AM

Source DHA

OK folks, see you all on Monday 19th
March 2018 !!

Have a great few weeks.



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