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Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Best Lawyers in Australia Award

Mr. David Bitel, Managing Partner of Parish Patience Immigration lawyers and Mr. Michael Jones, Special Counsel at Parish Patience Immigration Lawyers have been included in the list of Australia's Best Immigration Lawyers 2016 by the Eighth Edition of Best Lawyers in Australia published on 10 April 2015. Mr. Bitel and Mr Jones are accredited as specialist immigration lawyers by the Law Society of New South Wales.

In addition, Mr. Michael Jones, has been voted as the Lawyer of the Year 2015 by his peers and the award has been presented by Best Lawyers International, an oldest and most respected peer-review publication in the legal profession. It is widely regarded as a significant honour conferred on a lawyer by his peers.

Mahalingam Sutharshan

Planning levels – Points-tested visas

The Migration Programme determines the maximum number of visas that can be granted in each visa category. Applications for this visa are processed in line with Migration Programme planning levels. These planning levels have precedence over indicative client service standard timeframes.

The Migration Programme planning level for the Skilled Nominated category now has limited number of places left for the 2014-15 programme year. This means processing times will be longer and that once the remaining places are used, the Department cannot grant further visas in this category during this programme year.

Processing of these applications will continue although it may still be some time (usually not before 1 July) before a final decision is made.

Should the need arise applicants can check the Department's website (www.immi.gov.au) for any updates regarding application processing or changes to the Skilled Migration Programme.

Message from General Skilled Migration, DIBP

457 Review – Government response

The Government has now released its response to the Independent Review into the Integrity of the 457 visa programme report: *Robust New Foundations - A Streamlined, Transparent and Responsive System for the 457 Programme*.

The Government has supported the majority of the recommendations that were made by the Review Committee in the Report. The Government notes the importance of the 457 programme in supplementing the Australian workforce while protecting Australian jobs. The overriding aim of the Government in accepting these recommendations was to ensure the integrity of the programme, while facilitating sponsorship of overseas workers and streamlining 457 processes for trusted and low risk business sponsors.

While full details of the implementation of the recommendations are not yet available, the following information on some of the recommendations has been supplied by the Department for MIA Member information:

- **Training Benchmarks A and B** will be replaced with an annual training fund contribution based on the number of 457 sponsorships and with the contributions scaled according to the size of the sponsoring organisation (6.1) These contributions will be made to the Department of Industry and directed to areas of identified training need (6.2/3). The Government will undertake further consultation with stakeholders on how this will be implemented. It is believed that this will increase the integrity of the way these funds are used and remove the payment of commissions. Training expenditure cost may decrease for sponsors under this new arrangement.
- It will be made **unlawful for a sponsor to be paid** by a visa holder to be sponsored and a strong penalty and conviction will be applied (10.7)
- **Labour market testing** will not be abolished, however, the Department will examine ways to reduce the burden to employers and red tape in this process (2.0)
- The **English language** level will be altered to an IELTS average of 5 overall, with no less than 4.5 in any band (7.1)
- Alternate **English** language test providers are likely to be announced next month (7.3)
- The exemption for demonstrating **English** language competency will not be extended to further countries, although the current exemption for 5 years continuous study in English will be changed to 5 years cumulative study (7.5)
- **SBS approvals** will be extended from 3 to 5 years and from 12 to 18 months for start up businesses. These new approval time frames will commence from the time of renewal or new applications for SBS. Current approvals will not be extended to these time frames (10.1)
- The ATO and the Department have signed an MOU which allows information to be shared on **457 visa holder salaries**. The MOU allows the Department to request salary compliance checks across a broader range of the sponsored employees and businesses, without increasing the number of work site visits (18.1)
- **Visa charges** are being reviewed as part of the Joint Review of Border Fees, Charges and Taxes (11.0)

- The **age limitations and the TRT time frames for transition to ENS** are being reviewed as part of the Skilled Migration and 400 Visa Series Review, but the recommendations on these from the 457 review are supported (15.1/2)
- The **Ministerial Advisory Council on Skilled Migration** cannot be replaced, but advice is being sought on whether it can be reconstituted to be more responsive on labour market issues (1.1/2)
- **Information provided to sponsors** will be reviewed and revised for clarity, but further resources will not be allocated (16.0)

The Department advises that most of the changes arising out of these recommendations will occur over the next six months and some such as additional English language providers are already in progress. Those recommendations that require consultation with stakeholders may not come into force until 2016.

