

## **Budget 2009-10 – Skilled Migration Program – further cuts**

**Further cuts to the skilled migration intake have been announced by the Government in the 2009-10 Budget, in response to the continued economic slowdown. Permanent skilled migration will be reduced to 108,100 places for 2009-10. This is a reduction of 6,900 places following an earlier cut of 18,500 places announced in March.**

The cutback is limited to places for the independent skilled (non-sponsored) portion of the skilled migration program and will not affect employer-sponsored and government-sponsored visas, which continue to be fast-tracked and will remain uncapped.

The Government will also increase the English language level required for non-sponsored applicants for trades-related occupations and introduce a job readiness test to ensure migrants have both the language and the skills needed to participate in the labour market.

Senator Chris Evans, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, said that “The migration intake in the coming year reflects the economic climate while ensuring employers can gain access to skilled professionals in industries still experiencing skills shortages”.

More details are available at:

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2009/ce02-budget-09.htm>

For further information about these changes, you can 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).