

The High Court of Australia Case Summaries for the 2009 year are recorded in this month's newsletter, along with assessment criteria for trades recognition and language requirements for welfare workers. Citizenship changes and further protection for human rights are featured.

Immigration

English language requirement for Welfare Workers from 1 February 2010

The Australian Institute of Welfare and Community Workers (AIWCW) re-affirms that the English language requirement will be introduced with effect from 1 February 2010. The required level of proficiency is a score of not less than 7.0 in each IELTS component (also known as band), that is, reading, writing, speaking and listening - as evidenced through results achieved in recognised IELTS tests.

Concessions, Exemptions and Transitional arrangements have been taken into consideration – as outlined below.

Concessions

1. The score of 7.0 for each language component (reading, writing, speaking and listening) may be obtained at any test session over a period of 12 months. This may apply even if scores in some components at a particular test are lower than 7.0. As soon as a score of 7.0 is obtained for all four components these satisfactory scores are valid for a period of two years thereafter.
2. Either the general or the academic form of the IELTS test will be recognised until 1 February 2012. With effect from 1 February 2012 only results from the academic IELTS test will be recognised. Concession 1 will continue to apply after this date.

Exemptions

Exemptions will apply to those who were fully educated (for at least 10 years in formal schooling) in a country with English as the main or official language, as already allowed by other relevant professions. Included among these countries are: Australia, United Kingdom, Ireland, United States of America, Canada and New Zealand.

Transitional Arrangements

The AIWCW recognises that those international students who were enrolled in an AIWCW approved course in Australia before 31 July 2008 did not have the opportunity to be aware of the intention of the AIWCW to require an English language proficiency.

To reduce the impact on these students, a special concession has been made so that students who were already studying in an AIWCW approved course in

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Australia on 31 July 2008, or who had signed an agreement before 31 July 2008 to study such a course, will not be subject to the above AIWCW requirement to be proficient in the English language.

For more information, see: <http://www.aiwcw.org.au/>

New assessment criteria from TRA – January 2010

Effective January 2010 Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) is assessing offshore applications based on the new Uniform Assessment Criteria (UAC). The new UAC is **used ONLY for offshore applicants seeking a skills assessment for permanent migration to Australia**. Onshore applicants have a new arrangement with the Job Ready Program.

Applicants applying for permanent residency from outside Australia are required to be assessed under the Offshore Assessment Program to meet the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) skills assessment requirements for a permanent residence visa.

TRA will assess the applicant's occupation by comparing his training and employment experience with the requirements of the Uniform Assessment Criteria (UAC). The UAC has four Skill Pathways. For the application to be successful, the evidence must show that the applicant's training and employment experience meets one of these Skill Pathways.

Skill Pathway A – Formal Apprenticeship

- Minimum employment requirement – 4 years
- Training requirement – 900 hours formal training (inclusive of employment)
- Specific requirements – Regulated apprenticeship

Skill Pathway B – Informal Apprenticeship

- Minimum employment requirement – 5 years
- Training requirement – 900 hours formal training (inclusive of employment)

Skill Pathway C – Vocational Traineeship

- Minimum employment requirement – 5 years
- Training requirement – 1800 hours formal training (inclusive of employment)
- Specific requirements – Recognised traineeship

Skill Pathway E – Australian Qualification

- Minimum employment requirement – 4 years
- Training requirement – AQFIII

For further information see the TRA website:
www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/Programs/TRA

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Citizenship our common bond

In a speech delivered at the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) conference in Victoria recently, Senator Chris Evans highlighted the importance of citizenship in uniting all Australians. The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship said:

“Citizenship is an important guiding symbol for everyone living in Australia – whether newly arrived, descendants of immigrants, or part of Australia’s Indigenous heritage. Australian citizenship is the bond that unites us all in one common endeavour across heritage, culture, politics, wealth, religion and colour.”

Regarding the new citizenship test, Senator Evans said: “The Rudd Government supports the citizenship test but not if it creates a barrier to citizenship. We believe that anyone who has a will and commitment to learn about Australia and become a citizen should be given the pathway to do so.

