

Iscah Migration Newsletter

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Hey

Hope you had a great few weeks and here is the latest jampacked edition of our monthly visa newsletter.

This is free, if you want backcopies go to our website at www.iscah.com To subscribe or unsubscribe to the mailing list, email us at newsletter@iscah.com

On to this month's news ...



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1) State Migration (489/190) in Western Australia

Thanks very much to those who took part in our survey about international students leaving WA and the lack of incentive the state was giving to choose to study here.

We had well over 100 replies and many took quite a lot of time with some of the answers. So THANKYOU.

We met the WA government (DTWD) 5 weeks ago and was able to explain the reasons for the dramatic fall of new international students choosing WA. The survey results also helped a lot to explain why and what needs to be done.

We are VERY optimistic that the state government has listened and that there is some possible changes to the WA state migration plan that will make it reachable for student graduates.

Watch this space as if something does not happen we will be back to put pressure on the WA government in various ways.

2) Radio interview with Iscah in Perth about International Students

Radio interview on 6PR today with Iscah about WA international students

http://www.iscah.com/wp_files/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Steven-ONeil-email-180418.mp3

3) Official policy document on Accountants for 189 invitations

The following Department of Immigration policy document explains why Accountants receive such a small number of invitations each program year.

Including at the end is the discussion that took place when the Department realised they had already invite too many people in this occupation for the 2017/18 Program year and had to halt invitations.

http://www.iscah.com/wp_files/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/AccountantInvitePolicy.pdf

It is this document that allowed us to then write this report

http://www.iscah.com/wp_files/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Accountants-left-short-changed.pdf

Which we have sent so far to the CPA, Chartered Accountants of Australia, Immigration minister, Assistant Minister for Citizenship, Prime minister, and various media organisations. We have done this to show them the absurd unfairness of one occupation only being on 1.04% of the national workforce compared to every other occupation at 6%

(Source: Iscah)

4) Special visa for Farmers

The Turnbull government is planning a special visa to stave off a Nationals rebellion, address a shortfall of hundreds of thousands of farmers in the next decade and rescue billions of dollars in revenue.

The agricultural visa could also be used by ministers with sympathy for white South African farmers to encourage them to immigrate to Australia, as the issue continues to divide the highest levels of the Coalition.

"That would solve the South African problem," a government source said.

The preliminary stages of the visa have been in discussion for months after intense lobbying from the National Farmers Federation on the need to address a gap of 100,000 workers in the agriculture industry, but it is understood it is more likely to be announced months after the May budget.

The peak body has warned the shortfall is expected to widen further over the next decade, putting a \$40 billion windfall at risk, driven by free-trade agreements, a weaker Australian dollar and strong crops. Acting Prime Minister Michael McCormack made a reference to the program this week after stating he would not discuss party room matters or make announcements at the National Press Club.

"An agricultural visa program is something that I know David Littleproud is working on along with his Nationals colleagues, along with our regional Liberal friends," he said on Thursday. "Whilst we have these shortfalls in employment, the fruit doesn't get picked, the sheep don't get shorn."

The reference caught Coalition MPs offside.

It is understood Mr Littleproud, the Agriculture Minister, is still discussing the details with stakeholders and the visa could form part of a broad reform program being undertaken by Minister for Citizenship Alan Tudge, who has taken over responsibility for visas from Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton.

Mr Littleproud said he was "well aware of farm labour shortages" and had been working hard on finding a solution since he was appointed.

Both Mr Tudge and Mr Dutton have become vocal advocates for white South African farmers, despite Foreign Minister Julie Bishop being forced to defuse tensions with Pretoria after Mr Dutton said a "civilised country" needed to give "special attention" to the farmers .

The pair claim that the farmers are being discriminated against by having farm-land repossessed by the South African government.

To date, they have encouraged farmers to apply through Australia's humanitarian visa program, which is limited to 20,000 per year - but the opening of a new visa category for farmers could bring thousands more to Australian paddocks.

Farmers have been frustrated by being unable to increase production or shear their sheep - despite wool reaching record prices - because of the labour drain that deepened after Mr Dutton slashed the skilled migration list last year.

The changes meant occupations such as "agricultural supervisor" fell off the list and have not been replaced, despite increasing shortages resulting from a rapidly aging farming workforce where the average age is 56.

Mercado analyst Robert Hermann said he conducted a straw poll of sheep farmers comparing the average age of those to 10 years ago.

"Basically you've got the same shearers in the same shed," he said. "There is real optimism about the demand for Australian agriculture for a whole lot of reasons but the constraint will be our ability to find labour."

A program designed to bring more unemployed Australians into agriculture has been widely considered a flop after the \$27.5 million seasonal work incentive recruited only 217 employees.

National Farmers Federation workplace relations general manager Ben Rogers said "frustration is a strong word but it's accurate."

"When Mr Dutton made the changes a year ago - he took a lot of the jobs we relied upon and that has caused major headaches," he said. "Locals just aren't interested in the work." Mr McCormack agreed with some criticisms of Mr Dutton's changes.

(Source: Sydney Morning Herald)

5) Government trumpets high international student numbers

Education Minister Simon Birmingham has celebrated a record-breaking number of international students flocking to Australia, at the same time as Treasurer Scott Morrison pointed the finger at them for clogging up public transport.

