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Skilled migration to support growth in WA

In July 2011 the Minister for Immigration & Citizenship, Chris Bowen, announced that the government will be extending the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme to include Perth.

According to the latest data, new capital expenditure in the mining industry is estimated to be $55.5 billion in 2010-11. In real terms, this investment is the highest on record, almost four times the average annual level over the past 30 years. The total value of all resource projects currently in the pipeline is around $380 billion — the equivalent of more than one-quarter of Australia's annual GDP.

Western Australia is at the heart of this new investment. More than 60% of the $174 billion in planned investment on advanced projects in Australia is earmarked for WA. Annual employment growth in the mining industry over the last seven years is a very significant 10.4%. This pace of growth, along with the pipeline of investment, is projected to lead to a shortage of 36 000 tradespeople by 2015.

Whilst the resources sector is crucial for Western Australia, it is not the only industry in this state that requires overseas workers. Ironically, the great opportunities available in the resources sector are, in turn, leading to domestic labour shortages in other industries in Western Australia. Nowhere is this more the case than in Perth.

Temporary and permanent migration plays a critical role in meeting demand for labour and addressing capacity constraints. By extending the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme to include Perth, employers will be provided with another avenue to recruit the skilled workers they need from overseas, complementing the existing range of temporary and permanent skilled visa options.

By extending the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme to include Perth, employers will be provided with another avenue.

RSMS allows employers to sponsor skilled workers from overseas to job vacancies. It also allows them to sponsor workers who are here on a temporary visa for permanent residence. With most applicants for RSMS being former 457 visa holders, the scheme provides an opportunity for workers who have proved their value to an Australian employer, and who enjoy living here, to continue to contribute to our economy.

As part of the Budget, the government announced the allocation of 16 000 places for the RSMS scheme. In his announcement speech, Chris Bowen MP stated, "We are giving RSMS applications the highest priority, delivering the migrants Australia needs to the places where we need them most."

ISA Group

Your complete immigration and overseas recruitment service

To meet the demand for skilled labour in some industries, Australian businesses need to find and recruit people from overseas to service existing contracts and secure new projects.

ISA Group helps businesses engage new staff for short to long-term work assignments by providing cost-effective and tailored visa and immigration solutions.

For more information, go to **isa.com.au**, or call us on **+61 08 9346 8888**.

New HR service:
See page 2 for details

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Important changes since 1 July 2011

On Friday, 1 July 2011, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) introduced a range of changes, including visa application fee increases, new forms and other updates. As our client, ISA know that you are particularly interested in the changes relating to employer sponsored visas such as the 457 and ENS. We have summarised the most relevant changes below.

If you'd like more information about the broader changes introduced by DIAC, we welcome you to contact us.

VAC increases

The annual adjustment of most fees and Visa Application Charges (VACs) includes the following fee increases for Subclass 457:

- $405 for standard business sponsorship
- $80 for nomination application fee
- $305 for the visa application fee

For permanent residency the cost of ENS and RSMS applications is now $2,960, up from $2,575.

Subclass 457: Increase to TSMIT

DIAC has introduced an increase in the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT).

From 1 July, 2011, an occupation must have a market salary rate that meets or exceeds the new TSMIT of A$49,330 per year to qualify for a Subclass 457 visa nomination. ISA Group has already sent a detailed email to our clients about this, as this change is vital to all existing 457 holders and their employers. It is part of the sponsor's obligation to ensure they meet equivalent terms and conditions in the workplace.

Increase to English Language Exemption Salary

Also beginning 1 July, 2011, 457 visa applicants who seek an exemption from the required English language proficiency test - on the basis of their offered income in Australia - must demonstrate a minimum annual salary of at least A$88,410.

Points test update

DIAC has completely overhauled the points test for General Skilled Migration visa subclasses. The new points test targets applicants with strong English language competency, formal qualifications and substantial post-qualification work experience.

Points are no longer given in relation to an applicant's nominated occupation and no occupation has priority over another.

New Skilled Occupations List

A new Skilled Occupations List took effect from 1 July 2011. You can find the updated list here: http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/_pdf/sol-schedule1.pdf

ISA's new HR Consultancy service

Exciting things continue to happen at ISA Group, with a new HR Consultancy service being offered to complement and enhance our established core capabilities.

If you're setting up a new company or division in Australia, this new service means we can work with you to look at the whole 'people system'. This includes developing your company culture as well as general cultural awareness. We also cover training, learning & development, leadership team support and quick project start-up needs. And we'll help you develop and implement your HR policies, systems and processes too.

If your business is already established, but you're looking to strategically or operationally review your whole HR function, we can partner with you on this, providing hands-on support and advice and working with you on implementation and delivery.

Meet Julie Hillier

Our HR Consultancy support is now managed by Senior HR Consultant, Julie Hillier. Julie has more than 20 year's professional experience in HR and Organisational Development, both nationally and internationally.

With an MSC in Economics (Human Resources), Julie is passionate about setting up organisations for success. Together with our HR team, Julie will ensure people with an appropriate mix of skills and experience are assigned to support your business and industry needs.

ISA Group is in the business of ensuring you get the right people, at the right time and in the right place.