“ ... there are some people who want to apply for formal citizenship but it is unreasonable to expect them to sit the citizenship test. Recent legislative changes will ensure that people who suffer from a permanent or enduring incapacity will not be required to sit the citizenship test. This is just one way of ensuring that these people are not excluded.”

The centrepiece of the new citizenship test is the *Pledge of Commitment*.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/speeches/2009/ce091030.htm>

Protection for victims of torture and inhumane treatment

The Rudd Government is introducing new laws to better protect people at risk of violation of their fundamental human rights which may include women and girls at risk of female genital mutilation and so called 'honour killings'.

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans said the Migration Amendment (Complementary Protection) Bill 2009 allows all of Australia's international human rights obligations to be considered under the same visa process as claims under the Refugees Convention.

The Bill establishes new criteria for the grant of a protection visa in circumstances that engage Australia's obligations under human rights treaties other than the Refugees Convention. The criterion includes:

- arbitrary deprivation of life
- having the death penalty imposed and carried out
- being subjected to torture
- being subjected to cruel or inhumane treatment or punishment, or
- being subjected to degrading treatment or punishment.

'We currently meet these obligations through reliance on personal ministerial intervention powers which are not reviewable, transparent or subject to procedural fairness. These changes will entrench our non-return obligations in law and provide for all claims to be considered efficiently in one fair and transparent process,' Senator Evans said.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2009/ce09083.htm>

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Australia in the Asian century: our strategic role in the zone

Australia has a strategic role to play on the world stage because of its location in the Asia-Pacific zone. This was the theme of a speech recently delivered by Senator Chris Evans at the University of Western Australia.

Referring to “the Zone”, which is the strategically significant geographic time zone that runs on either side of Western Australia, Evans said that sixty per cent of the world's population lies in this zone, which also encompasses many of Australia's, key economic and political relationships.

Evans discussed the transfer of wealth and influence that is taking place today from Europe and North America to countries in this zone:

“It is fast becoming a truism to talk of the 21st century as being the Asia-Pacific century. We are amid an historic shift in global economic and strategic influence to the Asia-Pacific region, a shift that the global economic crisis seems likely to accelerate.

“This matters to Australia, not only because our key markets are in Asia but because Asia's economic strength is translating into greater regional weight in global decision making.

“While international institutions have been largely shaped and influenced by European and North American countries, today countries from our region, and from this zone, are having a greater say in international governance. The G20 most clearly reflects this. It is hard to argue that the global financial crisis has a silver lining but the transformation of international governance characterised by the emergence of the G20 as the 'premier forum for global economic cooperation' is pretty close.

“It's not only good for Australia – we now have a seat at the head table. It's also good for Asia. Japan was the G8's single voice from Asia. The G20 includes six countries from our region and almost half of the G20 countries are members of APEC.”

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/speeches/2009/ce091109.htm>

China now biggest source of migrants

China has become Australia's biggest source of migrants, for the first time eclipsing the traditional main points of origin, New Zealand and Britain. The latest migration figures show a record 6350 settlers arrived from mainland China in the four months to October, more than the 5800 who arrived from Britain and the 4740 who came from New Zealand.

The new Chinese ascendancy owes more to a collapse in migration from the traditional sources than it does to the 15 per cent annual growth in migration from China. The number of migrants from Britain is down 28 per cent over the year and the number from New Zealand is down 47 per cent.

An Adelaide University demographer, Graeme Hugo, said the global financial crisis had hit migration from traditional sources in ways that hadn't much affected China. In March the Government sliced 18,500 off the skilled migration program for 2009-10, disproportionately hitting Britain for which skilled migrants account for eight out of 10 flights booked. Chinese migration, dominated by family reunions, suffered less. New Zealand migration collapsed as people decided to hang on to their jobs. “It's an immediate response. New Zealanders don't need to apply to

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Resources

APB Education

immigrate. There's no pipeline - that's why the response is so big."

