

Immigration

Budget Measures

Highlights - 2009 Federal Budget on Migration

- The Migration Program will total 168,700 places for 2009-10.
- The Federal Government's 2009 Budget has made a further cut to the permanent skilled migration intake to 108,000 places for the 2009-10 program (a 20% reduction to the previous budget)
- The reduction will be achieved largely through cutbacks in the General Skilled Category
- A job-readiness test will be introduced for some onshore skilled applicants
- The Government will be increasing the English language requirement for trades occupations to IELTS 6 in each band from 1 July 2009 for offshore applicants and 1 January 2010 for onshore applicants
- There will be fewer visas granted to trade level occupations
- There will be an increase in family migration places to 60,300, including an additional 2500 for partners, 1000 for contributory parents and 300 for child visas
- Increased size of the humanitarian program to 13,750 places (7750 Special Humanitarian and 6000 refugee)
- Increased funding to improve detention centres
- DIAC staff reductions
- Increased costs for DIAC to establish the new Office of the MARA.

Full details of the Government's Budget statements can be found at:
<http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/budget/budget09/budget09pbs.htm>

New directions in detention

Following last July's landmark speech announcing the Government's policy, New Directions in Detention, and ongoing administrative changes to reflect the Government's new detention values, the new policy addresses the need for the prompt resolution of people's immigration status while they remain in the community. Collectively, these measures advance the Government's

In this issue:

Immigration

[Budget Measures 2009 Highlights](#)

[New directions in detention](#)

[Increase in family programs](#)

[Cuts to migration program](#)

[New body to regulate migration agents](#)

[Fairer refugee process](#)

[Refugee law to embrace more](#)

[Scrap detention debt regime](#)

[DIAC apology to former detainees](#)

commitment to resolving people's immigration status expeditiously.

See:

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2009/ce01-budget-09.htm>

Increase in family programs for 2009-2010

The Government will provide more opportunities for family reunions with an increase of 3800 places in the family component of the Migration Program, to 60 300. Overall, the Migration Program will total 168 700 for 2009-10, which comprises the 60 300 family places, 108 100 skilled places and a further 300 places for special eligibility.

Government cuts migration program

The Government will cut the 2008-09 permanent skilled migration program by 14 per cent to protect local jobs while ensuring employers can access skilled professionals in industries still experiencing skills shortages.

As has long been the case, the Government adjusts immigration levels according to the economic circumstances of the day and Cabinet agreed to cut the permanent skilled migration program in light of the worsening global economic situation.

The changes to the program are:

- A 14 per cent cut in the 2008-09 permanent skilled migration program intake from 133 500 to 115 000.
- Removing building and manufacturing trades from the Critical Skills List, such as bricklayers, plumbers, welders, carpenters and metal fitters. The list will now comprise mainly health and medical, engineering and IT professions.
- Extending for another 12 months the suspension of processing of non-priority cases.

See: <http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2009/ce09030.htm>

New body to regulate migration agents

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans announced the establishment of a new body to regulate migration agents after a review found dissatisfaction among consumers and potential conflicts of interest under the current arrangements.

'The current arrangement has the industry association managing the regulatory function of its own members – which includes the handling of complaints – and this has caused serious concerns among consumers and stakeholders,' Senator Evans said. 'As migration decisions are life-changing and involve considerable

[Changes for same-sex de facto partners](#)

[Migration agency fraud racket](#)

[Study lures overseas students](#)

[Charge over people smuggling](#)

[Workshop with Philippines](#)

[Singapore exchange program](#)

[Passport scam](#)

[Subclass 457 changes](#)

[457 English language changes](#)

[State sponsored migration program](#)

[South Australia sponsorship changes](#)

Human Rights

[Fair Work Bill](#)

financial and emotional investments on behalf of prospective migrants, it is important they have confidence in the professionalism and integrity of their migration agent. The changes we are making will provide greater confidence to the consumers of migration advice services and remove concerns about potential conflicts of interest.'

