

Hey

Welcome to October's newsletter on all the visa news we have seen in the last month.

Signs are good that the migration program is set to take off with borders opening, and the Prime Minister stating that skilled migrants and international students will be one of the first groups allowed to travel to Australia

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On to this month's news ...



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1) Parents allowed to travel to Australia soon

Parents to be able to visit Australia soon -

<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-kirribilli-nsw-9>

" also want to note that at the National Security Committee earlier this week, where we considered these matters on Tuesday, we also agreed that we would be looking at expanding the definition of 'immediate family' to include the parents of Australian residents and citizens, and I know that will be very welcome news to Australians right across the country who are hoping to be reunited with their family members, their parents who are overseas"

(Source: Australian Prime Minister)

2) NSW State update

NSW 491 nomination process has been updated with new info

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/topics/visas-and-migration/skilled-visas/subclass-491>

<https://www.study.sydney/return>

3) South Australian update

To manage South Australia's COVID recovery response, an additional 70 occupations will be open to applicants currently residing offshore from Tuesday 28 September 2021.

The minimum requirements for state nomination include at least 8 years work experience in the occupation or closely related occupation and a proficient plus English level. Full requirements for each occupation will be shown on South Australia's Skilled Occupation List from 10am, ACST, Tuesday 28 September 2021.

For South Australian state nomination, prospective applicants must meet the Department of Home Affairs requirements, state-specific occupation requirements and have skills in an occupation that is available on our Skilled Occupation List. Offshore applicants meeting the minimum published requirements can lodge a Registration of Interest (RoI) from 10am, ACST, Tuesday 28 September 2021.

<https://www.migration.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-09/70-offshore-occupations.pdf>

(Source: South Australian government)

4) Queensland update

Latest news from QLD government

The Migration Queensland Program opening date has been delayed, due to a final round of industry consultation by a Queensland Government Department to determine program requirements.

We are unable to provide a specific opening date but envisage the program to open as soon as this final round of consultation has concluded. We appreciate your ongoing patience.

Please note: the Queensland state nomination program is an invitation only program with a limited nomination allocation (quota), and because of this there is no guarantee you will be selected for nomination. If you have a visa expiring, it is suggested to consult with a Registered Migration Agent or an Immigration Lawyer regarding your alternative migration options.

(Source: Queensland State government)

5) Update for overseas travel

Australia is ready to take its next steps to safely reopen to the world, with changes coming to the international border.

Our government is setting out the framework for how international travel will look in coming months.

With first dose vaccination rates at over 78 per cent and double dose rates nationwide at 55 per cent and on track to reach 70 per cent in some jurisdictions over the next week, our government has been finalising plans so Australian families can be reunited, Australian workers can travel in and out of our country, and we can work towards welcoming tourists back to our shores.

Within weeks, large parts of the country will be moving to Phase B and then to Phase C of the National Plan to safely reopen Australia and to stay safely open. Under Phase C, international travel is on track to reopen safely to fully vaccinated Australian travellers. Many countries around the world have now safely reopened to international travel and it will shortly be time for Australia to take the next step.

To enable fully vaccinated Australians to travel, our government is finalising new arrangements. Following completion of home quarantine pilots in New South Wales and South Australia, it is anticipated that states and territories that are ready to do so will roll out:

- Seven day home quarantine for Australian citizens and permanent residents fully vaccinated with a vaccine approved for use in Australia or 'recognised' by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)
- 14-day managed quarantine for anyone not vaccinated or vaccinated with a vaccine not approved or recognised by the TGA

Australian citizens and permanent residents who cannot be vaccinated - for example if they are under 12 or have a medical condition - will be treated as vaccinated for the purposes of their travel. States and territories will begin this program at different times given their varying vaccination rates but we expect the system to commence in November.

Under Phase B and C of the National Plan, 14-day managed quarantine caps apply to unvaccinated arrivals. These will return to previous levels at Phase B of the National Plan. We will work with states and territories to remove all travel caps on vaccinated Australians.

In line with the National Plan, our government is balancing the need to minimise the risk that the spread of COVID-19 presents, with the need to live with the virus.

