

Hey everyone

Welcome to the latest edition of our monthly visa newsletter.

Disappointing to see all the states migration programs reduced by 70% for this program year

Check out our NEW Tiktok visa channel here on plenty of news and tips... <https://www.tiktok.com/@iscahmigration>

Anyhow on to the latest news that we have seen about migration policy and changes



Contents

- 1) WA August invite round - official results
- 2) NSW State Migration update
- 3) ACT/Canberra Govt update on reduced 190/491 migration
- 4) WA State Migration Program 2023/24
- 5) South Australia State update
- 6) Northern territory update for skilled Migration
- 7) Victorian State Migration update
- 8) Migration Queensland program opening for 2023 - 24
- 9) Medical Practitioners migration requirements change
- 10) Closure of the Pandemic Event visa
- 11) TRA Update
- 12) News Articles

1) WA August invite round - official results

Visa 190 invites

Schedule 2 - 302 invites (lowest 75 points up to 07/07/23)

Higher Education - 150 invites (lowest offshore, masters/PHD 75 points up to 17/01/23)

Vocational - 35 invites (lowest WA, Cert 3. 65 points up to 10/02/23)

Note only building and construction occupations were invited in the August round -

<https://migration.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/Last>

(note there were NO 491 invites)

2) NSW State Migration update

Essential Information for Submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI) in SkillSelect for NSW Nomination. Migrating to New South Wales begins with understanding how to correctly submit an EOI in SkillSelect. Below, you'll find essential guidelines to ensure your EOI is considered for NSW nomination.

Subclass and State Selection

To be considered for a NSW invitation round, your EOI must target a single visa subclass and specifically seek nomination by NSW. If you select multiple visa subclasses or states (including 'Any'), your EOI will be disqualified.

You may submit multiple EOIs in SkillSelect.

Submission Timing

There's no need to submit a new EOI for the current program year. All valid EOIs are considered equally during an invitation round, and the timing of your submission doesn't affect your chances of being invited for NSW nomination.

Document Validity

Ensure that all your documents are valid on the day you're invited to apply and remain so for at least five business days after applying. If any documents, including your English and skills assessments or passport, have expired or will expire within five business days, you'll be ineligible for NSW nomination.

Points Claims

If invited, you must provide valid evidence for all points claims in your EOI. This evidence must remain valid for at least five business days after you apply for NSW nomination. If you can't meet this requirement, you won't be able to apply using your invitation.

Employment Claims

For NSW nomination, you can only claim skilled employment after a specific date:

- **Deemed Skilled Date:** If stated on your skills assessment, you can claim skilled employment only after the date you're deemed skilled in your occupation.
- **Date Qualified:** If your skills assessment doesn't state a deemed skilled date, you can claim skilled employment only after completing your qualifying study in your nominated occupation.

Claiming skilled employment before NSW deems you skilled will make you ineligible to accept an invitation for NSW nomination.

Integrity and Compliance

NSW maintains a strict stance on the submission of false documents or misleading information. Should you provide false or misleading information to NSW, be aware that it will lead to the refusal of your application. The consequences may extend to a permanent ban on future eligibility and a referral to the relevant authority for investigation or prosecution.

Final thoughts

Navigating the process of submitting an EOI in SkillSelect for NSW nomination requires careful attention to detail. From selecting the right subclass to ensuring all documents are valid, each step is crucial. Remember, the path to NSW nomination is not about haste but precision. Multiple EOIs are permissible, but each must be meticulously crafted. Keep your documents up to date, and align your claims with the evidence. Your future in NSW is not just a dream; it's a possibility that begins with a well-prepared EOI. If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to our support team.

NSW updated information page for 491

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

3) ACT/Canberra Govt update on reduced 190/491 migration

As you are aware, in 2022-23, the ACT received an allocation of 4,050 nomination places, split evenly between the 491 and 190 visa subclasses. I want to thank you for your hard work in putting in the applications. The ACT successfully reached its full allocation.

As we commence the new program year, I would like to provide you with the following update.
ACT Migration – Allocation update 2023-24

The Department of Home Affairs has recently announced the 2023-24 Migration Program, as part of the annual budget process. A planning level of 190,000 places has been announced, a slight reduction from the 2022-23 planning level of 195,000 places.

Of the 190,000 places,
The State and Territory Nominated planning level is 30,400 places and the regional planning level is 32,300 places. This means the overall number of visas the Government plans to grant in these programs in 2023-24 will be broadly similar to the number of visas granted in 2022-23.

Note: Migration Program planning levels refer to the number of visas delivered under the Migration Program each year for each category and count not only the primary applicant but any accompanying dependents they may include on their application.