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2009/ce09014.htm>

Fairer refugee determination process

Changes announced in the 2009-10 Federal Budget will help to produce a fairer and more streamlined system of determining refugee status, the Refugee Council of Australia says.

Measures announced by Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans, include:

- the development of a national Community Status Resolution Service and Assisted Voluntary Return Service;
- abolishing the arbitrary "45-day rule" approach to the granting of work rights and health care access to asylum seekers; and
- introducing a Complementary Protection system for people to whom Australia has protection obligations under human rights treaties other than the Refugee Convention.

The new Community Status Resolution and Assisted Voluntary Return services, which will cost \$77.4 million over four years, are being funded by savings which have resulted from keeping fewer people in immigration detention for extended periods.

Other welcome changes announced in the Federal Budget include the introduction of a four-year planning framework for the offshore Refugee Program and an increase in the Woman at Risk quota from 10.5% to 12% of the Refugee Program.

As forecast in last year's Budget, the Australian Government will offer 13,750 places in the Refugee and Humanitarian Program in 2009-10 – 6000 under the Refugee Program and 7750 under the Special Humanitarian Program and onshore protection process.

Refugee law to embrace more

Australia will extend protection to people who are threatened with torture and death in their homelands but do not fall under the definition of "refugee". The Government is to change the law to accommodate people not specifically included by regulations drafted to contend with the mass displacement of Europeans after World War II.

The Immigration Minister, Chris Evans, will introduce a new complementary protection system. "The Rudd Government is committed to humanity, fairness and integrity in its refugee policies," said Senator Evans. It is understood Australian laws would offer those owed complementary protection the same rights as those deemed refugees, avoiding a two-tiered system.

See: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/refugee-law-to-embrace-more-20090223-8fts.html>

[Review of anti-terrorism laws](#)

[Teaching Asian languages](#)

[International pro bono activities](#)

[Strengthening women's rights](#)

[Native title to be presumed](#)

[A new era of disclosure](#)

Multicultural Affairs

[Africans face racist abuse](#)

[Funding workplace diversity](#)

Education

[Budget measures](#)

[Student mix changing](#)

[Raising Australia's international education profile](#)

Detention debt regime to be scrapped

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans, has introduced a Bill to abolish the unjust and ineffective detention debt regime imposed on immigration detainees.

The Migration Amendment (Abolishing Detention Debt) Bill 2009 will also waive all existing debts for current and former detainees but there will be no refunds of debts already paid.

People convicted of people smuggling or illegal foreign fishing will still be liable for their costs of detention and removal to act as a deterrent and to recognise the seriousness of these offences.

The liability for costs associated with the removal or deportation of unlawful non-citizens will also remain unchanged. The Government has no intention of encouraging visitors to this country to become destitute and then rely on the Australian Government to pay for their return.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2009/ce09031.htm>

DIAC apologises to former immigration detainees

As a consequence of recommendations in a recent report, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) will apologise to a group of former Villawood Immigration Detention Centre detainees about arrangements it made for their identification interviews in the centre in 2005.

The department accepts the report's recommendations in full, including paying compensation to complainants, a DIAC spokesman said.

"The department has changed the way it arranges and conducts identification interviews involving officials of foreign governments.

See: http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/media_releases/690

Migration changes for same-sex de facto partners

The department currently recognises for some visa classes same-sex partners, termed interdependent partners, for migration purposes. Under current legislation, an interdependent partner is a same-sex partner with whom one has had a mutual commitment to a shared life together to the exclusion of all others. The relationship must be genuine and continuing and interdependent partners must live together for 12 months, or not live separately and apart on a permanent basis. The law equates such relationships to de facto relationships.

Under existing legislation, interdependent partners (same-sex partners) of Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents or eligible New Zealand residents may apply for an interdependency partner visa (subclasses 110, 814, 826, 310). These visas allow interdependent partners and their dependents to enter and/or remain in Australia.