The Government's intention is that once changes are made in November, the current overseas travel restrictions related to COVID-19 will be removed and Australians will be able to travel subject to any other travel advice and limits, as long as they are fully vaccinated and those countries' border settings allow. Border settings and quarantine requirements in other countries continue to change and we strongly encourage all Australians to closely monitor DFAT travel advice, available on smartraveller.gov.au.

These changes mean there will be no travel restrictions if you are a vaccinated Australian entering or leaving our shores. We will also work towards completely quarantine-free travel for certain countries, such as New Zealand, when it is safe to do so. Testing is expected to continue to be a requirement of international travel, but subject to further medical advice, Rapid Antigen Tests may be used.

Australians who want to travel overseas once restrictions are removed will be able to access an internationally recognised proof of vaccination document in the coming weeks to prove their

vaccination status abroad. The proof of vaccination for international travel will include a QR code that is readable globally, and will comply with the standards set out by the International Civil Aviation Organisation. Engagement with commercial airlines and foreign governments has already begun to ensure they are familiar with the system.

We know it has been an extraordinarily difficult 18 months for Australians overseas trying to come home and for Australians with family and friends overseas.

To maximise the number of Australians who can return, our government is also offering facilitated flights into any state or territory that agrees to commence seven day home quarantine trials for returning Australians.

More than 680,000 Australians have returned since the Government recommended people reconsider the need to travel abroad in March last year. The Government stands ready to assist more people to return with the cooperation of states and territories.

Australian citizens and permanent residents who have been vaccinated with a TGA-approved vaccine overseas can already visit their GP or local pharmacist in Australia to have their COVID-19 vaccination status updated in the Australian Immunisation Register, to be able to show proof of vaccination in Australia.

In coming weeks the government will finalise the processes for people to be able to show their vaccination status if they have had a TGA 'recognised vaccine'. People who have received vaccines not recognised by the TGA, or who are unvaccinated, will be required to undertake 14 days of managed quarantine on arrival.

In addition to the four COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved and registered for use by the TGA - Pfizer (Comirnaty), AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria), Moderna (Spikevax) and COVID-19 Vaccine Janssen - the TGA has also been reviewing other vaccines in widespread use around the world for the purposes of determining 'recognised vaccines'.

We need to ensure that we keep Australians safe without creating unnecessary obstacles to people who have been fully vaccinated overseas from coming to our country.

Today, the TGA has published its initial assessment of the data on the protection offered by the Coronavac (Sinovac) and Covishield (AstraZeneca/Serum Institute of India) vaccines and has advised that these vaccines should be considered as 'recognised vaccines' for the purpose of determining incoming international travellers as being appropriately vaccinated.

Declaring certain COVID-19 vaccines as 'recognised vaccines' is separate to a regulatory decision on whether they are approved for use for vaccination in Australia, which has not been made by the TGA. The recognition of these two additional vaccines is a major milestone towards more Australians vaccinated overseas getting home sooner.

The TGA will continue its assessment of other vaccines for the purpose of determining 'recognised vaccines' based on the available data and data that is provided.

In coming weeks the Minister for Health will consider updates to the Biosecurity Act Emergency determinations to facilitate some of these changes for fully vaccinated Australian travellers as we move forward on the National Plan to get Australia back to normal and reopen our country safely.

(Source; Australian Federal Government)

6) Tasmanian State update

Some changes have been made to the Tasmanian 491 State criteria
https://www.migration.tas.gov.au/skilled_migrants/skilled_regional

(Source: Tasmanian State Government)

7) Western Australian update

<https://migration.wa.gov.au/services/skilled-migration-western-australia/invitation-rounds/current-invitation-round>

WA Invite round 1st October results

Here are some of the official WA results from popular occupations in the 491/190 selection round of 1st October 2021

Lowest ranked invite ...

General List Schedule 2 -

Accountant 110 points (EOI submission date of 01/10/2019) 491 visa

Graduate List -

Chef 90 points Advanced Diploma (EOI submission date of 14/09/2020) 491 visa

Cafe/Restaurant Manager 70 points (EOI submission date of 21/09/2021) 190 visa

(Any questions to query@iscah.com thanks)

WA reopen multiple occupations on the graduate list

<https://migration.wa.gov.au/services/skilled-migration-western-australia/latest-news>

<https://www.migration.wa.gov.au/services/skilled-migration-western-australia/occupation%20lists>

(Source: Western Australian state government)

8) ACT/Canberra update

<https://www.act.gov.au/migration/resources/canberra-matrix-invitation-round>

9) Partner numbers last program year

The Government has delivered the 2020-21 Migration Program, including the largest Partner Program in over 25 years by processing in excess of 72,000 places for couples seeking to reunite.