Figures released Wednesday showed a 12 per cent increase in the number of foreign students in Australia compared to the same period last year, exceeding 500,000 in February, driven by a boom in enrolments from Nepal, Colombia, Brazil, India and China.

The international student business was "going from strength to strength", Senator Birmingham said, affirming Australia was "uniquely positioned" to absorb even more growth in the market. Simon Birmingham says the international student boom is set to continue to record-breaking levels.

The new data came as Treasury and the Department of Home Affairs lobbed a grenade into the immigration debate by releasing a paper warning that cuts to the annual migrant intake would significantly lower economic growth. Bureaucrats also noted that while the permanent migration program has been at the same level for years, temporary migration has risen - particularly international students. "The stock of international students has increased 46 per cent on the back of increasing global demand for education services and a lower exchange rate relative to earlier this decade," it said. At the same time, the report noted the pathway for students to become permanent residents had become "more difficult and less direct" due to more onerous labour market requirements.

Foreign students are still flocking to Australia's universities.

Mr Morrison - who has vigorously defended the permanent migration intake of 190,000 against calls to slash it - seized on the document as evidence temporary migration played the key role in adding to population and infrastructure pressures.

"It is the rise in temporary migration in recent times that has fuelled the population growth," he told ABC radio. "If you are sitting on a bus, tram or train, the reason there is more people sitting on it has more to do with people studying, people visiting. You have to understand what's driving the population pressures." A spokesman for Mr Morrison said students and visitors made significant contributions to the economy and the Treasurer had made no comment on prospective changes to either visa class.

The booming market for Nepalese students saw 18,000 enrolments in NSW universities in 2018, up by 56 per cent from 2017 - with another 4600 in Victoria. Indian students continued to prefer Melbourne universities over Sydney, and China remained the biggest source country for foreign students, with close to 160,000 present in Australia in February (31 per cent of foreign students).

Major universities have copped criticism for being over-exposed to the Chinese market, putting them at risk of losing a prime cash cow if sentiments change in Beijing. In January, University of Sydney vice-chancellor Michael Spence accused the Turnbull government of "Sinophobic blathering" over its concerns about Chinese spying at Australian universities.

Senator Birmingham has previously said Chinese student numbers were "fairly modest" and on Tuesday said he hoped the "record-breaking run of growth" in foreign students would continue.

The figures released Wednesday show that from February 2013 to February 2018, the number of international student enrolments in Victoria doubled - from 86,830 to 176,983. In NSW, numbers almost doubled from 109,687 to 200,958 over the same period. Enrolments are higher than the number of actual students because some students are enrolled in multiple courses.

(Source: The Sydney Morning Herald)

6) AAT (Appeal) success rates

Some interesting figures here

- Over half of visa refusals are now overturned at the AAT on appeal.

<https://www.pressreader.com/australia/the-west-australian/20180427/281500751862015>

7) Citizenship wait times rapidly worsen

Wait times for Australian citizenship have rapidly blown out by several months, fanning fears applicants are being forced to put their lives on hold.

Three-quarters of would-be citizens are waiting up to 13 months for decisions on their applications, according to the latest Department of Home Affairs figures.

Average processing times are three months worse than October last year.

Nine in 10 applicants receive a decision on their citizenship within 16 months, up from 14 months in October.

The worsening waits follow the axing of hundreds of processing staff, a boom in lodgements and a shift to automation.

Greens senator Nick McKim said the ballooning delays reflected a lack of respect for aspiring citizens, laying blame for the blowout at management for shedding staff.

Senator McKim said the delays were impacting on crucial life decisions around employment, housing and education.

"People want to be able to make plans for their lives and for many people that's not currently possible because of the delays," he told AAP.

"People who want to make such an important commitment to Australia by becoming citizens should be respected by having their applications dealt with in a reasonable time frame."

The blowouts come as the Turnbull government pursues tougher hurdles to citizenship, including extending the waiting period for permanent residents to become citizens to four years.

A Home Affairs spokesman said there was a growing number of people seeking citizenship each year, and the department had a duty to thoroughly assess each application.

"Resolving these complex issues is often neither straightforward nor quick, as the decision-maker is faced with a set of circumstances unique to each case," the spokesman said.

Home Affairs has been allocated more than \$100 million to overhaul its visa and citizenship processes, with most categories experiencing double-digit growth.

Appearing before a Senate hearing last year, Home Affairs secretary Michael Pezzullo conceded wait times were likely to worsen as his department pursued large-scale automation.

Justifying a decision to axe 355 officers, Mr Pezzullo said shifting to automation - not hiring more staff to process paper files - was the only way to manage the workload.

But Brooke Muscat-Bentley, from the public sector union, said it was bizarre for the federal government to continue cutting processing officers despite the steady rise in applications.

Staff were dealing with frustrated and anxious customers and an increasingly difficult workload.

"Putting the system under so much unnecessary pressure benefits no-one," she said.

The union is concerned the government is "deliberately running down" citizenship processing as a pretext to privatise the operation, as it is doing with visa processing.