[International student data](#)

United Nations

[Next President of Crisis Group](#)

[Helen Clark gets UN job](#)

[UN to consult RCOA](#)

Foreign Affairs

[Mandate for Timor-Leste](#)

[Aid for Afghanistan and Pakistan](#)

[Support for Asia-Pacific businesses](#)

[Land mine programs](#)

[New HIV strategy](#)

[Australian Fellowships](#)

[Water report](#)

From 1 July 2009 the following changes will commence:

- Same-sex and opposite-sex partners will be recognised as being 'de facto partners'
- Only opposite-sex married partners will be recognised as being 'spouse'
- A broader range of parent-child relationships will be recognised
- An expanded range of visas will be available for same-sex de facto partners.

Applications lodged up to and including 30 June 2009 will be processed under existing legislation. More information on how the changes will affect applications lodged on or after 1 July 2009 will be available later in the year.

For migration purposes, the registration of a de facto relationship under a prescribed state or territory relationship registration scheme will be recognised as being non-conclusive evidence of a genuine and continuing relationship. Different rules apply to such relationships in the different Australian States and Territories.

The new changes will recognise surrogacy arrangements, where a court order has been made under a prescribed law of an Australian state or territory as per the *Family Law Act 1975*.

More information on visa application processes and eligibility requirements is available at www.immi.gov.au

Migration agency fraud racket uncovered

An alleged racket involving migration agents supplying false documents for student visa holders has been uncovered in a joint agency operation in Melbourne, the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans, said today.

'It is alleged that the agents were involved in falsifying documentation to support permanent skilled migration applications of their student visa holder clients,' Senator Evans said.

Investigations are continuing into possible offences relating to forgery and fraud under the Migration Act and the Commonwealth Criminal Code which carry penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment.

The Minister again repeated that people who obtain permanent visas based on falsified documentation can have their visas cancelled under the Migration Act visa cancellation process. Visa applicants are reminded that the integrity of the migration programme relies on honesty of applicants and people who tell lies or produce false documents in support of an application can expect serious problems if detected. For more information contact our Managing Partner, David Bitel.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2009/ce09033.htm>

Study lures overseas students

A \$3.5 million campaign will target the lucrative overseas higher education

[Gaza reconstruction conference](#)

[Assistance for Rohingya people](#)

[APB Education](#)

[Speeches worth noting](#)

[Quote of the month](#)

market over the next nine months in an attempt to entice more students to study in Australia.

Educators will spruik the benefits of Australian courses at international events in China, India, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand amid concerns that these markets are under threat from international competitors. Further, recent reports of racist attacks on Indian students in Melbourne have not helped the overseas education industry.

The higher education sector will be promoted with more support offered to education agents to direct students to Australian institutions. The welfare of international students, and the support network available to them in Australia, will be reviewed as part of the strategy to maintain existing numbers.

The Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, said, "I want Australia to be seen by international students as a welcoming place to study for a globally recognised education qualification".

The Government should also be aware that recent changes to the General Skilled Migration programme will have adverse consequences on the interests of overseas students studying in Australia.

See: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/campaign-dangles-study-lures-to-overseas-students-20090316-8zyk.html>

Charge over people smuggling

Two Indonesian men who allegedly facilitated a people smuggling venture to Australia in March will face Perth Magistrates Court after they were charged by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) with people smuggling. The two men were charged with one count of facilitating the bringing of non-citizens into Australia (of 5 or more people) contrary to Section 232A of the Migration Act 1958.

http://www.afp.gov.au/media_releases/national/2009/two_men_charged_over_people_smuggling.html

Workshop with Philippines

In a wide-reaching example of regional cooperation on border security, participants from more than 20 countries will attend a document examination workshop in Manila. The workshop will be led by expert document examiners from Australia, Philippines and Singapore and all participants will be invited to share their experiences and develop networks for future cooperation.