The Department will be providing the MIA with further information for MIA members within the coming weeks and which will be disseminated as soon as possible.

MIA

Federal Government announces changes to 457 skilled visa program after review into rorts and abuse

The Federal Government says it will reduce regulation at the same time as it strengthens the integrity of Australia's 457 skilled visa program.

Assistant Immigration Minister Michaelia Cash released the Government's response to a review into allegations of rorts and abuse in the system.

The Government will adopt most of the 51 recommendations.

"For example, in relation to the integrity of the 457 program we will strengthen that by increasing focus on, and resourcing for monitoring of 457 sponsors," Senator Cash said.

"We're also looking at the introduction of a new penalty making it unlawful for sponsors to be paid for a migration outcome, greater transparency around the department's sanction processes, increased information sharing among key government agencies, in particular the Australian Taxation Office."

She said the review of the 457 visa program did not reveal the widespread rorting claimed by the previous government, but the Government will increase scrutiny on businesses suspected of doing the wrong thing.

The Government's response to the review has received a broad endorsement from business and industry groups.

The Government aims to have all changes put into place by the end of this year, but the union movement says it is still pushing for a broader inquiry into all temporary visas.

The Australian Council of Trade Union (ACTU) secretary Dave Oliver is "deeply concerned" about the use of visas like 457s.

"At a time when we've got unemployment in this country sitting (at) 6 per cent, youth unemployment at 14 per cent and we've got a Government that is trying to loosen requirements for bringing temporary workers from overseas," Mr Oliver said.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-03-18/federal-government-announces-changes-to-457-visa-program/6328900>

457 Visa Scam: Man kept in 'conditions akin to slavery' awarded \$186,000 in unpaid wages

Dulu Ram from India came to Australia in 2007 to begin work as a cook in a restaurant in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs. He spent the next 16 months working 12-hour days and sleeping on a mattress in the storeroom. During this time, he earned less than \$7000 and had only one day off.

Despite signing a formal employment contract outlining a \$42,000 base wage, it was later revealed that this was only drafted in order to scam the 457 skilled employment program.

Mr Ram was functionally illiterate and could not speak English. During a site visit by the Department of Immigration officials to the restaurant, Mr Ram's situation went unnoticed – he had said only what he had been told to say.

Judge Rolf Driver handed down the Federal Circuit decision in an unpaid wages case against Mr Ram's employer, Mr Trivedi, on Friday April 3.

He found 'Mr Ram was kept by his employer in conditions akin to slavery' and ordered payment of \$186,400. This figure is made from calculations of hours worked, overtime, leave entitlements and superannuation payments owed, including interest on that amount.

MIA

Fair Work Australia – Inquiry into 417 Working Holiday visa wages and conditions

The Fair Work Ombudsman is sending a specialist Overseas Worker Team to the Northern Rivers, Tweed Coast, Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay regions of NSW and Queensland. The Team will engage with key stakeholders in Byron Bay, Lismore, Gympie and Maroochydore as part of its enquiry into allegations of working holiday visa holder exploitation by unscrupulous employers.

Deliberate exploitation of backpackers seeking to extend their visas by undertaking 88 days specified work in a designated regional area has been identified in other regions. This exploitation took the forms of underpayment, non-payment, employees paying employers and third parties, to receive documentary evidence for the required 88 days work. Exploitation of workers in exchange for accommodation was also found.

The Fair Work Ombudsman reports 10% of its complaints now come from visa holders. MIA members with evidence of exploitation of overseas workers are also encouraged to provide evidence to the FWO on the Fair Work Info line 13 13 94.

MIA Notice – 10 April 2015

Immigration detains 37 in NSW and VIC

Compliance operations in regional New South Wales and Victoria found a total of 37 illegal workers and unlawful non-citizens near Robinvale and Euston.

According to Assistant Minister for Immigration Michaelia Cash, the illegal workers had recently arrived on tourist visas.

Employers responsible for hiring the workers are currently being investigated for possible breaches of illegal workers sanctions.

All of those detained have been moved into immigration detention facilities in Melbourne.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/michaeliacash/2015/Pages/immigration-detains-37-nsw-vic.aspx>

Australia and Vietnam sign Work and Holiday visa MOU

Australia and Vietnam have signed an MOU that will allow reciprocal Work and Holiday visa arrangements for 200 young people from both countries to experience each other's culture.