(Source: AAP)

8) Federal Government official report on the positive impact of migration

Full report : <https://cdn.tspace.gov.au/uploads/sites/107/2018/04/Shaping-a-Nation-1.pdf>

9) Business lobby, unions join forces to call for no reduction in migration

The Australian Industry Group and the ACTU have signed an historic compact urging 'no reduction' in the annual rate of permanent migration to Australia

One of the nation's peak business lobby groups and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) have found rare common ground, urging the Turnbull government to keep Australia's annual intake of permanent migrants at 190,000.

The unprecedented document, published today in *The Australian*, warns cutting the annual migration rate would harm the country's economy and social fabric.

It comes following reports of a fractious debate within the Coalition over whether the current 190,000 cap on permanent visas should be reduced.

Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott has urged a major cut to 110,000 places, while Home Affairs minister Peter Dutton said he had "canvassed different options" but denied a report he urged cabinet to back a reduction of 20,000 places.

"This historic national compact brings together civil society, business and our union movement in shared tripartite commitment to migration as part of Australia's future," the document says.

"We affirm that Australia's permanent migration program is essential to Australian society and our economy and do not support any reduction to the scheme."

0:00ayMute

Co-signatories include the powerful Australian Industry Group, which represents 60,000 companies, and various civil society groups, including the Migration Council, the ethnic community group FECCA and the Settlement Council of Australia. Of the country's largest unions, United Voice, joined the ACTU in backing the statement.

The co-operation between the business lobby and the union movement is unusual. Just a few weeks ago, the Australian Industry Group accused the ACTU of "treating businesses and workers as social engineering cannon fodder".

Annual immigration reports show Australia has accepted almost exactly 190,000 permanent migrants every year since 2011.

Nearly every year the cap is met, but in the most recent 2016-17 financial year, the intake dipped to 183,000. The government has no obligation to fill the quota.

Mr Dutton said the final statistics for the 2017-18 year would be available in coming months and suggested the number would again be "less than 190,000".

The compact was also published online on a website registered to the Migration Council, according to domain hosting data.

Group says 190,000 should be target again, not a cap. The 190,000 "planning level" has been in place since 2012, and was considered a target.

But the Turnbull government last year reframed the figure as a cap, rather than a number to strive for, resulting in last year's reduction of 7,000 places.

Carla Wilshire is the CEO of the Migration Council, which organised the joint statement. She said the signatories wanted the level to remain at 190,000, rather than being allowed to gradually fall under the existing cap.

"We need to move back to system where we have a target of 190,000 places and we hit that target, because it's critically important to business confidence, to job creation, to growth, that we have confidence in how our migration program is going to play out over the budgetary year," Ms Wilshire told SBS News. The statement comes just days before the release of the federal budget on May 8, which could include announcements in the immigration portfolio.

"I think it's critically important that going forward, in this budget and in budgets to come, that we maintain our level of immigration, that we don't see a cut," she said.

Union backs permanent rate, but wants temporary visas restricted

The ACTU, meanwhile, is simultaneously campaigning for tighter rules to limit the number of jobs going to temporary migrant workers, warning against a "guest" worker system where low-income workers from overseas could be easily exploited.

The union group wants tougher labour market testing rules, so employers have to prove they recently advertised the job inside Australia before telling the government they needed to fill a skills shortage with a foreign worker.

It also wants a ban on job ads that specifically target foreign workers or a particular visa stream.

Last year, the Turnbull government dramatically cut its list of eligible occupations in a major reform to the controversial 457 visa.

Hundreds of jobs - including hairdressers, finance managers, chief executives, public relations professionals, primary school teachers and dentists - were moved on to a list that no longer had access to a pathway to permanent residency, meaning they would not be able to settle in Australia.

The ACTU is now echoing concerns from the Migration Council that the 457 reforms may create a "guest worker" system in Australia, which has traditionally run a migration program with many skilled workers ending up as permanent residents.

"Australia's migration program must, as it did previously, favour permanent migration, so people can come to Australia with their family and build a life for themselves - with the same rights that we all deserve," ACTU secretary Sally McManus said.

The 190,000 cap on permanent migration every year does not tell the whole story of Australian immigration.

The country's "net overseas migration" statistics, known as the NOM, track the flows of people in and out of the country.

It includes those who enter the country on temporary visas, including temporary working, student and tourist visas. It also includes Australians who leave the country, or return home after time overseas.

The Home Affairs department estimates 511,900 people will have arrived in Australia by the end of this financial year in June 2018.

Minus the 286,200 people who leave, and Australia should be left with a "net" migration of 225,700.

(Source: www.sbs.com.au)

10) New requirements on RCB/187 Nomination Process for South Australia

New requirements on RCB/187 Nomination Process for South Australia

Immigration SA has received a large volume of RCB advice applications over the last 5 months.

Priority processing arrangements

We will be priority processing applications for positions in country SA regions and positions with salary over \$141k.

On receipt of an application, Immigration SA will determine whether it needs to be priority processed (you don't need to request priority processing separately).

RSMS changes

The March RSMS changes implemented by the Department of Home Affairs have resulted in some RCB advice changes.