See: http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/media_releases/693

Singapore exchange program

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship has stepped up its efforts to identify fake passports and increase its cooperation with Singapore by hosting forensic document examiners as part of a reciprocal exchange program. A DIAC spokesman said the department has a regular program of exchange visits with document examiners from a number of countries. Effective document examination is a cornerstone of good border security and Australia is a leader

in the field.

http://www.newsroom.immi.gov.au/media_releases/691

Passport scam

Websites are selling fake Australian passports for as little as \$1250, boasting they will pass the most rigorous border checks. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said the sites are a scam but admit they are "the subject of ongoing discussions" with the Australian Federal Police. The department warns that anyone who uses the documents is guilty of a serious criminal offence.

Buyfakepassports.com and fakepassports.org are two websites offering false Australian documentation. The former boasts it produces high-quality fake documents. The anonymous operators of Buyfakepassports told AAP via email that their passports would "successfully pass all existing tests, like UV-test, MRZ (Machine Readable Zone) check, machine check and so on ... We also provide [the ability] to affix almost all kind of stamps into the passports to make you feel more confident."

The websites in question were the subject of discussions with federal police. In 2007-08, Australian officials overseas detected 128 improperly documented arrivals, while 143 were detected at Australia's entry points.

See: <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2009/03/09/1236447132568.html>

Subclass 457 changes

From 15 May 2009, ASCO Occupations 5-7 can no longer be nominated under Subclass 457 Standard Business Sponsorship (SBS) arrangements.

These changes also apply retrospectively to applications already lodged but undecided.

For applications which no longer meet the requirements, DIAC says that "your case officer will give you the option to withdraw the application, and make a request for a refund. Refunds are available in particular situations. The department will be contacting those clients who may be entitled to a refund and providing them with an opportunity to withdraw relevant applications and request a refund.

In general terms a refund will be available to those who have lodged a nomination or visa application that was not finalised before 15 May 2009 if the application has a nominated activity that has tasks that correspond to the tasks of an occupation in an ASCO 5-7 position. Approved nominations for ASCO 5-7 positions where a Subclass 457 visa has not been granted for this nomination may also be eligible to apply for a refund."

See: http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/whats_new_457.htm

457 English language changes

From 14 April 2009 the English language requirement for Subclass 457 – Business (Long Stay) visa applicants increased from a general IELTS score of 4.5 to 5. This is an average band score.

This requirement applies to people making a subclass 457 application on or after 14 April 2009 and applies to nominated occupations within ASCO major groups 4 to 7, and to people applying as chefs or head chefs (ASCO 3322-11 or 3322-01).

See: www.immi.gov.au/skilled/skilled-workers/faq.htm

State sponsored migration program

State and Territory governments who may offer nomination are:

- Tasmania
- Victoria
- Western Australia
- New South Wales
- Queensland
- Northern Territory
- South Australia

Nomination from a State or Territory government does not automatically result in the grant of a visa. Your application must also be assessed by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship against a number of visa-specific requirements. You will only be granted a visa if all requirements are met.

For information in relation to different States and Territories visit the following website:

<http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/475/nom-state-terr.htm>

South Australia Government sponsorship changes

The following processing times will apply to existing and new sponsorship applications:

Permanent Sponsorship Applications: 4 weeks
Provisional Sponsorship Applications: 6 – 8 weeks

The Concessional English Program has been temporarily suspended while this program is under review. This means that this concession will not be available and Immigration SA will not be accepting sponsorships under this provision until further notice.

Selected occupations have also been removed from the sponsorship occupation lists. For further details see: www.migration.sa.gov.au

Human Rights

Fair Work Bill

A Senate Committee has finished its inquiry into the Government's Fair Work Bill, but the legislation faces an uncertain future with the Greens and the

Coalition pushing for changes. Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard welcomed the conclusion of the inquiry, which received 154 submissions and took evidence during six days of public hearings, and called on senators to "accept the will of the Australian people". She says the Government will consider proposed minor changes to its industrial relations laws.