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/china-now-biggest-source-of-migrants-20091207-kffd.html>

High Court of Australia – Case Summaries

2009 High Court of Australia - Case Summaries Documents

February 2009

- PNJ v The Queen ([2009] HCA 6) case summary [2009] HCASum 6 (10 February 2009)
- Tabcorp Holdings Pty Ltd v Bowen Investments Pty Ltd ([2009] HCA 8) case summary [2009] HCASum 8 (12 February 2009)

March 2009

- LK v Director-General, Department of Community Services([2009] HCA 9) case summary [2009] HCASum 9 (11 March 2009)
- Minister for Immigration & Citizenship v Kumar & Anor ([2009] HCA 10) case summary [2009] HCASum 10 (11 March 2009)
- Hickson v Goodman Fielder Pty Ltd ([2009] HCA 11) case summary [2009] HCASum 11 (12 March 2009)

April 2009

- R & R Fazzolari v Parramatta City Council; Mac's Pty Ltd v Parramatta City Council & Anor ([2009] HCA 12) case summary [2009] HCASum 12 (2 April 2009)
- Carroll v The Queen ([2009] HCA 13) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 13 (21 April 2009)
- IceTV Ltd & Anor v Nine Network Australia Pty Ltd ([2009] HCA 14) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 14 (22 April 2009)
- David Stuart & Anor v Tania Kirkland-Veenstra & Anor ([2009] HCA 15) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 15 (22 April 2009)
- Radio 2UE Sydney Pty Ltd v Ray Chesterton ([2009] HCA 16) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 16 (22 April 2009)
- Jones v The Queen ([2009] HCA 17) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 17 (29 April 2009)
- Keramianakis v Regional Publishers Pty Ltd ([2009] HCA 18) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 18 (29 April 2009)
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission v Channel Seven Brisbane Pty Ltd & Ors ([2009] HCA 19) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 19 (30 April 2009)

May 2009

- The Queen v Edwards & Anor ([2009] HCA 20) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 20 (21 May 2009)
- Friend v Brooker & Anor ([2009] HCA 21) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 21 (28 May 2009)

June 2009

- Spriggs v The Commissioner of Taxation; Riddell v The Commissioner of Taxation ([2009] HCA 22) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 22 (18 June 2009)

July 2009

- Pape v The Commissioner of Taxation ([2009] HCA 23) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 23 (7 July 2009)
- Bakewell v The Queen ([2009] HCA 24) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 24 (7 July 2009)
- Campbell & Anor v Backoffice Investments Pty Ltd & Anor([2009] HCA 25) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 25 (29 July 2009)

- Vale v Sutherland ([2009] HCA 26) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 26 (29 July 2009)

August 2009

- Aon Risk Services Australia Ltd v Australian National University ([2009] HCA 27) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 27 (5 August 2009)
- ACQ Pty Ltd v Michael Cook & Anor; Aircair Moree Pty Ltd v Michael Cook & Anor ([2009] HCA 28) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 28 (5 August 2009)
- Lane v Morrison ([2009] HCA 29) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 29 (26 August 2009)
- Minister for Immigration and Citizenship v SZKTI & Anor([2009] HCA 30); Minister for Immigration and Citizenship v SZLFX & Anor ([2009] HCA 31) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 30 (26 August 2009)
- Bruton Holdings Pty Ltd (in liquidation) v Commissioner of Taxation & Anor ([2009] HCA 32) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 31 (26 August 2009)

September 2009

- Clarke v Commissioner of Taxation & Anor ([2009] HCA 33) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 32 (2 September 2009)
- Visscher v The Honourable Justice Giudice & Ors ([2009] HCA 34) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 33 (2 September 2009)
- Leighton Contractors Pty Ltd v Brian Allan Fox & Ors; Calliden Insurance Ltd v Brian Allan Fox & Ors ([2009] HCA 35) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 34 (2 September 2009)
- Minister for Immigration and Citizenship v SZIZO & Ors ([2009] HCA 37) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 35 (23 September 2009)
- Fellowes v Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission([2009] HCA 38) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 36 (23 September 2009)
- Minister for Immigration and Citizenship v SZIAL & Anor([2009] HCA 39) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 37 (23 September 2009)
- Minister for Immigration and Citizenship v SZJGV & Anor; Minister for Immigration and Citizenship v SZJXO & Anor ([2009] HCA 40) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 38 (30 September 2009)
- Alcan (NT) Alumina Pty Ltd v Commissioner of Territory Revenue([2009] HCA 41) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 39 (30 September 2009)