RCB's are now required to provide advice to the Department of Home Affairs on the following:

Whether the identified person would be paid at least the annual market salary rate for the occupation*

Whether there is a genuine need for the identified person to be employed in the position, under the direct control of the nominator.

Whether the position can be filled by an Australian Citizen or Australian permanent resident who is living in, or would move to, the local area concerned.

*The Department of Home Affairs will assess whether the occupation is above the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT) - currently AUD 53,900.

New RCB advice requirements

As a result of these regulation changes, the following change applies to RCB advice applications submitted to Immigration SA.

- **Positions advertised in print media**, will also need to be advertised online on one of the recruitment sites listed in the RCB advice checklist. This is to demonstrate a broader recruitment process to attract suitable Australian Citizens or Permanent Residents who are willing to move to the local area for the position.

When a position is vacant due to registration, Immigration SA may request additional documentation regarding the previous incumbent's employment.

Separate documentation

All documentation in support of an application must be uploaded in the online application form. From 7 May 2018, any documents emailed separately will not be considered in the assessment process and will be deleted.

If needed, you can scan multiple documents and save them as one attachment in the application form.

There is also an additional upload button in the 'recruitment activity' section of the application form.

Please note: separate documents will only be accepted when Immigration SA requests them as part of the assessment process.

RCB advice

Immigration SA will only provide RCB advice once per employer nomination application lodged with the Department of Home Affairs (applications for the same position with the same nominee).

If you receive "not-satisfied" advice from Immigration SA, please provide any further information or documentation addressing the "not-satisfied" advice directly to the Department of Home Affairs.

Regards

11) Important GSM – 489/190 changes for South Australia

Work experience changes

Immigration SA has revised its requirements for accessing the work experience waiver for international graduates of SA (rather than our usual requirement for at least one year of skilled work experience in the past three).

1. SA graduates will now need to have been working for the last 3 months in a skilled occupation at the time of application. This enables Immigration SA to collect appropriate evidence to verify applicants' current employment in South Australia and ensure that good employment outcomes are occurring. The updated requirements can be viewed on our website under 9.2.3 and 9.5.1. Please note: some occupations have additional work experience requirements, for example, some occupations require 12 months work experience in South Australia. For additional requirements, see the occupation lists and international graduate page.

2. These changes will apply to all applications submitted after 28 May 2018.

3. Immigration SA reserves the right to obtain further evidence if there are concerns about the veracity of the work experience being claimed (this may include salary level and genuine need for the position). Immigration SA wants to ensure all employment outcomes are genuine.

Chain migration

Changes are being made effective from 1 July 2018 to Immigration SA's chain migration pathway to ensure that this remains an option for families seeking to reunite with an immediate family member in South Australia.

1. The pathway will now be offered for the provisional 489 visa only. It is important that migrants in this pathway are genuinely settling with or near their family member and not using this as a pathway to settle in other states.

2. The existing family member in South Australia will need to have resided in South Australia for at least 24 months, rather than 12 months. This ensures closer ties and commitment to South Australia.

3. The existing family member in South Australia should be a permanent resident, Australian citizen or South Australian State nominated provisional visa holder (489 visa).

4. It remains important that chain migration applicants carefully consider their likelihood of achieving skilled employment, as they are being nominated primarily based on their family links. We expect that the existing family member will be on hand to provide considerable settlement support as required.

(Source: South Australian State government)

12) Skill Australians Fund passes Parliament for 482, 186 and 187 visas

The Migration Amendment (Skilling Australians Fund) Act 2018 and associated Migration (Skilling Australians Fund) Charges Act 2018 received Royal Assent yesterday 22 May 2018.

The training contribution charges and other sponsorship provisions (Subdivision B of Division 3A of Part 2 of the Migration Act) come into effect from a date fixed by Proclamation or on the day after six months from 22 May 2018 and will affect:

- applications made on or after this commencement date, AND
 - applications made but not decided before the commencement date.
- Transitional LMT arrangements appear only to be in place for major disasters under s140GBB(2).

New sections 140ZL to 140ZQ have been added to the Migration Act 1958:

- s140ZL - Liability of the Crown
- s140ZM - Nominations that require the charge to be paid
- s140ZN - Regulations will be made on the process of paying the charge
- s140ZO - Recovery of the charge and late payment penalty
- s140ZP - The Commonwealth is not required to pay the charge, although notionally liable
- s140ZQ - Division binds the Crown

Labour Market Testing

- Advertising must not start earlier than 4 months before the nomination is lodged.
- The Minister may determine the language, method, period and duration of such advertising.
- The advertising must be undertaken in a targeted manner so that a significant proportion of suitable qualified and experienced Australians would be likely to be aware of the position and set out the experience and skills required.
- The advertising must be for a duration of at least 4 weeks.
- A copy of the advertising may be required to accompany the nomination.

The Migration Amendments (Family Violence and Other Measures) Act 2018 has some interaction with this Act, affecting the implementation of Schedules 2 and 3. These Schedules essentially define that this Skilling Australians Act refers to sponsorship by approved work sponsors, ie employment related sponsorship.