See: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/02/28/2503858.htm>

Review of anti-terrorism laws

"It is now time to reassess the laws brought in the wake of the 9/11 attack on the US and to restore, as much as possible, human rights standards set aside by such laws," said John Dowd AO QC, President of the International Commission of Jurists, Australian Section. "The release in Geneva of the report of the Eminent Jurists Panel on terrorism, counter-terrorism and human rights 'Assessing Damage, Urging Action' enables governments to re-examine our laws to ensure that the high standards of Australia's rule of law have not been unnecessarily trampled by the political imperative to be seen to be doing something," said Mr Dowd.

The full report is available at www.icj.org

Teaching Asian languages

The Federal Government has quietly implemented a \$62 million Asian language plan with an ambitious goal to double the number of year 12 students fluent in Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian or Korean within a decade.

Education Minister Julia Gillard conceded that achieving the target would be difficult because participation in the study of some Asian languages had been "going in the wrong direction". "The Rudd Government considers learning languages other than English, in particular Asian languages, very important to Australia's future security and prosperity in an increasingly globalised world."

The money, to be spent over the next 2½ years, will fund extra Asian language classes in high schools, teacher training and the development of specialist curriculum for students with language skills.

See:

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/articles/2009/02/14/1234632618467.html>

International pro bono activities

Commonwealth Attorney-General Robert McClelland recently met with the Attorney-General for England and Wales, the Rt Hon Baroness Scotland of Asthal QC. During her visit to Canberra, Patricia Scotland participated in a roundtable on international pro bono activities attended by a number of pro bono and volunteer organisations, as well as representatives of a number of Australian law firms. "Patricia Scotland has overseen some innovative pro bono initiatives which we can learn from in Australia."

http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/www/ministers/RobertMc.nsf/Page/MediaReleases_2009_FirstQuarter_23February2009-MeetingwithAttorney-GeneralforEnglandandWales

Australia strengthens women's rights

The Minister for the Status of Women, Tanya Plibersek, welcomed the entry into force in Australia of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Australia has been a party to CEDAW since 1983 and became a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention in December 2008.

http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/www/ministers/robertmc.nsf/Page/MediaReleases_2009_FirstQuarter_4March-AustraliaStrengthensWomensRights

Native title to be presumed

Chief Justice of the High Court, Robert French suggested three "modest proposals" to reform the 15-year-old native title process.

Among these, he said there should be a presumption in favour of a claimant's continued connection with traditional lands. States and territories and other parties would be able to challenge it, but the onus of proof would shift from claimants. If governments were concerned about an increase in compensation claims, the presumption could be stopped from applying to compensation cases.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/native-title-to-be-presumed-in-proposed-law-reforms-20090408-a0w0.html>

A new era of disclosure

Sweeping changes to the Commonwealth Freedom of Information laws promise to break down a culture of government secrecy, abolish application charges, permit email requests and see disputes resolved free by a new independent umpire.

The first substantial overhaul of the 27-year-old FoI Act are detailed in two draft Bills which scrap exemptions in the current law and create a single public interest test weighted in favour of disclosure to get more information into the public arena.

The new Bill, released recently by the Special Minister of State and Cabinet Secretary, John Faulkner, also requires all government agencies to publish as part of their regular activities far more "relevant, up-to-date and accurate" information such as detailed costings of ministerial trips.

See: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/changes-to-foi-bring-a-new-era-of-disclosure-20090324-98wr.html>

Multicultural Affairs

Africans face racist abuse

A national inquiry will examine the racism and exclusion faced by Africans,

amid fears that media stereotypes, such as the portrayal of African youths as violent gang members, are fuelling discrimination. The project, to be headed by the Australian Human Rights Commission, will provide the first national picture of the health, education, housing and employment barriers experienced by Africans, many of whom came to Australia as traumatised refugees in recent years, especially from the conflict in Sudan and Somalia.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/africans-face-racist-abuse-20090316-902b.html>

Funding to improve workplace diversity and to address racial intolerance

The Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement services, Laurie Ferguson, announced the Australian Government would provide \$120,000 over two years for the *Cultural Diversity Management Pilot Training Program* to assist Australian business to recognise, encourage and promote cultural diversity in their workplaces.