October 2009

- Sydney Water Corporation v Maria Turano & Anor ([2009] HCA 42) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 40 (13 October 2009)
- Jeffery & Katauskas Pty Ltd v SST Consulting Pty Ltd & Ors; Jeffery & Katauskas Pty Ltd v Rickard Constructions Pty Ltd(subject to deed of company arrangement) & Ors ([2009] HCA 43) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 41 (13 October 2009)
- Ronald John Bofinger & Anor v Kingsway Group Ltd formerly Willis & Bowring Mortgage Investments Limited (ACN 089 265 127)& Ors ([2009] HCA 44) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 42 (13 October 2009)
- John Holland Pty Ltd v Victorian Workcover Authority ([2009] HCA 45); John Holland Pty Ltd v Inspector Nathan Hamilton & Anor ([2009] HCA 46) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 43 (13 October 2009)

November 2009

- CAL No 14 Pty Ltd t/as Tandara Motor Inn & Anor v Motor Accidents Insurance Board; CAL No 14 t/as Tandara Motor Inn v Sandra Scott ([2009] HCA 47) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 44 (10 November 2009)
- Adeels Palace Pty Ltd v Anthony Moubarak; Adeels Palace Pty Ltd v Antoin Fayez Bou Najem ([2009] HCA 48) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 45 (10 November 2009)
- International Finance Trust Company Ltd & Anor v New South Wales Crime Commission & Ors ([2009] HCA 49) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 46 (12 November 2009)

December 2009

- Zurich Australian Insurance Ltd v Metals & Minerals Insurance Pty Ltd ([2009] HCA 50) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 47 (3 December 2009)
- ICM Agriculture Pty Ltd ABN 32 006 077 765 & Ors v The Commonwealth of Australia & Ors ([2009] HCA 51) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 48 (9 December 2009)
- Tian Zhen Zheng v Deju Cai ([2009] HCA 52) Case Summary [2009] HCASum 49 (9 December 2009)

For a detailed summary of each case, see:

<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/HCASum/2009/>

Multicultural Affairs

Book to celebrate Australia's Muslims

The Government has recognised the contribution of Australia's Muslim communities through a book launched recently by the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson.

The Australian Journey – Muslim communities features photographs and personal stories of 43 Muslim Australians and their contributions to Australia. 'This is a showcase of the diversity of Australia's Muslim population and the contributions that many have made to our nation,' Mr Ferguson said.

The book reminds us that Australia's 340 000-strong Muslim population is drawn from diverse ethnic backgrounds and encompasses a range of practices, beliefs and aspirations. It includes people from business and the arts to defence and emergency services – from all walks of life, the book demonstrates that Muslims are working for the benefit of all Australians. Some of these people are well known, while others are quietly achieving in their chosen field.

'I am pleased that young Australians will have the opportunity to identify with the positive role models in this book,' Mr Ferguson said. 'It proves to every child that you can aspire to any occupation, in any field, and be a valued Australian citizen.'

The book has been widely distributed and is available on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's website.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/parlsec/media/media-releases/2009/lf09051.htm>

Report on social cohesion

The Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson, has welcomed the Scanlon Foundation's launch of the report *Mapping Social Cohesion 2009*. He said the report indicated an increased level of trust and confidence in the Australian Government and its policies, particularly its pursuit of social justice and equity.

The survey conducted at both a national and local level found the overwhelming majority of Australians expressed a strong sense of pride in our way of life and culture.

Key findings included:

- 93 per cent believe that maintaining the Australian way of life and culture is important
- 82 per cent agree that Australia 'is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life'.

The study showed that the majority (55 per cent) of Australians support our current level of migration.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/parlsec/media/media-releases/2009/lf09055.htm>

Australians must work together against intolerance

The United Nations International Day for Tolerance provides an opportunity for Australians to address issues of intolerance.