ISA Group is in the business of ensuring you get the right people, at the right time and in the right place. People who've been trained, developed and motivated to deliver to the best of their ability for your business!

For more information about our HR Consultancy Services, please contact Julie@isa.com.au

Amanda Cooke

Amanda Cooke has been working as one of ISA Group's Senior Consultants since February 2008. She became a Registered Migration Agent in 2005 as a logical advancement to her career in Human Resources and Relocation Management.

Amanda is one of those rare people in Western Australia – she was actually born here! She spent 11 years in Melbourne, where she worked in HR in the transport, pharmaceutical and corporate consulting industries.

Amanda says that her ambition to register as a Migration Agent was a good career progression to an area she finds interesting and is always changing. In 2005 she completed her migration studies at Victoria University and returned to her home town of Perth.

Amanda is predominantly responsible for Permanent Residency case management at ISA Group, but practices in all areas of visas and migration.

An Aquarian who loves quirky comedy, reading and travel, Amanda also enjoys keeping up-to-date with all aspects of the migration profession and maintaining her professional development.

Ministerial Workshop

The Shadow Minister of Productivity, Population, Immigration and Citizenship, Scott Morrison is seeking to establish a baseline of community expectation on population growth.

As part of the Coalition's sustainable population policy, ISA Group has been asked to assist with conducting an extensive inquiry, giving Australians from all around the country the opportunity to have their say on Australia's future population growth.

Working with the Shadow Minister, ISA Group will be formally inviting selected clients to assist with a ministerial workshop that will focus on gathering input from companies who take advantage of 457 visas for skilled overseas workers.

The workshop also intends to get 'real' feedback regarding the skilled labour shortage and what companies are really experiencing.

We'll publish the results of the inquiry in a later edition of *Human Connections*.

ISA's successful recruitment process

ISA Group's recruitment service helps businesses find and employ suitably qualified personnel from overseas.

We have a proven track record in overseas recruitment, combined with the unique capability of in-house registered migration agents. Through our recruitment office and skills testing training centre in the Philippines we can cater for one-off placements or multiple appointments.

Using ISA Group's experience and expertise, clients can avoid the pitfalls of overseas recruitment - issues that can catch out even the most experienced HR recruitment teams.

We've found great people for a variety of industries, including hospitality, mining and resources, motor trades and oil and gas. Recruits have not only shown they have the skills required, they have also proven to be loyal workers who are happy to stay.

Recruits have not only shown they have the skills required, they have also proven to be loyal workers who are happy to stay.

As one of Australia's leading visa and immigration consultancies, we also remove the stress of overseas recruitment by handling visa applications and ensuring that applicants meet immigration requirements.

For more information about our overseas recruitment services, please contact Brett Merrey on (08) 9346 8888 or email brett@isa.com.au

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Helping you monitor obligations

ISA Group has introduced a monitoring and compliance service that's designed to help businesses sponsoring Subclass 457 visas to meet their sponsorship obligations.

When a business sponsors a worker under the subclass 457 visa program, they agree to a set of specific requirements, also known as 'undertakings'. These undertakings are a part of immigration law and must be met.

With the Department of Immigration and Citizenship imposing high penalties for non-compliance, it is essential for businesses to have steps in place to make sure they meet their commitments. DIAC is taking a much stronger line on sponsors who don't meet their obligations and in recent times some businesses have had their sponsorships cancelled.

ISA Group has specialists who can help clients monitor their obligations and/or conduct audits to ensure that they are not in breach of any requirements. By using the services of ISA's monitoring and compliance team, a business can avoid any potentially costly and unproductive oversights.

Contact us

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Subclass 457: When do sponsorship obligations cease?

Employer obligations	Duration of obligation
Obligation to cooperate with inspectors	This obligation commences from the time a sponsor is approved; it ceases five years after the sponsorship ceases.
Obligation to ensure equivalent terms and conditions of employment	This obligation commences from the time the visa is granted; it ceases when the primary sponsored person ceases employment, or is granted a further substantive visa.
Obligation to pay travel costs to enable sponsored persons to leave Australia	This obligation ceases when another nomination is approved, a further substantive visa is granted, or when the visa holder has left Australia and no longer holds the Subclass 457 visa.
Obligation to pay costs incurred by the Commonwealth to locate and remove unlawful non-citizen	In relation to a primary visa holder, this obligation applies from the day the person becomes an unlawful non-citizen; it ceases five years after the person leaves Australia.
Obligation to keep records	This obligation commences from the time a sponsor is approved; it ceases two years after the last sponsored person ceases with the sponsor.
Obligation to provide records and information to the Minister	This obligation commences from the time a sponsor is approved; it ceases two years after the last sponsored person ceases with the sponsor.
Obligation to provide information to Immigration when certain events occur	This obligation commences from the time a sponsor is approved; it ceases when the sponsorship ceases, and where the employer is no longer sponsoring a visa holder.
Obligation to ensure primary sponsored person only works in an approved occupation	This obligation ceases when another nomination is approved, a further substantive visa is granted, or when the visa holder has left Australia and no longer holds the Subclass 457 visa.
Obligation not to recover certain costs from a primary or secondary sponsored person	This obligation ceases on the concurrence of the following two events: • the approved sponsorship ceases; and • there are no sponsored persons in relation to the sponsor.