



VISA ALERT

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FIRB CRACKDOWN CONTINUES

DIAC & THE FLOODS

:: TIP

457 visa holders may be eligible for the same financial entitlements as Australians in certain circumstances - it's always worth checking

:: REMINDER

Brisbane office of DIAC has now re-opened for business

The Foreign Investment Review Board ("FIRB") crackdown continues on purchase of homes in Australia by certain temporary visa holders

With limited exceptions, Australia's foreign investment laws require that temporary visa holders obtain FIRB approval prior to the purchase of real estate in Australia.

FIRB screening and compliance measures include a hotline and a pilot monitoring system which matches records from FIRB with the Office of State Revenue State and Australian visa status to ensure that all purchases by temporary visa holders comply with FIRB requirements.

Recent statistics show that 15 real estate transactions involving temporary residents were requested by FIRB and a further 73 proposed residential real estate purchases have been voluntarily withdrawn in the last 9 months.

457 visa holders and eligibility for Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy

Centrelink has confirmed 457 visa holders and other temporary visa holders who can demonstrate a loss of income from the recent floods in Queensland, NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia may be eligible for the Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy. This payment is designed to provide interim compensation to those affected.

Individuals must have been living or working in Australia at the time of the loss of income to qualify and should contact Centrelink to check eligibility for the payment.

Eligibility for a second 417 Working Holiday ("WHV") visa based on flood damage clean up work

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship ("DIAC") has confirmed that in order to qualify for a second WHV, individuals may volunteer or undertake paid work assisting in the clean up of the recent flood damage.

A minimum of 88 days "specified work" must be undertaken in a designated regional area of Australia. This excludes metropolitan Brisbane. "Specified work" includes demolition of buildings, trench digging, land clearing and repair of non-residential premises including buildings, roads, footpaths and railways. Further information on the "specified work" and eligible Australian postcodes can be found on the DIAC website <http://www.immi.gov.au/>

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