'Australia's cultural diversity has brought us many cultural and economic rewards and will continue to help Australia prosper in the future,' Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services Laurie Ferguson said. 'Australians have welcomed seven million people from more than 200 countries to the Australian community since 1945. Our cultural diversity is one of our nation's great strengths, but we should never be complacent. We still face many challenges, however we must celebrate the great nation we have become, and consider ways we can all work together for the future.'

The United Nations' definition of tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human.

'Tolerance is not concession or indulgence,' Mr Ferguson said.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/parlsec/media/media-releases/2009/lf09052.htm>

Parliament of the World's Religions

The Australian Government has provided \$2 million to support one of the world's largest interfaith forums, the Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR), the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson, said.

'The parliament is a crucial interfaith forum for discussions about peace, diversity and sustainability in the context of inter-religious understanding and cooperation,' Mr Ferguson said. 'One of our nation's great success stories is that our multicultural society compares well with other countries in terms of low levels of discrimination, social tension or disharmony. Australia's strength as a culturally diverse nation played a big role in the decision to stage this event in Melbourne, and I'm proud to be part of this. One of the great democratic principles of Australia is freedom of religion. We are free to practise our religion or spiritual beliefs and not have religious beliefs as long as in doing so, Australian laws are respected.'

In the latest census data, almost 14 million Australians identified as belonging to a religion. Some 13 million Australians described themselves as Christian, spread among the Protestant, Catholic and many different Orthodox traditions. There are also more than 400 000 Buddhists, 340 000 Muslims, 150 000 Hindus, 90 000 Jews, 26 000 Sikhs and 12 000 Baha'i.

'Interfaith activities such as these can contribute to social cohesion by increasing mutual understanding of religious and cultural diversity,' Mr Ferguson said.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/parlsec/media/media-releases/2009/lf09057.htm>

We Are One project to empower migrant youth

A new project entitled *We Are One* will empower and engage Arabic-speaking youth in Melbourne's north western suburbs.

Victorian Arabic Social Services has been awarded \$160 000 through the Department of Immigration and Citizenship Diverse Australia Program to reach eight secondary schools in the Hume, Moreland, Whittlesea and Hobsons Bay local government areas.

'We Are One will address feelings of isolation and frustration often expressed by young migrants due to low self-esteem, disengagement from education and lack of knowledge regarding their rights,' Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services Laurie Ferguson said. 'It will employ practical strategies including mentoring, policing information sessions and personal development programs such as conflict resolution, leadership and communication skills.'

'Cultural awareness training for parents and teachers will also be part of the project. 'The migration experience is an enormously challenging one that affects not only first generation migrants, but their children as well. Some 10 000 people will be involved in the life of the *We Are One* project, including students, teachers, parents and community members. A whole-of-community approach backed by government support can help our youth achieve full participation.'

'This project will engage youth with education and empower them to choose positive pathways for the future.'

The Diverse Australia Program aims to address emerging issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance.

<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/parlsec/media/media-releases/2009/lf09056.htm>

New National Congress of Australia's First Peoples

Tom Calma, Chair of the Steering Committee charged with establishing the new national Indigenous representative body, has announced that the new organisation will be called the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples. Commissioner Calma said that setting up the new National Congress of Australia's First Peoples was a monumental task that would require a development phase until the end of 2010.

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2009/116_09.html

Human Rights

Anniversary of Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Australian Government welcomed on 20 November the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Australia was among the first nations to become a party to the Convention in December 1990, which has now been ratified by over 190 countries. The Convention clearly demonstrates the international community's commitment to ensuring the protection of children's rights.

The Rudd Government is committed to ensuring children in Australia live in safe and supportive environments, free from abuse and neglect through the first ever *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020*, endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in April. The National Framework seeks to involve children and young people in decisions affecting their lives and the Government is exploring the potential role of a National Children's Commissioner.

The Government is committed to helping Australia's more than 2.7 million young people play a full role in Australian life.

