

## **Skilled Migration – 457 visa program – changes to eligible occupations**

**Employers in regional areas are no longer able to directly sponsor overseas workers in some tourism, clerical and agricultural occupations, under changes to the 457 visa program.**

With effect from 15 May 2009 the Government has removed some occupations from the standard business sponsorship arrangements (SBS) available to employers under the 457 visa program.

This means that employers will only be able to directly sponsor overseas workers for occupations in the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) major groups 1 to 4. Employers in regional areas will no longer be able to directly employ overseas workers in ASCO groups 5-7 under regional concessions.

However, employers seeking overseas workers in ASCO 5-7 occupations may be able to do so by negotiating a labour agreement with the Commonwealth. Labour agreements aim to provide flexibility for industries experiencing skills shortages, while not undermining employment opportunities for Australians.

Current 457 visa holders in ASCO 5-7 occupations under SBS arrangements will be unaffected by the change for the duration of their visa.

Further details are available at:

[http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/media\\_releases/713](http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/media_releases/713)

For more information about negotiating a labour agreement contact [labour.agreement.section@immi.gov.au](mailto:labour.agreement.section@immi.gov.au)

You can also contact Ai Group's skilled migration advisers: Radek Divis (Sydney) at [radek.divis@aigroup.asn.au](mailto:radek.divis@aigroup.asn.au) (tel: 02-9466 5442 or 0403 395 154), or Stephen Reynolds (Melbourne) at [stephen.reynolds@aigroup.asn.au](mailto:stephen.reynolds@aigroup.asn.au) (tel: 03-9867 0221 or 0434 078 552).