

Dear Colleague

Highlights of 2009 Federal Budget on the Migration Program

- 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 onshore skilled applicants
- The Government will be increasing the English language requirement for trades occupation to IELTS 6 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 addition 2500 for partners, 1000 for contributory parents and 300 for child visas
- Increased humanitarian Program to 13,750 (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>