For the full text, click on Media Releases, then Archived Media Releases 2009 and scroll down to 20 November 2009 at: www.attorneygeneral.gov.au

Apology an important step forward in the healing process

The Apology delivered by the Prime Minister last November to the 500,000 forgotten Australians and former child migrants for the appalling treatment they suffered in institutional care last century, marks

an important step in the healing process for these individuals and the nation, the Australian Human Rights Commission said. Acknowledging the trauma, damage and lost life chances that many of these children suffered is an important reflection of our maturity as a compassionate nation with a conscience.

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2009/112_09.html

Disability levy needs to collect \$2.5b

A national insurance scheme being considered by the Federal Government to provide lifetime care and support to seriously disabled people would need to raise extra funding of \$2.5 billion a year, according to preliminary costings of the ambitious plan.

Estimates suggest that if the scheme were funded by a Medicare-style tax levy it would need to be set at about 0.4 per cent of taxable income, on top of the existing Medicare levy of 1.5 per cent.

The Government's Disability Investment Group has strongly backed the scheme and says that existing arrangements to support people with disabilities are a national disgrace. "Despite governments spending \$20 billion annually on the disability welfare system ... there still remains a large, and rapidly growing, unmet need for care and support," its report says. "This is despite an estimated army of 2.5 million family members and other carers providing unpaid care and support."

A national scheme would not only guarantee lifetime care and support for the seriously disabled, but also allow services like rehabilitation and training to be tailored to the needs of individuals. This would improve the prospects of people with disabilities finding employment, relieving pressure on the welfare system and allowing them to live more rewarding lives.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/disability-levy-needs-to-collect-25b-20091203-k8vf.html>

Reinstating the RDA in the Northern Territory welcomed

The Australian Human Rights Commission has welcomed the announcement by the Australian Government that it will reinstate the Racial Discrimination Act (RDA) in the Northern Territory in 2010. The Australian Human Rights Commission has been concerned about the lack of human rights protections in the 73 prescribed communities in the Northern Territory since the RDA provisions were suspended by the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) legislation in August 2007, Human Rights Commissioner Innes said.

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2009/119_09.html

Women on boards: AICD sends the right message

Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick, said she was encouraged by the leadership shown by the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), which called on all companies to be proactive by increasing the number of women on boards and at senior management levels. The call by the AICD for companies to adopt measurable goals for achieving greater diversity on their boards and in senior management - and to report against them - is a constructive message, said Commissioner Broderick.

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2009/118_09.html

Goldman Sachs report supports value of women

Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick, said that the Goldman Sachs report released recently proved that closing the gap between levels of male and female workplace participation would

be a financially astute move for Australia. The report is entitled Australia's Hidden Resource: The Economic Case for Increasing Female Participation.

"This report not only makes it clear that greater participation of women in the Australian workforce would be a lucrative move for our economy, it reinforces the need for us to respond to the aspirations and desires of women around this country to be in paid work in the manner they choose," said Commissioner Broderick.

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2009/124_09.html

Pay equity test case important

The Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick, has welcomed the Australian Government's agreement with the Australian Services Union, which represents social and community services workers, to support the first federal test case on pay equity for community sector employees under the new Fair Work system. Around two hundred thousand women who work in homeless and domestic violence shelters, aged care and other community services may win a 30 per cent pay rise under this major gender equity test case.

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2009/108_09.html

Human rights of international students a major issue

The rights of international students are a significant human rights concern for national, state and territory human rights commissions in Australia and New Zealand. Numbers of international students have grown rapidly over recent years and now make up a significant group of over half a million Australian residents whose human rights need to be safeguarded.

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2009/107_09.html

Peace Through Justice Breakfast

On the 20th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's Nobel Peace Prize, the Australia Tibet Council and Amnesty International recently co-hosted a special breakfast event featuring His Holiness the Dalai Lama and 2009 NAIDOC Person of the Year Professor Larissa Behrendt. At the breakfast, His Holiness spoke about the importance of justice in the lasting resolution of conflict. The event also highlighted Amnesty International's Demand Dignity campaign, calling for an end to the human rights violations that keep people poor.

www.atc.org.au/peace-through-justice

2009 human rights award

A barrister at the centre of one of Australia's highest profile terrorism cases has been awarded the nation's top human rights award for his work. Stephen Keim SC was presented with the honour recently for his role in the case of Dr Mohamed Haneef. Mr Keim was accused and cleared of misconduct in 2007 when he released a transcript of a police interview with Dr Haneef that helped to overturn police charges of association with a terrorist attack in the UK.