The Work and Holiday visa requires applicants to have the support of their government, hold or be studying towards tertiary qualifications and speak functional English.

It will be some months before the administrative requirements for the visa are finalised and it becomes available for applications.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/michaeliacash/2015/Pages/australia-vietnam-sign-visa-mou.aspx>

Assistant Minister – Work visa scams. Don't pay the price

The Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash, has launched a national campaign to investigate allegations of unauthorised payment to visa sponsors in return for visas.

Minister Cash said although the overwhelming majority of people do the right thing, it is a small minority who don't abide by their obligations or attempt to defraud our migration programmes.

"Visa fraud is not acceptable and anyone who engages in this type of behaviour will face serious penalties," Minister Cash said.

"The campaign will involve an initial assessment of up to 100 visa sponsors who are subject to allegations that they have been in some way connected to receiving payment for arranging sponsorship for individuals under the 457 visa programme."

A public education component of the campaign *Work visa scams. Don't pay the price* will further educate visa sponsors about their obligations and remind visa holders of their rights and responsibilities.

"All allegations of inappropriate behaviour by a visa holders or sponsors are taken seriously - if a sponsor is found to have failed their sponsorship obligations, the department takes appropriate action," Minister Cash said.

"This may take the form of imposing administrative sanctions, issuing infringement notices, executing an enforceable undertaking or applying to the federal court for a civil penalty order."

A business that sponsors a visa holder under false pretences may also be committing other offences, such as providing false or misleading information or engaging in misleading or deceptive conduct.

Visa holders who enter into contrived employment relationships for migration purposes may also be guilty of fraud related offences and/or not meet immigration requirements, including the genuineness criterion.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/michaeliacash/2014/Pages/mc218247.aspx>

Report of the Inquiry into the Business Innovation and Investment Programme

Joint Standing Committee on Migration

For over two hundred years, Australia has been a destination for migrants who have often travelled vast distances and overcome significant challenges in the hope of establishing a better life for themselves and their families. Migrants provide a substantial contribution across all facets of Australian life: economic, social and cultural.

The goal of Australia's migration programme is to meet Australia's economic and social needs through building the economy, shaping society, supporting the labour market and reuniting family.

The Business Innovation and Investment Programme is designed to meet those needs by attracting high quality investors and entrepreneurs to invest in Australia. It is important to encourage the creation of genuine and sustainable business opportunities that will generate economic growth, benefiting both the Australian economy and workforce.

With an increasingly important economic objective, the Committee held the view that it would be beneficial to inquire into the programme and assess its effectiveness.

The Joint Standing Committee on Migration shall inquire into the Business Innovation and Investment Programme (BIIP), excluding the Significant Investor Visa stream.

The inquiry shall:

- Assess whether the BIIP is meeting its intended objectives and if any adjustment are necessary.
- Consider the conditions involved in the decline in rates of application for the CIIP, in light of rates of application for the previous Business Skills Program.
- Evaluate the current eligibility criteria, with particular regard to the operation of the BIIP points test, and its effectiveness in selecting suitable migrants.
- Weigh the size of the current BIIP programme against the emphasis placed on other elements of the skilled stream of the migration programme in generating economic growth.

Eligibility criteria – Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Department of Immigration and Border Protection examine the Business Innovation and Investment Programme (BIIP) as part of the 2015-16 migration programme survey and in its reviews of the skilled migration and temporary activity visa programmes. The reviews should focus on the:

- Suitability and attainability of the objectives set for the BIIP;
- Role that States and Territories have in administering the BIIP and, specifically, the accountability of these jurisdictions and whether the Programme should instead be solely administered by the Commonwealth;
- Means of collecting data at the State and Territory level, its dissemination to the Department and evaluation;
- Promotion and marketing of the Programme;
- Application processing and service standards;
- Removal of the ability for the secondary applicant to become the primary applicant;
- English language requirements;

- Innovation points test; and
- Attracting investment in regional Australia, graduates, early-stage entrepreneurs, and venture capitalists.

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia – March 2015 Canberra

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Migration/BIP/Report

Explanatory Statement – English Language Tests, Scores and Passports 2015

The following changes to English Language Tests, Scores and Passports have been announced by the Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection.

