



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW SOL, OLD RUNAROUND

The Migration Institute of Australia (MIA) welcomes the final release of the Skilled Occupation List (SOL).

On 8 February 2010, the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Hon Chris Evans MP, announced a wide-ranging overhaul of Australia's General Skilled Migration (GSM) program. Central to those changes was the tightening of the list of occupations in demand "designed to deliver highly skilled migrants."

Today, following months of nervous anticipation – including a missed 30 April deadline – potential students, workers and migrants finally have their first look at the new Skilled Occupation List (SOL), which is proposed to commence 1 July 2010. It cuts by more than half the old List (from 408 to 181).

"I am glad to see this List has finally been released for the relative surety it provides for many thousands of potential applicants and employers," said Maurene Horder, CEO of the Migration Institute of Australia (MIA). "Unfortunately, this List is just one element of coming GSM changes by the Commonwealth. We are still waiting on a new Points Test to accompany it."

The new List is a reduced, restricted incarnation of the previous Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) and Critical Skills List (CSL) regimes. A significant number of occupations have been lopped off the list, leaving principally medical (around 40 percent), engineering classifications (around 20 percent) and construction-related trades (around 15 percent).

"The purpose of this new List is to make a significant impact on the number and makeup of migrants to Australia," said Horder. "And it will."

"It significantly impacts potential migrants, significantly impacts our higher education sector and significantly impacts areas across Australia suffering from acute skills shortages," she continued. "What we don't know yet is how negative that impact will be. In the meantime, the MIA calls upon the Minister to bring compassion, flexibility and transparency to the process of handling those already in Australia or who are applicants in the system."

The MIA is seeking an immediate lifting of the suspensions of applications offshore, which was put in place earlier this month.

Available for Interview:

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