The Migration (Skilling Australians Fund) Charges Act 2018, specifies that:

The nomination training contribution charge limit for a nomination made in the year beginning 1 July 2017 is:

- (a) for a nomination relating to a temporary visa—\$8,000;
- (b) for a nomination relating to a permanent visa—\$5,500.

and will be increased in each following year by the calculation provided in this Act.

The Migration Regulations and Legislative Instruments associated with these Acts will contain the detail of how these new Acts will be implemented and operate.

(Source: MIA)

13) Federal Budget highlights

Visas for Doctors/Medical Practitioners

The Government will improve the targeting of visas for general practitioners to areas of doctor shortages. From 1 January 2019, the Government will set a planning target of around 2,100 overseas trained doctors per annum to contribute to the continued growth in overall doctor numbers. Visas for other specialties and for state and territory based employment will not be affected.

Better managing the total number of doctors entering the system and directing them to areas of need has also made available \$415.5 million over four years from 2018-19 to fund Health policy priorities

Permanent visas for Retirement Visa (405/410) holders -

The Government will introduce a pathway to permanent residency for holders of Retirement (subclass 410) and Investor Retirement (subclass 405) visas.

From 2018-19, a portion of the planned parent permanent migration places will be quarantined for retirement visa holders each year. Retirement visa holders in Australia will be eligible to apply onshore for a permanent visa through the Parent (subclass 103) or Contributory Parent (subclass 143) visa streams. Retirement visa holders will be exempted from some parent visa requirements that they would typically be unable to meet, such as having family in Australia. The pathway will remain open until all retirement visa holders who wish to transition to permanent residency have done so.

As part of the establishment of the pathway, the Government will close the subclass 405 visa to new applicants. The subclass 410 visa is already closed to new applicants.

The measure is estimated to have a gain to the budget of \$8.2 million over the forward estimates period. The revenue generated from this measure will be redirected by the Government to fund policy priorities within the Home Affairs portfolio.

Longer Waiting times for welfare for New migrants

The Government will achieve savings of \$202.5 million over five years from 2017-18 by increasing the waiting period for newly arrived migrants to access certain welfare benefits from three years to four years from 1 July 2018. This measure also clarifies the application of the waiting period and exemptions for certain welfare benefits.

Current exemptions for vulnerable groups will continue to apply. Humanitarian migrants will remain exempt from all waiting periods, and hardship provisions will remain in place.

Refunds for Training Fees expanded on 482 visa

The Government will expand the refund provisions for the Skilling Australians Fund levy to allow refunds of the levy in the following scenarios:

- the employer's sponsorship application is approved but the employee's subsequent visa application is refused on health or character grounds;
- the sponsorship and visa applications are approved but the visa holder does not commence work with the employer; or
- a Temporary Skill Shortage (subclass 482) visa holder leaves their employer within the first 12 months of employment where the visa period was for more than 12 months. Refunds will only be available in this scenario for unused full years of the levy

These provisions are in addition to the existing refund provision for scenarios in which an employer's sponsorship application is refused.

The Government will also exempt religious organisations from paying the Skilling Australians Fund levy when they nominate a foreign skilled worker for a Temporary Skill Shortage (subclass 482) or Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186) visa under the Minister of Religion Labour Agreement or a company-specific Labour Agreement, covering bishops, ministers of religion and religious assistants.

(Source: Federal Government)

14) Migration Numbers for 2018/19 look like 190,000 ceiling again

Although the Federal Treasurer was not pinned down to an exact number. He does suggest in this interview this morning that numbers will remain at 190,000 as a maximum and there may be times it drops below this, even down by 10,000. But generally they are going to remain at the same levels for the next 4 years.

That is good news.

<https://www.3aw.com.au/full-interview-neil-mitchell-grills-scott-morrison-in-fast-and-furious-interview/>

Government confirmation that the 2018/19 migration program will be maintained at current levels, (190,000) And skilled migration at the current 128,550 places .

https://infrastructure.gov.au/department/statements/2018_2019/ministerial-statement/home-affairs.aspx

15) Queensland State Government suspend skilled applications

BSMQ currently has a backlog of applications and is temporarily suspending issuing new invitations. Please note that we will not be accepting any more Expression of Interests (EOIs) until further notice.

(Source: QLD State government)

16) Immigration Minister succeeds in dropping this years numbers down

Treasurer Peter Dutton has succeeded in reducing the migration program down to his wish of around 170,000 for the 2017/18 program year .

Australia's migration program slashed !!

Despite Treasurer Scott Morrison, Mr Turnbull and many economic analysts preaching our optimum level of migration being at around 190,000 per annum and despite reportedly being denied moves last year in cabinet to lower the program to around 170,000, the immigration minister has likely got his way.

Freedom of Information documents show that as of 31/03/2018 the visas granted under the migration program so far come to just 122,582. If that rate remains steady through to the end of June we are looking at a program of just 163,443 for the 2017/18 year.