The purpose of this Instrument is to reflect the changes to the Regulations which introduce an instrument making power to specify the current minimum English language test scores that are required for primary visa applicants for the Temporary Graduate (subclass 485) visa and the Skilled – Recognised Graduate (Subclass 476) visa.

The Instrument operates to specify:

- The English language requirements and the tests that are accepted by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, together with the minimum scores required overall and for each of the test components, and specifying which tests must be completed in a single sitting; and
- That the English language test must have been undertaken within three years before the day on which the application was made; and
- That the Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) test must have been undertaken on or after 1 January 2015; and
- The valid passports of citizens of specified countries that can be used as proof of English language proficiency.

The applicant must demonstrate that they have achieved the required level of English language proficiency by providing evidence, on lodgement of their visa application that they have achieved a minimum score.

1. The Regulations specify the following language tests:
 - a. An International English Language Test System (IELTS) test;
 - b. A Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based test (TOEFL iBT);
 - c. A Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic);
 - d. A Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) test; or

- e. An Occupational English Test; and
2. The requirement that the following tests must be completed in a single test sitting:
 - a. An International English Language Test System (IELTS) test;
 - b. A Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based test (TOEFL iBT);
 - c. A Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) or
 - d. A Cambridge English Advanced (CAE) test.
 3. The following minimum required overall test score and the minimum required scores for each of the test components:

English test	Minimum overall Score	Total overall score	Minimum scores for English test components			
			Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
IELTS	6	-	5	5	5	5
OET	B	-	B	B	B	B
TOEFL iBT	-	64	4	4	14	14
Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) (taken on or after 1 January 2015)	169	-	154	154	154	154

4. The following English language tests must have been undertaken within the three years before the day on which the application was made:
 - a. An International English Language Test System (IELTS) test;
 - b. A Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based test (TOEFL iBT);
 - c. A Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic);
 - d. A Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) test; or
 - e. An Occupational English Test; and

5. That the Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) test must have been undertaken on or after 1 January 2015; and
6. A valid passport issued by one of the following countries:
 - a. The United Kingdom
 - b. The United States of America;
 - c. Canada
 - d. New Zealand; or
 - e. The Republic of Ireland

Federal Register of Legislative Instruments F2015L00564

Release of Moss Review

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection has released the report of the Review into recent allegations relating to conditions and circumstances at the Regional Processing Centre in Nauru.

The independent review was carried out by the former Integrity Commissioner and former Head of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, Mr Philip Moss.

The report found more needs to be done so that any allegation of inappropriate or criminal behaviour within the Regional Processing Centre is investigated, and any alleged perpetrators dealt with under Nauruan law.

The Department has accepted all of the Review's 19 recommendations and has begun work to implement them, in cooperation with the Government of Nauru, service providers and the Australian Federal Police.

A full list of recommendations and the Department's response to them is attached to the release.

In particular, the Department and its partner agencies are committed to supporting the Government of Nauru to maintain a safe environment for transferees and settled refugees, especially in the area of child protection.

Mr Moss acknowledged the difficult environment in which officers of the Department, service provider staff and Nauruan authorities are working, in which decisive action must sometimes be taken in support of the Government of Nauru to ensure the good order of the centre.

A full version of the report, with limited redactions to protect the privacy of individuals who spoke to Mr Moss or who were the subject of allegations, has been published on the Department's website.

<http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/releases/release-of-moss-review>

Minister for Immigration Peter Dutton responds to Moss Report

In a statement issued by Mr Dutton he has revealed that The Department has accepted and responded to all 19 recommendations made by Mr Moss in the Moss Review. The Review highlighted allegations of physical and sexual abuse by Nauruan guards inside Australia's offshore detention centres.

Mr Dutton stated that serious allegations of wrongdoing must be adequately assessed and that the Department is already working with the Government of Nauru and the Regional Processing Centre to implement an appropriate response.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/peterdutton/2015/Pages/moss-report.aspx>

Introduction of biometrics collection for applicants in Nepal

Biometrics will be collected from visa applicants, irrespective of their nationality, who are physically in Nepal at the time of making a visa application to enter Australia, unless they are excluded or exempted from doing so under Australian Government policy.

Visa applicants in Nepal who lodge their applications at the Australian Visa Application Centre (AVAC) in Kathmandu, will be asked to provide their biometrics at the same time.