"Australia's diversity is a source of national strength and an asset to Australian industries," Mr Ferguson said. "It is important that Australian businesses employ the benefit of our diversity and acknowledge its economic and social contribution.

More information about the Diverse Australia Program can be found at www.harmony.gov.au

Education

Budget Measures

Revolution to go ahead a bit at a time

The Australian higher education system is set for a \$5.7 billion overhaul but not as soon as those in the sector expected. The phased approach to deregulating the sector, reforming student welfare and funding research was attributed to budgetary constraints imposed by the recession.

"This investment in higher education and innovation is an investment in the jobs of the future," Education Minister Julia Gillard said.

Among changes provided for by the budget were the following:

- Youth Allowance age of independence lowered from 25 to 22.
- \$1.12 billion for research and associated costs for universities.

<http://business.smh.com.au/business/federal-budget/revolution-to-go-ahead-a-bit-at-a-time-20090512-b207.html>

Student mix changing

The student profile of Australia's universities will change irrevocably with a \$5.3 billion overhaul of higher education over the next six years.

An extra 50,000 students - particularly from disadvantaged and mature age backgrounds - will start university by 2013 as outlined by the Federal Government

Under the budget announcement, universities will receive \$325 million for the achievement of the Government's enrolment targets over four years, with estimates of \$1000 extra loading for students from disadvantaged backgrounds by 2012.

<http://business.smh.com.au/business/student-mix-changing-in-5b-funds-overhaul-20090513-b3ep.html>

Raising Australia's international education profile

The Australian Government is to reprioritise its international education activities to raise Australia's international education reputation in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Welcoming recent data that show the sector remains strong despite the global economic downturn, the Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, recently announced that a new drive will mobilise resources to ensure that Australia's education is highly regarded and widely recognised. The new drive, called 'Study in Australia 2010', will see \$3.5 million redirected to specific measures in existing major source countries such as China, India, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand over the next nine months.

The measures will encompass four themes:

1. Student experience
2. Showcasing excellence
3. Positioning Australia
4. Sector Engagement

"I want Australia to be seen by international students as a welcoming place to study for a globally recognised education qualification", the Minister said.

International Student Data YTD December 2008

Australian Education International (AEI) has released the 2008 statistics on international students studying in Australia on student visas. AEI's latest data show that across all education sectors, international student enrolments in Australia have grown 20.7 per cent.

For more information see: www.aei.gov.au

United Nations

Next President of Crisis Group

The International Crisis Group is very pleased to announce that the Honourable Louise Arbour has been selected to be the organisation's next President and CEO.

Ms Arbour brings with her decades of practical experience in international affairs, having held many high-profile posts in her distinguished career. From 2004 to 2008, she served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the highest office mandated by the international community to promote and protect human rights. Before this, she was a Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada.

Helen Clark gets top UN job

Former New Zealand prime minister Helen Clark has been appointed the head of the United Nations Development Program. The post, to be taken up in August, is the third most senior UN role and would involve overseeing a US\$5bn (\$7.5bn) budget, which is mostly spent on programs in Africa. Ms Clark was Labour prime minister from 1999 until 2008.

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0%2C25197%2C25239339-12335%2C00.html>

UN to consult Refugee Council of Australia

The Refugee Council has been granted the honour Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This status is conferred on selected NGOs which have a special competence in specific fields of activity covered by ECOSOC. Having Special Consultative Status enables RCOA to participate in ECOSOC fora and those of its various subsidiary bodies.

See: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents>

Foreign Affairs

Mandate for Timor-Leste

The Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Stephen Smith welcomed the United Nations Security Council decision to renew the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste mandate until 26 February 2010. The United Nations mandate authorises a phased hand-over of policing responsibilities from United Nations to East Timorese police.