Migration Programme 2017/18		2016/17	Planned 2017/18	Actual to 31-Mar-18	Projected 2017/18
Child		3485	3485	2258	3011
Family					
	Partner	47825	47825	33052	44069
	Parent	8675	8675	6430	8573
	Other	900	900	410	547
Skill					
	Employer sponsored	48250	48250	25551	34068
	Skilled Independent	43990	43990	29819	39759
	State sponsored	28850	28850	19094	25459
	Business Skills	7260	7260	5613	7484
	Distinguished talent	200	200	172	229
Special Eligibility		565	565	183	244
Total		190000	190000	122582	163443*

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* includes approximately 2,365 New Zealand citizens already in Australia

This figure currently includes 2,365 New Zealand citizens who are already living permanently in Australia. When these are removed (they have not been part of the migration program before) the program for 2017/18 may come in at just 160,000

Treasurer Morrison will not be pleased...

(Source: Iscah)

17) Why only 30 invitations per round

We have obtained details of why DAHA have reduced the invitations to 300 per round since January 2018 (tks kirk).

http://www.iscah.com/wp_files/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/189-at-300.pdf

18) Government considering forcing regional migrants to stay rural

Australia has several visas designed to bring skilled migrants to the bush – but many leave for the cities once they secure a permanent place.

The Turnbull government is considering changes to regional skilled visas to "bind" migrants to rural areas even after they secure a permanent place in Australia, multiculturalism minister Alan Tudge has revealed.

The minister said many migrants who were specifically sponsored for regional jobs were later quitting those jobs and moving to the cities, perpetuating skills shortages in regional towns.

"If they've come in on the basis of being employed in a regional area, then we think it's not an unreasonable expectation that they stay in that area for a certain amount of time," Mr Tudge told reporters in Melbourne.

"We're looking at ways that we can effectively bind people to the regions if they've got a sponsorship to go to those locations."

Australia has a handful of visas specifically on offer to those who want to work in a regional area, including the Skilled Regional (887) and the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (187).

Last year, out of the 184,000 migrants given permanent places in Australia, there were nearly 12,000 regional visas granted under those schemes.

Those visas require the applicant to work in a regional area for a number of years or to be sponsored by a regional employer - but they do not force the migrant to stay in a rural area once the visa conditions have been satisfied.

Mr Tudge said the government was looking at the issue but there was no specific plan on how to "bind" the migrants long-term.

The head of the Home Affairs department, Michael Pezzullo, told a Senate committee there could be "legal" challenges in restricting long-term freedom of movement, but said it would not be a "fatal flaw or concern".

Nationals MP and assistant minister for families David Gillespie said it was "very frustrating" for companies who sponsored regional migrants when they later "hightailed it" to the cities.

Regional employers often felt "shortchanged" when they paid for a migrant's airfares, only for them to leave the area a short time later.

"We do have freedom of association, freedom of speech and freedom of movement," Dr Gillespie told SBS News on Tuesday.

"But it leaves a sour taste if someone sponsors someone to come here on the basis that they're going to work in a regional centre and then they skip town at the first opportunity."

Dr Gillespie would not comment on the government's legal options but raised the example of overseas doctors, who often came on visas that linked their Medicare billing to a regional centre for up to 10 years.

(Source: www.sbs.com.au)

19) Global visa and citizenship processing times

Global visa and citizenship processing times will be updated monthly, providing you with an indicative timeframe for processing applications. Processing times are available for the majority of visa subclasses and citizenship products, but will exclude a few subclasses such as those closed to new entrants, capped and queued, or which have a low volume of applications. Two processing times are displayed in calendar days, indicating how long it is taking to finalise 75 and 90 per cent of applications submitted globally. Processing times are impacted each month by changes in application volumes, seasonal peaks, complex cases, and incomplete applications. Processing times include applications lodged online and by paper. Where available, you should lodge your application online as it helps streamline processing arrangements.

Visa application processing times

Last updated: 15 May 2018 (for month ending 30 April 2018)

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

(Source: DHA)

20) Victoria State government close applications

Statement from Victorian State Government website :

We are currently experiencing a very high volume of applications for visa nomination for skilled migration. To help us manage this demand, and meet our service commitments to you, **we are not accepting any new Skilled Nominated visa (subclass 190) or Skilled Regional (Provisional) visa (subclass 489) nomination applications at this time.**

We will continue to assess all nomination applications received prior to 15 May 2018, however delays may occur in providing outcomes for these applications.

Please note that this is only a temporary measure to manage current demands.

All business and investor visa nomination applications remain unaffected during this temporary closure.

We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience caused and encourage you to check our website in the coming weeks to stay up-to-date and apply for skilled migration visa nomination when applications reopen.

(Source: Victorian State Government)

21) Regions needing 3000 migrants

Call to bring 3000 migrants to the regions

Population decline in the nation's regional areas could be stopped if communities could welcome an extra 3000 migrants a year, according to a regional think-tank, which is taking its pitch for changes to federal parliament.

The Regional Australia Institute has released a paper on Tuesday warning that in more than 150 regional local government areas across the country the number of Australian-born residents is decreasing.

That population loss has led to labour shortages in many areas, with the institute arguing there is currently no systematic way for migrant workers to link up with rural employers.

While there have been successful regional migration projects scattered across Australia, with some small towns increasing their population by 15 per cent, they are being carried out in isolation.

"Now we need to connect the dots and help other rural towns capitalise on the opportunities migrant settlement programs can deliver," the institute's chief executive Jack Archer said.