Visa applicants who send their applications by post to the Australian High Commission in New Delhi or to the AVAC in Kathmandu, will be sent a letter requiring them to attend the AVAC, in person, to provide their biometrics.

Biometric data will be collected by the Australian Government's service provider VFS Global through a quick, discreet and a non-intrusive process that captures a facial image and a 10-digit fingerprint scan on a dry scanner machine.

Submitting a complete visa application with all required supporting documentation at the AVAC and providing biometrics at the same time, is the quickest and most efficient way to lodge a visa application in Nepal.

Applicants are encouraged to make an appointment by contacting the AVAC in Nepal to lodge their visa application and have their biometrics collected.

More information about these new arrangements is available on the [Nepal](#) page.

<https://www.immi.gov.au/News/Pages/biometrics-collection-nepal.aspx>

Biometric collection commencing in Mexico

Collection of biometrics will commence in three locations in Mexico from 14 April 2015.

Biometrics will be collected from visa applicants, who are physically in Mexico at the time of making a visa application to enter Australia, irrespective of their nationality, unless they are excluded or exempted from doing so under Australian Government policy.

The Australia Government will open three Australian Biometric Collection Centres (ABCCs) in Mexico City in 14 April 2015, Monterrey on 17 April 2015 and Guadalajara on 20 April 2015.

Visa applicants residing in Mexico who lodge their application at the Australian High Commission in Ottawa will be sent a letter advising them that they need to attend one of three ABCCs to provide their biometrics. Applicants will need to contact on the Australian Biometrics Collection Centres in Mexico to make an appointment and have their biometrics collected.

MIA Notice – 7 April 2015

Sri Lankan girl, Eliza Fonseka, refused visa because she has Down syndrome, says family

A Sri Lankan family who wants to work in a Christian crisis centre in remote Australia say their daughter was refused a temporary visa because she has Down syndrome.

The Immigration Department issued a temporary work visa to eight-year-old Eliza Fonseka's parents, but not to the child, because she was considered to be a "significant cost to the Australian community in the areas of health care".

Eliza's father Angelo Fonseka said his daughter was in good health and not on medication, and the family had Australian private health insurance to cover any medical costs.

"We have given in writing that we will take responsibility for Eliza, she doesn't need any support from the government," Mr Fonseka said.

"In Sri Lanka we are not relying on any government benefits. As parents we are supplying everything. If we migrated to Australia we will do the same thing."

The family plans to move to Shark Bay, 800 kilometres north of Perth, to work at a Christian crisis centre that provides food, accommodation and support to people in need.

"We want to help them. My wife is a worship leader, she wants to be [on] the worship team in Shark Bay some day," Mr Fonseka said.

In a statement, the Department of Immigration said it could not discuss the specific details of the case, but said the visa assessment process was extensive.

"If an applicant has a significant medical condition, their medical reports are referred to a Medical Officer of the Commonwealth (MOC)," the statement said.

"A MOC is required by law to take into account the health care costs and community services likely to be required by a person with a condition of the same level and severity as the applicant.

"A person with a medical condition may fail to meet the health requirement if a MOC assesses their condition as likely to result in significant health care and community service costs to the Australian community or prejudice the access of Australians to such services during their stay in Australia."

The Immigration Department said health waiver provisions exist for certain subclasses of visas and the family could consider investigating that option.

The West Australian Premier Colin Barnett responded to the Fonseka's plea.

He wrote to them and said he had personally contacted Immigration Minister Peter Dutton and hoped they would be "successful in obtaining a favourable outcome".

National Reporting Team's Caitlyn Gribbin – Updated Sun 22 Mar 2015, 1:26pm

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-03-21/visa-claim-refused-because-daughter-has-down-syndrome/6337058>

Townsville mother and son, 10, face deportation due to boy's autism diagnosis

A Queensland woman and her son are at risk of being deported back to the Philippines because of the 10-year-old boy's autism diagnosis.

Townsville nurse Maria Sevilla and her son Tyrone, who have been in Australia for eight years, had a skilled working visa rejected by the Immigration Department because of her son's autism.

Tyrone was diagnosed in 2008.

The letter said Tyrone may be a burden on the taxpayer if he becomes a citizen later in life.

The Townsville Hospital nurse has appealed to the Migration Review Tribunal but it too has rejected the application.

Because the application was rejected they could be deported in 28 days.

"I hope I'm not considered as a burden. I'm trying my best to work for Tyrone's future," Ms Sevilla said.

