

human connections

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WA State Migration Plan released

The Western Australian State Migration Plan was released on 10 December 2010.

Skilled migration is one of the key areas supported by the State in order to meet critical levels of skill shortages. By attracting skilled workers from overseas to fill priority occupations, WA can continue to grow and expand in ways that benefit the broader community and meet the State's workforce development needs.

Under the plan, prospective skilled migrants who have a skill listed on the WA Skilled Migration Occupation List (WASMOL) may be eligible to apply for WA State Sponsorship. Listed occupations do not relate to specific job vacancies, nor do they represent any guarantee of a job; rather they identify skills that are in demand for industry sectors in Western Australia.

State Sponsorship applicants will have to compete with all potential employees in the Western Australian labour market in a normal competitive selection process to secure available jobs.

In addition to qualifying for an occupation listed in the WASMOL, applicants may need to meet other criteria such as an English requirement and relevant work experience, depending on the nominated occupation. They must also

meet the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's (DIAC) criteria for General Skilled Migration.

International students, who wish to apply for permanent residency upon completion of their studies in Western Australia, may be eligible for WA State Sponsorship under the Skilled – Sponsored (residence) visa (subclass 886).

To be eligible for this visa, students must have an Australian degree, diploma or trade qualification as a result of at least two years full-time study at one or more educational institutions in Western Australia. Applicants will also need to have an occupation listed on the WASMOL and hold a skilled-graduate (temporary) visa (subclass 485) or have lodged an 885 or 886 visa application with DIAC before applying for sponsorship.

Additionally, applicants will be required to have obtained at least 18 months work experience in their nominated occupation after gaining their qualification. Work experience will need to be gained in Western Australia on a full-time, continuous basis.

For more information about the occupations on the WASMOL, go to www.dtwd.wa.gov.au

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 recruitment, visa and immigration solutions.

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



ISA Group will be exhibiting at APPEA 2011 – the Australian upstream petroleum industry's premier annual event.
Visit us at Booth 181.



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Changes to Executive Salaries - Employer Nomination Scheme

The executive-level salary threshold for the Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS) was increased from \$165,000 to \$250,000 per annum on 6 December 2010.

The \$85,000 increase to base salary has created some difficulties for clients who were planning to lodge their application for permanent residency under the option of meeting or exceeding the lesser figure.

As the requirement is to demonstrate that the base salary for the position will be at least \$250,000 at the time the permanent residence visa is granted, we recommend companies carefully look at the different allowances that the subclass 457 visa holder may currently be earning.

Where appropriate, and as a result of the position becoming locally employed, you may wish to roll-up certain allowances into the base, for example foreign services premiums, or housing assistance, to meet the new executive salary level at the time a visa is granted.

As changes to remuneration may affect other factors of the employment terms and conditions

it is recommended that professional HR advice is obtained.

Where clients are not able to progress an application under the executive level option, the two remaining options for permanent residency under the ENS are:

1. Have worked full-time in Australia in the nominated occupation on a Subclass 418, 421, 422, 428, 444, 457 or 461 temporary residence visa for the last two years, prior to the visa application being made (including at least the last 12 months with the nominating employer);
2. Have had their skills assessed as suitable by the relevant skills assessing authority and have at least three years full-time work experience in the occupation before the visa application is lodged. (The occupation must be on the Employer Nomination Skilled Occupation List).

Employers affected by this change and unsure how to progress particular cases should contact ISA Group for further information, or go to www.immi.gov.au/skilled/skilled-workers/ens

Graduate skill visa holders another option for employers

Overseas students who have completed an eligible qualification of two years or more in Australia, but do not meet the requirements for a General Skilled Migration permanent residency visa, still have an opportunity to remain in the country for up to 18 months through a 485 visa.

Graduate skill subclass 485 visa holders can use this time to gain skilled work experience or to improve their English language skills. They have no visa conditions to limit their work, study or travel within Australia for the duration of their visa. This presents them with the possibility of organising an employer-sponsored temporary or permanent visa.

Employers have the opportunity to engage recent international graduates and assess their skills in the workplace. They may consider supporting a further visa application if the student demonstrates the necessary skills for the nominated position.

Graduate skill visa holders may be eligible to apply for General Skill Migration or an employer-sponsored visa as soon as they are eligible and before the expiry of their 485 visa.

To be eligible for this visa, applicants must:

- be under 45 years of age
- have completed an eligible qualification(s) in the last six months as a result of at least two years study in Australia
- have the skills and qualifications that meet the Australian standard for an occupation on the Skilled Occupation List, with a nominated occupation classified as either a 60 point or a 50 point occupation.

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NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Australian Hotels Association

Western Australia's expanding mining sector and lure of job opportunities is putting pressure on the hospitality industry to attract and retain skilled staff to manage the peaks of seasonal demand.

To help proprietors address staffing pressures, the Australian Hotels Association WA has partnered with ISA Group to provide an effective solution to the recruitment of work-ready skilled people.

AHA WA Deputy CEO, Paul Brockschlager, said the formal agreement will help members secure highly trained workers from overseas to maintain a high level of service for their customers.

