



## VISA ALERT

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### CHANGES TO 457 VISA PROGRAM FROM 01.07.2009

**:: TIP**

Build DIAC's MSL increase in your next salary review

**:: TIP**

If retrenching 457 visa holders include in your outplacement services a consultation with us to explore visa options to remain in, or return, to Australia

**:: TIP**

To bring to an end 457 visa sponsorship obligations consider nominating your 457 visa holders for permanent residence under the prioritised and fast track Employer Nomination scheme

The Minister for Immigration has announced the following changes from 1 July 2009:

- 4.1% increase in the minimum salary level (MSL) for all **new and existing** 457 visa holders - this will bring the MSL for ITC professionals to \$61,918.68 p.a. and for others \$45,221.04 p.a. based on a 38 hour week
- English - IELTS 5 for all trades and chefs
- formal skills assessment - all trades and chefs from high risk countries
- employers seeking access to the 457 visa program must have a strong record of, or demonstrated commitment to, employing local labour and non-discriminatory employment practices
- development of training benchmarks to clarify how employers can demonstrate their commitment to training local labour - details are yet to be announced
- extension of the Labour Agreement pathway to all ASCO 5 - 7 occupations.

And, **from mid-September 2009** the minimum salary for all new and existing 457 visa holders will be set by reference to market rates - details are yet to be announced.

Processing times for sponsorships and 457 visa applications slowed in March 2009 but are expected to improve in April.

When considering applications for new nominations and 457 visa applications sponsored by approved sponsors DIAC is requesting advice on 3 questions:

- what is the benefit to Australia - as distinct from the benefit to the business - of employing the 457 visa applicant
- remuneration packages of other workers employed in the same position in the business
- details of retrenchments and reduced working hours, if relevant, including types of positions affected and numbers involved.

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