"He loves to play under the sun. He was a bit fair when we came here to Australia and now he's like, brown skinned."

Queensland Disabilities Minister Coralee O'Rourke called it a "cold, heartless decision" by the Federal Government.

"I call on them to reverse the decision," she said.

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said the family could go back to the tribunal and attempt again to sway its decision.

But Ms Sevilla said she hoped Mr Dutton would exercise his ministerial power and allow them to stay.

Ms Sevilla said she would not be able to give Tyrone the same quality of life in the Philippines.

"It's like, I'm pleading for our life, for Tyrone's future," she said.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-02/townsville-woman-faces-deportation/6369438>

Tyrone Sevilla: Immigration Minister Peter Dutton indicates boy with autism will be allowed to stay in Australia

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton looks set to allow a 10-year-old boy with autism to remain in Australia.

Tyrone Sevilla's condition meant his mother Maria's skilled worker visa was rejected.

A 4,000-page petition of more than 122,000 signatures was handed to Mr Dutton's Brisbane office on Monday.

The Minister has the power to overturn their deportation to the Philippines.

"I need to have a look at the particular facts in relation to this case," Mr Dutton told RN Drive.

"But on the details, as they are made known to me at the moment, I think this is a case where we would be able to help the family.

"I hope that we can provide a good outcome for this family that I think they deserve."

Ms Sevilla came to Australia eight years ago to study nursing and now works at Townsville Hospital.

In her case, the Migration Review Tribunal cited the "significant cost to the Australian community" of health care for Tyrone.

She has asked Mr Dutton to consider her case, and the department is preparing a report for his consideration.

Mr Dutton said he reviews matters on a case-by-case basis.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-27/dutton-indicates-boy-with-autism-tyrone-sevilla-allowed-to-stay/6425994>

Planned cessation of Australian visa labels in 2015

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection (the Department) has commenced a process to cease issuing Australian visa labels in 2015. The information below is provided to stakeholders in advance of this change.

The Australian Government does not require holders of Australian visas to have a visa label in their passport. Visa holders can travel to and reside in Australia without a visa label – this is known as ‘label-free’. The Department’s digital systems have made visa labels unnecessary. Label-free is well understood and accepted with a majority of holders of Australian visas now travelling to Australia without a label.

The Department’s move to digital services is part of the ongoing shift by the Australian Government to adopt digital service delivery channels which are more convenient to use and easier to access 24/7. The Department has been developing comprehensive, secure online information services, which no longer involve the use of paper forms and visa labels. As a result, the use of Australian visa labels has been declining since the introduction of the original label-free travel arrangements in 1996. In the last few years the Department has seen a significant increase in visa holder and third party acceptance of digital channels to verify visa details.

Digital visa records are stored in a central database, where visa holders, registered Australian organisations and airline staff can check visa details online. The online service enables visa holders to share their digital visa record with any stakeholder as required. Secure digital checking is advantageous as it provides real-time information.

The Department’s digital options replace the need for visa labels. As such, the Department is preparing to phase out visa labels entirely. The cessation of visa labels will require supporting legislation and regulation changes. Currently, under the Migration (Visa Evidence) Charge Act 2012, valid visa holders are able to request and purchase an Australian visa label if they choose to do so.

<http://www.mia.org.au/documents/item/609>

Child visa lodgement changes

From 18 April 2015, child visa applications in Australia must be lodged at the Perth office in Western Australia – marked Attention to Child and Other Family Processing Centre.

This change will apply to all applications for Child visas (subclass 802) and Orphan Relative visas (subclass 837) lodged from 18 April 2015. Applications for Dependent Child visas (subclass 445) in Australia must also be lodged at the Perth office.

Further information on lodging child visa applications is available from the Department’s website.

MIA Notice – 7 April 2015

A.P.B. Education

Specialist IELTS Test Training and Coaching

Passing an IELTS test is now an essential requirement for all applicant for General Skilled Migration, student visas, and for many employer sponsored applicants. Adrian Bitel provides individual lessons to assist applicants achieve proficiency to the required levels in:

- Reading
- Speaking
- Writing
- Listening

He gives comprehensive ONE to ONE Personalised Coaching in any or all of the above areas at very competitive rates.

Contact: Adrian Bitel on (02) 9286 8700 or Mobile: 0412 656 026

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