There were many nominees who fight for the disabled, the underprivileged and the marginalised, but it was Mohamed Haneef's Barrister Stephen Keim who was chosen as the winner of the 2009 Human Rights medal. In doing so he joins the likes of High Court judge Michael Kirby, former prime minister Malcolm Fraser and eye doctor Fred Hollows.

<http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2009/s2768157.htm>

United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change

Addressing the media for the first time since last month's Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Yvo de Boer said the fact that Copenhagen did not deliver the full agreement the world needs to address climate change "just makes the task more urgent."

Three key things that Copenhagen produced are: 1) It raised climate change to the highest level of government; 2) The Copenhagen Accord reflects a political consensus on the long-term, global response to climate change; 3) The negotiations brought an almost full set of decisions to implement rapid climate action near to completion.

Mr. de Boer said that we're now in a cooling off period that gives countries useful and needed time to resume their discussions with each other. "If countries follow up the outcomes of Copenhagen calmly, with eyes firmly on the advantage of collective action, they have every chance of completing the job," he said.

For further information see:

<http://unfccc.int/>

Foreign Affairs

Australia increases assistance to UN disaster response

Australia will provide \$60 million over the next four years to the United Nations' Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). Australia is committed to supporting the important role of the United Nations in responding to humanitarian crises and is one of the world's top 10 contributors to the CERF. Australia's contribution will support immediate and coordinated humanitarian assistance to those affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts.

http://www.ausaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC=Latest&ID=5163_5065_9298_58_9312

Haiti earthquake emergency

"In for a decade, not just a year"

Haiti has sustained what may be the most severe natural disaster ever in the Western Hemisphere. Its historically weak physical and institutional infrastructure, and the sad fact that the earthquake's heaviest blow was delivered to the capital city's core, have only compounded Haiti's vulnerability.

Helping Haiti emerge from this disaster will require the hemisphere's largest-ever recovery and reconstruction investment in recent history — a commitment not for a year but for at least a decade.

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=6480&1=1>

Australia doubles aid to Haiti

The Federal Government has doubled Australia's immediate emergency assistance to Haiti to \$10 million, but has ruled out sending any Australian troops to Port-au-Prince.

Australia has also pledged \$5 million for longer-term reconstruction and Foreign Minister Stephen Smith says the Government may decide to increase that amount.

The Government was in talks with the United Nations as to whether other personnel could be provided in the areas of engineering, logistics and communications.

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/01/19/2795725.htm

Helping people with disability in the Pacific

Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands Forum countries will work in partnership to strengthen the capacity of these organisations across the Pacific to be effective advocates and leaders on issues that affect the lives of people with disability locally, nationally and internationally. This is an important step to greater inclusion of the needs and rights of people with disability in Pacific development.

http://www.ausaid.gov.au/media/release.cfm?BC=Latest&ID=1919_9516_1722_2321_19

Diplomatic Appointments

Ambassador to Sweden

Mr Paul Stephens has been appointed as Australia's Ambassador to Sweden with concurrent accreditation to Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania. Australia and Sweden have a positive bilateral relationship and share a strong commitment to multilateralism. Australia and Sweden enjoy strong trade and investment links.

<http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2009/fa-s091120b.html>

Consul-General in Guangzhou

Mr Grant Dooley has been appointed as Australia's Consul-General in Guangzhou. China is now Australia's largest trading partner. Mr Dooley was a member of the Royal Australian Navy (1982-98) prior to joining DFAT in 1998.

<http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2009/fa-s091120c.html>

Resources

The Australian Journey – Muslim Communities

You can download a copy of this book free from the DIAC website:
www.immi.gov.au. Click on Media > Publications > Multicultural Australia.

2009 Conference of FECCA (Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia on Strengthening Multiculturalism and Building Social Inclusion

Held at the Eastbank Centre, Shepparton, Victoria, October 2009

For more information see: <http://www.fecca.org.au/Conference09.cfm>

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

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