As a result of a successful State and Territory nomination program in 2022-23, the Department of Home Affairs has commenced this program year with a high volume of visa applications on-hand in these programs, including many from the ACT. The Department of Home Affairs has reduced the allocations for ACT nomination back to pre-pandemic levels. This allocation is intended to support an ongoing pipeline of visa applicants, without unduly impacting on visa processing times and the potential to delay the arrival in Australia of those already in the pipeline.

The allocations for the ACT in State and Territory nominated visa categories for 2023-24 are as follows:
Skilled Nominated visa (subclass 190) 600
Skilled Work Regional (Provisional) visa (subclass 491) 600
Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP) 0
Total 1,200

I appreciate that this allocation is smaller than the allocation in 2022-23. It is also significantly smaller than the allocation that the ACT requested from the Department of Home Affairs. We acknowledge the impacts this may have on your business and on skilled migrants, living in or wishing to migrate to the ACT.

The Australian Federal Government has committed through National Cabinet to providing a greater role for states and territories to contribute to Australia's migration settings as part of the development of the new National Migration Strategy (the Strategy). Engagement has already commenced with our jurisdiction in the development of the Strategy. We look forward to the release of the Strategy later in the year.

Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP)

The Department of Home Affairs has allocated no new nomination places for the BIIP in the 2023-24 program year for the ACT or any jurisdiction.

The Department of Home Affairs has advised this decision is due to the limited number of BIIP places available within the 2023-24 Migration program and the high number of applications already on-hand. Existing first and second stage visas are still being processed under the BIIP.

The ACT BIIP is closed to new applications for 2023-24.

ACT Nomination Guidelines and ACT Critical Skills List

We note the recent review undertaken and announced in April this year. There are no further changes at this stage, to either the ACT Nomination Guidelines or the ACT Critical Skills list. However, we anticipate a review later in the year and will advise any significant changes in due course.

We endeavour to provide migrants and agents with as much notice as possible, but changes may occur at short notice. Please make sure you check our website frequently for updates.

Invitation rounds

Our aim is to continue with regular invitation rounds. The frequency may differ this year based on a range of factors, noting the lower allocation. We will provide updates on invitations rounds through the ACT Migration website.

The next invitation round will be undertaken before 29 September 2023.

Given the lower allocation this year, you can expect the number of invitations to decrease, which will also likely result in higher minimum scores meriting an invitation. Please advise your clients accordingly.

Thank you for your ongoing support of these programs that contribute to reducing workforce shortages and maximising long term social and economic benefits to the Territory. We look forward to continuing to work with you over the coming year.

4) WA State Migration Program 2023/24

Premier Roger Cook to urge Federal Government to reverse cuts to WA's skilled migrant allocation
The Premier is calling on the Federal Government to reverse a decision to slash WA's nominated skilled migrant intake by 70 per cent — saying the workers are “desperately” needed to build new homes and fill a range of jobs. Credit: Michael Wilson/The West Australian
The Premier is calling on the Federal Government to reverse a decision to slash WA's nominated skilled migrant intake by 70 per cent — saying the workers are “desperately” needed to build new homes and fill a range of jobs.

The Commonwealth has notified the State Government its allocation for the State Nominated Migration Program would be drastically cut from more than 8000 places to just 2350 this financial year.

The SNMP allows States to specifically decide which overseas skilled workers they need to fill the local jobs in demand.

But the Albanese Government's plan to cut WA numbers has prompted the Premier to write a letter to his Federal leader objecting to the shock decision.

“I will always fight for what is best for Western Australia,” Mr Cook said.

“WA is the economic powerhouse of the nation and we desperately need more skilled workers — not less — to meet the demand being driven by our booming economy, specifically in our housing construction industry but also in key areas like health and hospitality.

“If we want to build more houses then we need more workers.”

The Premier is calling on the Federal Government to reverse a decision to slash WA's nominated skilled migrant intake by 70 per cent — saying the workers are “desperately” needed to build new homes and fill a range of jobs. Minister Paul Papalia is pictured on a recruitment drive in the UK.

Credit: Supplied/supplied

WA's skilled nominated visa allocation will drop from 5350 to 1500, while skilled work regional visas will plummet from 2790 to 850, unless the Cook Government can convince Federal Labor to change its mind.

And the State will get no migrants from the Business Innovation and Investment Program after receiving 40 last financial year, even though applications for this program are at record highs.

Despite the total allocation being slashed by nearly 6000, demand from prospective migrants remains high, with 5000 expressing interest in WA's Skilled Migrant Employment Register.

The Premier said that while local jobs were his “number one priority”, WA was experiencing a significant uptick in work in the pipeline as well as a backlog of jobs that need to be completed.

“We need a mass injection of skilled workers to get work moving along so we can get more people into homes, more infrastructure built and sustain the highly specialised roles that can't be filled,” he said. “The Commonwealth needs to review this decision immediately.”

