

NEWSLETTER 145



INDEPENDENT REVIEW INTO THE AFGHAN LOCALLY ENGAGED EMPLOYEE PROGRAM

The Albanian Government is devoted to supporting those who contributed to Australia's mission in Afghanistan and will put all of the recommendations of the Independent Review into the Afghan Locally Engaged Employee (LEE) Program's Final Report into action.

The Government has broadened the eligibility for certification to include security guards and former Afghan government and military officials who worked with the Australian mission in Afghanistan, in line with the Report's recommendations and the program's original aim. Wherever possible, those applicants from these cohorts who were previously deemed to be ineligible will be notified.

According to the Report's recommendations and the Government's commitment to expeditiously concluding certifications for individuals and their families, the Afghan LEE Programme will stop accepting new certification requests on November 30, 2023, and will terminate on May 31, 2024.

The final Report, along with the Australian Government's full response to the Independent Review is available online: [Afghan Locally Engaged Employee Program](#).

NSW SC 491 - CLOSING SOON

NSW Subclass 491 visa applications are still open for submission through RDA Far West, RDA Far South Coast and RDA Sydney.

The program will close on the 15 June 23.

FNQ DAMA - UPDATE

Read about the [Next five-year FNQ DAMA head agreement](#)

CHANGES TO AUSTRALIA'S WORKING HOLIDAY MAKER PROGRAM AND THE UK'S YOUTH MOBILITY SCHEME

For UK passport holders who apply for Australia's Working Holiday visa, the new arrangements will see an increase in the eligible age range and removal of specified work requirements.

- From 1 July 2023, UK passport holders will be able to apply for a Working Holiday visa between the ages of 18 and 35 years inclusive. This is a five year increase from the current maximum age of 30 years inclusive.
- From 1 July 2024, UK passport holders will be eligible to be granted Working Holiday visas up to a total of three years without having to meet any specified work requirements.

Similarly, for Australian passport holders who apply for the UK's YMS, the new arrangements will also see an increase in the eligible age range and the ability to stay in the UK for up to three years.

- From 31 January 2024 Australian passport holders will:
 - be able to apply for a YMS visa between the ages of 18 and 35 years inclusive. This is a five year increase from the current maximum age of 30 years inclusive; and
 - extend their YMS visa for a third year if they choose.

THE SIX THINGS WE CURRENTLY KNOW ABOUT AUSTRALIA'S BAN ON INDIAN STUDENTS

1. Some universities have placed restrictions on Indian applicants

2. Why the Indian student ban?

An application is deemed fraudulent or bogus

3. Which states are affected by the Indian student ban?

Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat.

4. Will the Indian student ban affect genuine applicants?

A university spokesperson from Torrens said only very strong, high-quality application with an endorsement by its agent in India **will be favoured**.

Another university spokesperson said these restrictions will include "assessing gaps" in an applicant's academic history.

5. Are there Indian student bans in other countries?

While there have not been outright bans from other nations, the history of Indian students studying abroad has been **rife with frustrations, restrictions and scandals**.

6. What's the latest from the Australian government?

On Thursday, the High Commission of Australia said the Australian government **does not discriminate against students of any region** willing to pursue courses in academic institutions in the country.

"Australian universities have the authority to make their own decisions on recruitment or admission, which may affect their intake from certain regions," said a spokesperson from the Australian High Commission.

TSMIT INCREASE REMINDER

Employers trying to make the 30 June 2023 deadline for applications at the current \$53,900 TSMIT are reminded that there isn't much time left to start the requisite four weeks of labour market testing advertising.

Up until and including June 30, 2023, nominations may be submitted at the existing TSMIT minimum of \$53,900.

On July 1st 2023, TSMIT will raise to \$70,000.

These nominations do not need to be approved by July 1, 2023; they just need to be submitted by that date.

Visas related to nominations that were approved at the lower level TSMIT may be submitted after July 1, 2023, without an increase in pay to the new post-July 1, 2023 TSMIT of \$70,000.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA UPDATE

At 4pm, ACST, Thursday 8 June 2023, the following programs will close to new applications:

- General Skilled Migration (GSM) Registration of Interest (ROI)
- General Skilled Migration (GSM) Direct applications (491 and 190)
- Business Innovation and Investment Program (BIIP) Entrepreneur Stream (Subclass 188E)

Any applications that have been commenced but not lodged before 8 June 2023 will be deleted from the system.

Existing applications lodged before this date will continue to be assessed by Skilled & Business Migration. All BIIP applications including 188A Intention to Apply (ITA) applications will be processed by 30 June 2023.

NEW AAT PRESIDENT NAMED

Now, Senator Katy Gallagher – currently serving as acting Attorney-General – has announced that the Albanese government is recommending Victorian Judge of Appeal Justice Emilius Kyrou AO as a judge of the Federal Court of Australia and as president of the AAT.

Kyrou J was selected, the acting A-G noted, through a “transparent and merit-based process” and has the experience and capacity to lead a trusted federal administrative review body in a fair, efficient, accessible and independent manner.

The appointment is subject to approval from Governor-General David Hurley. Once approved, His Honour will commence as a Federal Court judge on 8 June and then as AAT president the following day.

\$132.7M SETTLEMENT REACHED IN PFAS CLASS ACTION

An agreement has been signed to settle a multi-site class action for \$132.7 million, after toxic PFAS chemicals negatively impacted around 30,000 residents spanning seven communities.

The class action group members, represented by national plaintiff firm Shine Lawyers, have today (15 May) come to a settlement agreement with the Commonwealth in the multi-site PFAS contamination class action against the Department of Defence.

The trial was set to begin this morning in the Federal Court and was expected to run for six weeks, after residents allege that the Australian Government let PFAS chemicals escape defence bases in a number of communities, contaminating soil and groundwater.

This follows the launch of a compensation claim by Shine in February 2021, after approximately 500 Indigenous locals were impacted by contamination of the chemicals in Wreck Bay on NSW's south coast. Shine noted it would continue to pursue compensation in this matter.

CONTRIBUTORY PARENT, PARENT AND OTHER FAMILY VISA ALLOCATION 2022-23

Contributory Parent visas

A maximum of 6,800 visas may be granted for the 2022-2023 financial year, up from 3,600 in the previous year.

Parent Visas

A maximum of 1,700 Parent visas may be granted in the 2022- 2023 financial year, up from 900 in the previous year.

Other Family visas

A maximum of 500 Other Family visas may be granted in the 2022-2023 financial year, the same number as in the previous year.



AUSTRALIA-INDIA MIGRATION AND MOBILITY PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT

Part of the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) are the Australia-Indian Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangements.

The Agreement offers:

- The Work and Holiday Maker Visa programme is available to citizens of India.
- Young Indians will have access to 1000 spots a year.
- Australia's Post-Study Work Visa Programme offers incentives for students to enrol.
- After earning a diploma or trade qualification (stays up to 18 months), a bachelor's degree (stays up to 2 years), a master's degree (stays up to 3 years), or a doctoral degree (stays up to 4 years), a post-study work visa is issued.
- High-performing STEM bachelor's degree holders may stay an additional year (from two to three years).

The Arrangement does not include a waiver of LMT requirements for inbound Indian nationals.