

AMBER MIGRATION NEWSLETTER
June 2015

Welcome to **Amber Migration**'s June 2015 Newsletter – and **Happy Financial Year-End!**

Since our last Newsletter, the Department of Immigration & Border Protection has implemented a few of the 457 reform recommendations, which are outlined in this Newsletter. Visa application fees will increase on 1 July 2015, with percentage increase ranging from CPI 2.3% to 50%.

(1) 457 Reform Recommendations – with reference to our last Immigration Update, DIBP has implemented the following 457 reform recommendations:

- The timeframe for the sponsor to **notify DIBP of notifiable events** has been extended from 10 working days to 28 days after the event has occurred.
- The **English language** level for 457 primary applicants has been altered to an IELTS average of 5 overall, with no less than 4.5 in any band. Alternate **English** language test providers have been announced and are summarised in the following table:

| English test | Minimum band score | Minimum scores for English test components | | | |
|--------------|------------------------|--|---------|----------|---------|
| | | Listening | Reading | Speaking | Writing |
| IELTS test | Overall band score 5.0 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| OET | - | B | B | B | B |
| TOEFL iBT | Total band score 36 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 12 |
| PTE | Overall band score 36 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| CAE | Overall band score 154 | 147 | 147 | 147 | 147 |

- An **exemption to the English language testing requirement** applies if the applicant has completed at least 5 years of study at the secondary level or higher, where the English language was the teaching medium. Previously, the study had to be consecutive with no breaks. Breaks are now allowed.

- **Business Sponsorship approvals** have been extended from 3 to 5 years for businesses that have traded in Australia for 12 months and over, and from 12 to 18 months for those that have traded for less than 12 months. Maximum visa validity for the former remains to be 4 years. Maximum visa validity for the latter has changed to 18 months.
- **Business Sponsorship approvals for overseas businesses** that intend to establish a business operation in Australia have been reduced from 4 years to 18 months. Business Sponsorship approvals for overseas businesses that are entering Australia to fulfil contractual obligations have been extended from 3 to 5 years.

(2) Visa Application Charges (VACs) -- VACs will increase from 1 July 2015. While many visa application charges will increase in line with inflation, significant increases have been made for Significant Investor visas and for offshore Partner visas:

- 2.3% for 457, General Skilled Migration, Skilled Graduate, Visitor and Student visas
- 5% for Temporary Short Term Business, Entertainment, Working Holiday, Resident Return, Retirement and Contributory Parent visas
- 10% for Remaining Relative, Carer and Aged Dependent Relative and Non- Contributory Parent visas
- 50% for Significant Investor and Offshore Partner visas.

The table below outlines VACs that may be most relevant to you:

| Visa | Old VACs | | | New VACs | | |
|--------------------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| | PA | Dep>18 | Dep<18 | PA | Dep>18 | Dep<18 |
| 457 | \$1,035 | \$1,035 | \$260 | \$1,060 | \$1,060 | \$265 |
| 186 ENS | \$3,520 | \$1,760 | \$880 | \$3,600 | \$1,800 | \$900 |
| 187 RSMS | \$3,520 | \$1,760 | \$880 | \$3,600 | \$1,800 | \$900 |
| 600 Onshore | \$335 | - | - | \$340 | - | - |
| 600 Offshore | \$130 | - | - | \$135 | - | - |
| Partner - Onshore | \$6,865 | \$3,435 | \$1,720 | \$6,865 | \$3,435 | \$1,720 |
| Partner - Offshore | \$4,630 | \$2,320 | \$1,155 | \$6,865 | \$3,435 | \$1,720 |
| 188 SIV | \$4,675 | \$2,340 | \$1,170 | \$7,010 | \$3,505 | \$1,755 |

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