Mr Cook will ask the Federal Government for 10,000 places on the SNMP, the same request made last financial year when 8180 were granted.

It is expected the issue will be raised at a Skills Summit in Perth this week.

The unprecedented demand for workers, particularly in industries such as housing, health and

hospitality, continues to be fuelled by a tight local labour market with WA recording an unemployment rate of 3.4 per cent in July — below the national average of 3.7.

The shock SNMP decision by the Federal Government comes in stark contrast to an acute worker shortage which last year saw a Chicken Treat in the Pilbara offer \$130,000 for a store manager and a Broome cafe offer a \$92,000 barista job.

The State Government implemented a raft of changes in response to make it easier for skilled migrants to come to WA, including scrapping application fees and reducing English standards and expanding the number of occupations to its priority occupation list from 170 to 286.

Then-Premier Mark McGowan globe-trotted from Rome to Doha to spruik the changes, in hopes to fill the roles in a diverse range of occupations — a far cry from when he first became Premier in 2017 and sought to remove WA from the Regional Skilled Migration Scheme to put “West Australian jobs first”.

While more workers are needed to build new homes, the Catch 22 is that the State lacks the homes to house these would-be workers.

The West on Friday revealed that Perth was experiencing its worst ever housing shortage, with properties for sale in Perth dropping by 24 per cent over the year.

(Source: West Australian newspaper)

Ok folks

That's all for this month, stay safe

See you all on Monday 17th July 2023.



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

5) South Australia State update

Skilled and Business Migration update – 2023–24 nomination allocations

Recently, the Commonwealth Government provided advice of its decision to significantly reduce visa nomination allocations for South Australia's General Skilled Migration (GSM) program in 2023–24.

An allocation of 2,300 nomination places has been provided, which contrasts with the 8,800 places allocated to the State in 2022–23.

We will continue to support South Australia's priority industries with the limited places available, including our focus on attracting overseas skilled migrants in critical sectors such as Health and Defence.

Further information about the 2023–24 GSM program will be announced shortly, and GSM applications from the 2022–23 financial year will be finalised in the coming weeks.

As is the case with all states and territories, the Commonwealth Government has not provided South Australia with any nomination places for the Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP) in 2023–24.

Business or investor migrants who already hold a provisional visa (subclass 188) can apply for nomination for the extension stream or permanent (subclass 888) visa in 2023–24 as these are not subject to a cap.

6) Northern territory update for skilled Migration

Update: Temporary closure of the General Skilled Migration (GSM) program

Unexpectedly, the Australian Government has provided a significantly reduced allocation of GSM nominations for the 2023–24 program year as compared to previous years.

In order to manage the current pipeline of nomination applications against the reduced allocation, Migration NT will temporarily stop accepting new nomination applications from 5pm Thursday 24 August 2023.

Existing applications that have already been lodged through the online MigrationNT portal prior to this time will continue to be assessed under existing eligibility criteria, and eligible applicants will be issued nominations.

Please note that this eligibility criteria will be strictly applied.

Once the existing applications have been assessed, the program will be reopened for subclass 491 nomination applications only, and with tighter criteria. These details will be published on this website.

Those who have visas expiring should seek professional advice on their visa options and ensure that they remain lawful during their stay in Australia.

The NT Government continues to advocate for an increased allocation and for migration settings that suit the needs of the Territory.

7) Victorian State Migration update

Skilled program

The Australian Government has allocated 3,300 skilled visa nomination places to Victoria for the 2023-24 program.

Victoria's allocation consists of:

Skilled Nominated visa (subclass 190) – 2,700 places

Skilled Work Regional (Provisional) visa (subclass 491) – 600 places

More information on the 2023-24 program, including eligibility requirements and program dates, will be published on the Live in Melbourne website when available.

Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP)

The Australian Government did not provide Victoria with any Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP) subclass 188 nomination places for the 2023-24 program. As such, we are not able to accept any applications for subclass 188 visa nomination this program year.

We will remain open to nomination applications for:

Permanent visa nominations (subclass 888), and extensions for the Business Innovation and Significant Investor streams.

More information about the Australian Government's visa planning levels for 2023-24 is available on the Department of Home Affairs' website [external link](#).

8) Migration Queensland program opening for 2023 - 24

Migration Queensland has now opened its state nomination skilled migration program, on 5 September 2023.

As we have received a reduced allocation from the Department of Home Affairs this financial year (1550 skilled nominations and no BIIP allocation), Queensland's state nominated program will be very competitive. Migration Queensland will begin inviting selected applicants from the end of September 2023, and hold invitation rounds at the end of each month for the remainder of financial year 2023 - 24. The number of applicants we invite each month will be capped to ensure an even and consistent rate of invitation throughout the program year. Due to this competitive process, please ensure that you explore alternative migration options.