It uses the example of Pyramid Hill in Victoria, which has a population of 550 people with about 100 Filipinos.

For the first time in years, new homes are being built, schools have grown and there is even a Filipino grocery store.

The institute wants the government to develop a new way to work out priority labour shortages in regional areas and to offer incentives for migrants to move to those locations.

"We have a national opportunity here to alleviate some of the biggest issues affecting regional Australia," Mr Archer said.

The institute will launch the paper at an event in Canberra with Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack and Labor's agriculture spokesman Joel Fitzgibbon.

(Source: 9 news)

22) Update on PR for Retiree 405/410 visa holders

This is from an outstanding lobby group called BEIRA -

The Review Team in Canberra have advised us that “ from next year, retirement visa holders will be able to apply for permanent residence under the ONSHORE Contributory Parent (subclass 884 and 864) and ONSHORE Non-Contributory Parent (subclass 804) visas. Retirement visa holders will be exempted from some parent visa requirements, such as having family in Australia.

The Department of Home Affairs has been instructed to commence making relevant changes to give effect to this new policy. Further information about specific eligibility details will be provided when available and updates will be made via the Department’s website in 2019”.

We have also established that our pathway to PR is included in the Budget which will need to be approved by Parliament. Treasury have stated that they will not split the Budget so it will have to go through as one package.

In addition, we are advised that Minister Tudge will not make an announcement about our pathway until the Budget is approved. When he does so, he is likely to make an official announcement with a media release and details will also be posted on the Home Affairs website.

(Source: BEIRA)

23) Migration key driver behind 1 million jobs

More than half of the one million jobs created in Australia over the past five years are due to migration, Home Affairs officials have confirmed.

Updated 22 hours ago

Immigration was a key driver in the creation of one million jobs in Australia over the past five years, a Senate committee has been told.

The Turnbull government loudly trumpeted reaching the jobs milestone last week, describing it as an excellent outcome for Australian workers and families.

Former prime minister Tony Abbott set the benchmark in 2013 before he was deposed two years later, and has recently been an outspoken advocate for slashing Australia's annual migrant intake.

Home Affairs assistant secretary Jason Russo said Australia's immigration numbers were a significant driver of the jobs growth.

"Perhaps more than 50 per cent but I can look at the figures and provide that," Mr Russo told a Senate estimates hearing in Canberra on Tuesday.

Home Affairs secretary Michael Pezzullo noted well over 50 per cent of country's population growth was driven by migration.

"It would be passing strange to think that your population is being driven in part by migration, but your jobs growth isn't," Mr Pezzullo told senators.

"It would be illogical to think they were operating in different directions."

A recent study by Treasury and Home Affairs found migrants accounted for two-thirds of net jobs created over the past five years, with the percentage even more pronounced for full-time employment.

The joint report found migrants were not replacing Australian workers.

"In fact, the study found almost no evidence that outcomes for those born in Australia have been harmed by immigration," the report said.

"The most statistically significant associations were with stronger labour market outcomes for the Australian-born."

The departments said this was likely explained by the fact migrants were generally seen as complementary to the Australian-born labour force.

"Some migrants also do not participate in the labour force or have limited work rights (for example, long-term visitors, students and working holiday makers) but still consume goods and services and therefore still add to job creation."

While employment has increased by more than one million since the coalition came to power in September 2013, the jobless rate is practically the same at 5.6 per cent.

(Source: SBS)

24) Unofficial Skill Select results and comments from 23rd May 2018

Another very small round of invitations overnight for the 23rd May 2018

Our observations include that :

- Total invites look again at around 300
- All invited occupations seem to have been no more than 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.

If you aware of any more recent invites for any of these occupations please email us at query@iscah.com with some details so that we can see if this table can be updated over the next 24-48 hours.

Looks like DHA have set on a smaller percentage than 25% of each pro rata occupations normal round quota.

The round just completed was the second in a row where the following pro rata occupations had the same invites each round (18th April and 9th May).

Presumably to fit Accountants in the 300 places

- Accountant 45
- Auditor 12
- ICT Business and Systems Analyst 15
- Software and Applications Programmer 58
- Industrial, Mechanical and Production Engineer 20
- Other Engineering Professionals 9
- Computer Network Professional 12

DHA confirmed with us that this comment below was accidentally left off the 18th April 2018 Occupational Ceiling page and has been readded for this round ..

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

Also that the reopening of Accountant for 189s recently was due to some numbers left across all visa categories in the 2017/18 program year.