"The opportunity to secure overseas applicants through 457 visas provides an excellent solution for venues to recruit qualified and experienced staff," Mr Brockschlager said.

Through the agreement with ISA Group, AHA Western Australian members receive competitive rates and services designed to cater for their specific needs.

ISA Group has placed 30 people in the hospitality sector - most of them chefs - in Perth and regional areas over the past 12 months. All of these people still remain in permanent, full-time employment and the feedback about them has been very positive.

AHA member and Director of Exmouth's Potshot Hotel Resort, Jacqui Ogden, has worked successfully with ISA Group to secure skilled chefs overseas for more than five years.

"All employees recruited through ISA Group have demonstrated a strong work ethic, are highly skilled, well presented, polite and able to hit the ground running," Ms Ogden said.

"Although there is a cost involved in sourcing overseas staff through ISA Group, this is easily outweighed by the level of expertise and experience of the workers and the length of time they are willing to stay."

Motor Trades Association

The motor trade sector, like the hospitality industry is not immune to challenges created by the demand for human resources created by the State's mining boom.

It's why the MTA has also formed a partnership with ISA Group - to provide a one-stop-shop for motor trade businesses seeking an efficient way to recruit skilled, work-ready people.

MTA WA has signed an agreement appointing ISA as its preferred supplier for overseas skilled labour recruitment services.

"In this current climate, finding training and retaining staff can be a real test for some businesses. To be able to offer a single supplier for skilled recruitment in WA is an exciting development for MTA members," said CEO Stephen Moir at the signing of the agreement.

MTA member and Mandurah Hyundai dealer principal, Dion Bloomfield has successfully recruited skilled workers from overseas for the past four years.

"To be able to offer a single supplier for skilled recruitment in WA is an exciting development for MTA members"



ISA Director Noelene Merrey with MTA WA's Chief Executive Officer, Stephen Moir.

Knowing that workers' skills were pre-proven, he welcomed the new partnership between MTA and ISA.

"Many younger workers and apprentices are attracted to the big money in mining, so it's very difficult to get technicians," according to Mr Bloomfield. "While some members may be put off by the cost, to have an organisation like ISA that can cut the red tape for you is a huge advantage."

ISA Group's hands-on management team has been providing overseas recruitment and visa services for more than 25 years across trades that include servicing, motor repair, heavy diesel fitting, body repair and spray painting.

For more information, members can contact Brett Merrey on 9346 8888 or brett@isa.com.au

Labour Agreements – did you know?

Labour Agreements are formal arrangements to recruit a number of overseas skilled and semi-skilled workers. Both temporary and permanent visas can be granted under the agreement which is generally effective for 2 to 3 years.

An agreement becomes effective when it has been signed by the employer, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, plus other parties to the agreement.

The Department of Immigration & Citizenship announced on 15 May 2009 that ASCO 5-7 occupations can only be filled by overseas workers under a Labour Agreement. Employers wishing to renew employment contracts with existing 457 visa holders, or offer new employment contracts to overseas skilled workers in ASCO 5-7 occupations, will need to establish an industry Labour Agreement.

Situations where Labour Agreements could be advantageous for employers include where:

- an industry association has negotiated a wide agreement for the supply of needed skills in the Temporary Business (Long Stay) Subclass 457 visa and permanent entry Labour Agreement visa (Subclass 120 and 855) programs
- occupations are not on the list of approved occupations for the Temporary Business (Long Stay) Subclass 457 visa, permanent Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS) or Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme, yet a genuine skills shortage exists - or occupations are not covered under the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO)
- a large number of workers are needed for relatively short term projects with tight timeframes where sufficient local supply of professional and tradespersons is unavailable

- entry of overseas workers for a specific industry is best addressed under the provisions of a Labour Agreement
- priority processing of a 457 visa is needed.

To be considered for a Labour Agreement, organisations need:

- an ongoing requirement to recruit overseas skilled workers
- evidence of efforts made to recruit from the local labour market
- a willingness to work with the government to improve the training and recruitment prospects of Australian workers
- a record of commitment to training Australian workers

- evidence that they are a lawfully operating business
- good financial standing, attested by a CPA accountant, plus recent financial statements
- a good business record, showing compliance with relevant laws and regulations
- evidence of previous compliance with immigration laws (if applicable)
- to be the direct employer of the recruited employee
- to be prepared to consult with unions and relevant stakeholders.

For more information about Labour Agreements and how they might help you, please contact ISA group or go to www.immi.gov.au/skilled/skilled-workers/la



ISA Group's Donald Ayers, Rachelle Frame and Ian Tallentire bring a little Oahu to Osborne Park.

Fund-raising for flood victims

With typical Australian comradeship, ISA, like many other businesses around Australia, recently dug deep into their pockets and their wardrobes to raise funds for the flood victims of Carnarvon and Queensland. We held two themed Fridays – a 'Thong Day' and a 'Hawaiian Day' (pictured). Both days were a great success. Our hearts and support run very strong within the ISA Group towards these tragic events.