If you are interested in applying for Queensland nomination, please first review both the Department of Home Affairs and Migration Queensland criteria. If you meet all eligibility criteria and wish to lodge an EOI, you must submit a brand new EOI in SkillSelect. Migration Queensland will only consider EOI's lodged on or after 5 September 2023 - updated EOI's will not be considered.

Our website pages have been updated with detailed criteria for the 2023 - 24 program.

9) Medical Practitioners migration requirements change

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/news-media/archive/article>

10) Closure of the Pandemic Event visa

From February 2024, the visa will be closed to all applicants. This will provide certainty to our visa system now that the circumstances that drove the operation of the visa no longer exist.

From 2 September 2023, the Pandemic Event visa will only be open to applications from existing Pandemic Event visa holders.

All other visa holders will be ineligible for the Pandemic Event visa. This is a transitional measure to promote visa integrity.

Anyone with a valid Pandemic Event visa will remain lawful until their current visa expires.

The staged closure of the visa is another measure to ensure the visa system is serving the needs of the Australian people.

Labor inherited a migration system with backlog after backlog, delays and endless waitlists. The Albanese Government hasn't wasted a day in cleaning up the mess left by the former Liberal Government.

The Albanese Government has recently ended a series of pandemic measures, including unlimited work hours for international students and work exemptions for Working Holiday visa holders.

These measures combined place downward pressure on Net Overseas Migration, which continues to rebound post-pandemic, and will help support the return to pre-pandemic levels of population growth. From 2 September 2023, new applications will receive a six month visa. A Visa Application Charge of \$405 AUD will also be introduced.

These settings will further ensure that the visa is only used by those who have a genuine need to remain and contribute to Australia.

People who currently hold a Pandemic Event visa and seek to apply for a different visa will need to meet the criteria for that visa.

Those without any options for other visa applications are expected to depart Australia when their visa expires.

Quotes attributable to Minister Giles

"The Pandemic Event visa was an important part of Australia's visa system during the pandemic. Many people on temporary visas helped Australia during this period. We're providing an opportunity for people who hold a Pandemic Event visa to explore another visa option, or plan to leave Australia.

"Under the Liberals, our migration system wasn't working for anyone. There was no plan to deal with how the borders reopened.

"We've brought wait times down, and we're working to make sure our migration system is working again for all Australians after a decade of mess and mismanagement under the Liberals."

11) TRA Update

Updated requirements for applicants applying to be assessed through the Offshore Skills Assessment Program (OSAP) for Vehicle Painter [324311]

From 11 September 2023 TRA is removing the requirement for the remaining applicants with a country of passport listed for Vehicle Painter [324311] to have their skills assessed through the OSAP program.

Vehicle Painter [324311] – Brazil, China, Fiji, Hong Kong SAR, India, Iran, Ireland, Macau SAR, Philippines, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Vietnam, Zimbabwe

Applicants from any country will now be able to apply to have their skills assessed through the Migration Skills Assessment (MSA) program. Applicants will need to ensure they have a qualification relevant to the occupation.

12) News Articles

New international student visa reforms will allow applicants to use pathway as means for migration to Australia

<https://www.skynews.com.au/australia-news/new-international-student-visa-reforms-will-allow-applicants-to-use-pathway-as-means-for-migration-to-australia/news-story/bb31d8d3e2e0674d230fed10b4104ff0>

Action to end rorts in international education

<https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/ClareONeil/Pages/action-end-rorts-international-education.aspx>

Think curbing overseas migration will end the housing crisis? It won't – and we can't afford to do it

<https://theconversation.com/think-curbing-overseas-migration-will-end-the-housing-crisis-it-wont-and-we-cant-afford-to-do-it-211120>

Government seeking to address student visa rorting

<https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/government-seeking-to-address-student-visa-rorting,17847>

Government interview related to the cut to state skilled migration programs

<https://ministers.dewr.gov.au/oconnor/transcript-doorstop-perth>

The controversial 408 pandemic visa for international students is being scrapped

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/the-controversial-408-pandemic-visa-for-international-students-is-being-scrapped/eizu9x13f>

Will number of temporary entrants in Australia continue to rise?

<https://johnmenadue.com/will-number-of-temporary-entrants-in-australia-continue-to-rise/>

'Power imbalance': how Australia's visa system leaves migrants beholden to their employers

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/sep/03/australias-visa-system-refugees-immigrants-how-does-it-work>

Australian Work and Holiday Visa will be available to Filipinos but what is it and who is eligible to apply?

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/filipino/en/podcast-episode/australian-work-and-holiday-visa-will-be-available-to-filipinos-but-what-is-it-and-who-is-eligible-to-apply/9dlxf8oke>