See: http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2009/fa-s029_09.html

Aid for Afghanistan and Pakistan

Australia recognises that Pakistan is critical to a long-term solution in Afghanistan and that the problem of terrorism and extremism in the

Afghanistan-Pakistan border area has major regional and international security implications. Australia will also provide \$3 million to international agencies in Pakistan to help meet the urgent humanitarian needs of people displaced by rising conflict. This will support efforts by the international community to bring stability and security to the border region with Afghanistan.

http://www.aisaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC=Media&ID=7618_7108_728_6500_208

Australia supports businesses in Asia-Pacific

The Australian Government's Enterprise Challenge Fund (ECF) is a \$20.5 million program aimed at strengthening the private sector, encouraging economic growth and reducing poverty in the Asia-Pacific region. The ECF is an attempt to make this growth work for the poorest people in our neighbourhood.

http://www.aisaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC=Latest&ID=8939_4232_3636_3915_9453

Improving lives of landmine survivors

Australia has a proud record of achievement in supporting land mine removal programmes. Australia's land mine action program includes a \$75 million commitment to action on land mines from 2005 to 2010. Australia is on track to meet this target.

http://www.aisaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC=Media&ID=3144_207_7220_8594_3749

New strategy to tackle HIV

Australia remains committed to tackling HIV in the Asia Pacific region. Halting the spread of HIV sets priorities that will guide Australia's international development assistance to tackle the growing epidemic in the Asia-Pacific region.

http://www.aisaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC=Media&ID=4666_2573_317_6187_2393

Australian Fellowships

Nine talented agricultural scientists and economists from across the Asia-Pacific region have each won a John Dillon Memorial Fellowship award, provided by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, ACIAR, for short-term leadership development opportunities in the area of agricultural research management, agricultural policy and extension technologies to people who are participating in ACIAR-funded programs.

http://www.aisaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC=Latest&ID=3045_842_1430_8231_7509

Water report

Following the Sanitation and Water Conference held in Melbourne in October 2008, a report has been released that highlights the sanitation and water challenges facing developing countries in our region. The outcomes from this conference have helped develop the Government's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy and the related \$300 million Access to Clean Water and Effective Sanitation Initiative.

The report can be found at:

www.watercentre.org/resources/Meeting_the_Sanitation_and_Water_Challenge

Gaza reconstruction conference

Australia recognises the vital importance of recovery and reconstruction efforts, and the need for a strong and coordinated international response across Gaza and the West Bank. Australia was deeply disturbed and saddened by the recent conflict, and in particular by its humanitarian cost in the Gaza Strip. These tragic events have underlined yet again the vital importance of the international community continuing to support efforts towards Middle East peace.

http://www.aisaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC=Speech&ID=699_9656_9062_5221_3190

Assistance for Rohingya people

Australia is concerned about the deteriorating living conditions and increasing marginalisation of the Rohingya people in Burma and in refugee camps in Bangladesh. Australia has supported the Rohingya people in Bangladesh and Burma for more than a decade. Australia has committed to take some Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh as part of its offshore refugee resettlement programme in consultation with UNHCR.

See: <http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2009/fa-s090415.html>

A.P.B. Education Specialist IELTS Test Training and Coaching

Passing an IELTS test is now an essential requirement for all applicants for General Skills Migration. Adrian Bitel provides individual lessons to ensure proficiency in:

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Reading | Writing |
| Speaking | Listening |

Comprehensive ONE to ONE Personalised Coaching in any or all of the above skills will assist applicants to attain the required score levels.

Contact: Adrian Bitel - Mobile: 0412656026

Or Leave your details with Parish Patience Immigration on (02) 9286 8700

Speeches worth noting

The Hon Julia Gillard MP

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Address to the DEEWR International Education Roundtable, Sydney, 16 March 2009.

Quote of the month

We cannot solve our problems
with the same thinking
we used to create them.

Albert Einstein
(1879 – 1955)

Parish Patience Immigration

Lawyers
Level 1, State Street Centre
338 Pitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Australia

Tel: +61 2 9286 8700
or: **1300 850 695** (within Australia)
Fax: +61 2 9283 3323

Email: mail@ppilaw.com.au