The 2020-21 Migration Program has delivered 160,052 places against the planning level of 160,000 places, with the majority going to applicants already onshore. This has increased from 140,366 places delivered in 2019-20.

Visa processing focused on onshore applicants and applicants in critical sectors and occupations. 71.2 per cent of applicants finalised in the Skill Stream and 64.8 per cent of Family places were delivered to applicants onshore.

For skilled visas, the focus was on supporting Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic by enabling Australian employers to hire the workers needed to maintain their businesses and drive Australia's recovery from the pandemic.

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs Alex Hawke said the program exceeded expectations, despite challenges posed by COVID-19.

"Australia's well managed migration program delivers outcomes that support economic recovery, create jobs, and protect the safety and security of Australians," Minister Hawke said.

"Delivering a full program of 160,052 places meant drawing on the pool of onshore applicants due to global COVID-19 restrictions. This has been very successful given the difficult circumstances this year."

The focus of the Migration Program in 2021-22 will continue to be on visa categories that help Australia's economic rebound and stabilise net overseas migration.

"We will continue to give priority to skilled visas that drive economic growth, job creation and investment in Australia," Minister Hawke said.

"There will be ongoing flexibility within the migration program to respond to uncertain health, border and economic conditions arising from COVID-19," he said.

"The Government will continue to be flexible and adapt to changing circumstances in global migration," Minister Hawke said.

The 2021-22 Migration Program will have an overall planning level of 160,000 places and carry over the 2020-21 Migration Program composition and planning levels, including the flexibility to move places within the Skill stream to provide flexibility to support Australia's response to managing COVID-19.

(Source: Immigration Minister)

10) Recent media Articles

<https://www.itnews.com.au/news/global-tech-talent-visa-lures-9584-migrants-in-second-year-570099>

<https://www.vetassess.com.au/home/updates/post/new-assessment-criteria-for-dance-professionals>

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/lives-completely-shattered-graduates-plead-for-work-visa-extension-20210318-p57bx7.html>

<https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/bridging-visa-boom-sparks-audit-request,15554>

<https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/outcome-of-2020-21-migration-program-alex-hawke-panics-on-immigration,15563>

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/victoria/slavery-in-our-suburbs-the-matrix-of-marriage-migration-and-abuse-20211001-p58wf4.html>

<https://www.thecattlesite.com/news/57508/australian-farmers-welcome-dedicated-agworker-visa/>

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/no-time-to-waste-business-wants-answers-on-skilled-migrants-return-20211005-p58xg2.html>

<https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/partner-visas-the-big-winner-in-new-migration-program,15590>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/indian-international-students-can-return-to-australia-this-year?>

<https://johnmenadue.com/the-overseas-student-and-immigration-nexus-where-to-now/>

<https://www.afr.com/politics/australia-needs-explosive-surge-of-2-million-migrants-20211011-p58z0n>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/could-australia-see-a-migration-boom-after-the-covid-19-pandemic/bd600754-7263-4cb5-a9dd-730d06bcd162>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/oct/15/labor-accuses-coalition-of-playing-politics-with-women-and-childrens-lives-in-pushing-visa-cancellation-bill>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/kristina-keneally-calls-for-post-pandemic-overhaul-of-australia-s-migration-system/b7b22005-074c-47a2-90ca-d641b50df002>

Ok folks, that's all for this month

See you all on Monday 15th November 2021



Steven O'Neill (Iscah Manager - MARN 9687267)

 iscah.migration


 iscahmigration

 iscah.com

 Phone: 08 9353 3344

 Fax: 61-8-9353 3350

 E-mail: newsletter@iscah.com

 Iscah Migration
Suite 14 (Kewdale Business Park)
133 Kewdale Road, Kewdale
Perth Western Australia, 6105
PO Box 75 Welshpool BC 6986



Registered Migration Agent 9687267