Finally at this stage they are looking to again impose a 2.5% (instead of 6%) limitation when calculating the Accountant quota for 2018/19. We are continuing to have them look at the further policy of then having to share this 2.5% across OTHER visa categories, which is grossly unfair for Accountants

Iscah estimated invitation dates after Skillselect round of :	EOI points score			All EOIs to this effect date we believe have been invited		
23rd May 2018	65 points	70 points		75 points	80 points	85 points © Iscah2018
2211 Accountants - no invites seen yet this round	6/10/2015	24/10/2016	1	18/10/2017	28/12/2017	8/05/2018
2212 Auditors	27/07/2015	26/12/2016	8	26/09/2017	9/02/2018*	23/05/2018*
2334 Electronics Engineer - no invites seen yet this round	18/09/2017	6/12/2017	c	2/05/2018	9/05/2018	9/05/2018
2335 Ind, Mech, Prod Engineers	27/04/2017	23/11/2017	a	16/05/2018*	22/05/2018*	22/05/2018*
2339 Other Engineer Profs	3/01/2017	30/10/2017	h	30/03/2018*	22/05/2018*	22/05/2018*
2611 ICT Business Analysts - no invites seen this round	11/08/2016	13/08/2017	2	16/02/2018	8/05/2018	8/05/2018
2613 Software Applications Programmer @ Iscah 2018	18/04/2017	30/10/2017	0	25/03/2018*	22/05/2018*	22/05/2018*
2631 Computer Network Prof	4/03/2017	30/10/2017	1	15/04/2018*	22/05/2018*	22/05/2018*
ALL the other NON-pro rata occupations	28/09/2017	6/12/2017	e	15/05/2018*	22/05/2018*	22/05/2018*
Assumptions - All 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 asterix next to them * and are in dark GREEN						

(Source: Iscah/DHA)

25) Estimated waiting time for your 189 invitation – Iscah analysis

Here are Iscah's latest estimates of how long we think you will have to wait for a 189 invitation from TODAY - 24th May 2018. Depending on when you lodged your EOI, what the effect date is and the occupation. We have extended it this time through to the new 2018/19 program year and listed some assumptions. As a result it allows us to say whether we think you will get an invitation

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 - <http://www.iscah.com/use-189-eoi-predictions/>

Assumptions					
Pro rata to continue with a ceiling of approx 20% of their normal numbers until July 2018					
average of 300 per round until June 2018 and then 1000 per round after that (full Pro Rata)					
Same occupational annual ceilings for 2018/19 as in 2017/18					
Approximately 25% wastage for fake and double invites to continue					
Iscah Estimated Time period for an EOI invite - 189 visa as at 24th May 2018		EOI Lodged today (17th May 2018)	3 months ago	6 months ago	Copyright Iscah 2018 12 months ago
2211 Accountants	80 points	4 months	10 weeks	invited	invited
	75 points	not before July 2019	13 months	invited	invited
	70 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
© Iscah					
2212 Auditors	80 points	4 months	2 months	invited	invited
	75 points	14 months	11 months	7 months	invited
	70 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
©					
2334 Electronics Engineer	80 points	next round	invited	invited	invited
	75 points	1 month	invited	invited	invited
	70 points	5 months	10 weeks	invited	invited
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	invited	invited
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
©				© Iscah	
2335 Ind, Mech, Prod Engineers	80 points	next round	invited	invited	invited
	75 points	1 month	invited	invited	invited
	70 points	5 months	14 weeks	invited	invited
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	invited
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
© Iscah					
2339 Other Engineering Professionals	80 points	next round	invited	invited	invited
	75 points	2 months	invited	invited	invited
	70 points	9 months	6 months	invited	invited
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
© Iscah				© Iscah	
2611 ICT Business Analysts	80 points	invited	invited	invited	invited
	75 points	4 months	invited	invited	invited
	70 points	11 months	9 months	5 months	invited
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
©					
2613 Software Applications Programmer	80 points	next round	invited	invited	invited
	75 points	2 months	invited	invited	invited
	70 points	5 months	4 months	invited	invited
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	invited
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
©					
2631 Computer Network Professionals	80 points	next round	invited	invited	invited
	75 points	2 months	invited	invited	invited
	70 points	10 months	8 months	invited	invited
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	15 months
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019
©				© Iscah	
ALL other NON pro rata occupations	80 points	next round	invited	invited	invited
	75 points	1 month	invited	invited	invited
	70 points	5 months	3 months	invited	invited
	65 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	invited	invited
	60 points	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	not before July 2019	invited

Note that Non-Pro ratas may be invited much quicker if DHA decide to restrict Pro Ratras again from July 2018 or invite more than 1000 per round - we will update then

(Source: Iscah)

26) Skill Select Results for 9th May 2018

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.

Invitations issued on 1 March 2017

Visa subclass	Points	Date of effect
Skilled - Independent (subclass 189)	70	5/05/2018 11:19 AM
Skilled - Regional Provisional (subclass 489)	80	5/03/2018 4:45 PM

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 dates of effect cut off for the pro rata occupations in the 9 May 2018 invitation round.

ID	Description	Points score	Date of effect
2211	Accountants	80	28/12/2017 7:02 PM
2212	Auditors, Company Secretaries and Corporate Treasurers	80	9/02/2018 10:30 AM
2334	Electronics Engineer	75	2/05/2018 1:28 PM
2335	Industrial, Mechanical and Production Engineers	75	3/05/2018 2:00 PM
2339	Other Engineering Professionals	75	26/03/2018 11:56 AM
2611	ICT Business and System Analysts	75	16/02/2018 9:49 PM
2613	Software and Applications Programmers	75	19/03/2018 1:09 PM
2631	Computer Network Professionals	75	14/04/2018 1:33 PM

(Source: DHA)

OK folks, see you all on
Monday 18th June 2018!!

Have a great few weeks.




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