

Published date – 9th January 2019

www.cdclanka.lk

Australia announces two new special visa agreements with a pathway to permanent residency

The new visa agreement allows employers to sponsor skilled workers with some concessions which may include access to some occupations that are not available under the standard visa arrangements, some concessions for English language requirements and salary levels.

In a bid to distribute the migrant population outside Australia's major cities such as Sydney and Melbourne, the Australian government has designed a new agreement to attract migrants to regional areas across the country.

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, Mr David Coleman, on Monday announced two new special visa agreements which offer a pathway to permanent residency to migrant workers willing to move to regional areas in Australia.

The scheme - known as the **Designation Area Migration Agreements (DAMA)s** have been announced for two regions in Australia - **Warrnambool region** in Victoria and the **Northern Territory** which are experiencing labour shortages and need a population boost.
Five must-know details about Northern Territory's \$15,000 relocation offer

Over 53 occupations have been listed as a high priority - including accountants, software engineers, mechanical engineers and chefs.

Over 53 occupations have been listed as high priority - including accountants, software engineers, mechanical engineers and chefs.



This special five-year agreement with the Commonwealth will allow employers in the Great South Coast region in Victoria and in the Northern Territory to bring in skilled workers under the Temporary Skill Shortage visa (Subclass 482) and will offer pathways to permanent residency for these visa holders.

The agreement allows employers to sponsor skilled workers for occupations which are not available under the standard visa arrangements, with some concessions for English language requirements and salary levels.

And for the first time ever, a pathway to permanent residency is being offered under DAMA.

While the Great South Coast region in Victoria is the first across the country to enter into such an agreement, the Northern Territory government will sign a new five-year agreement this week, ahead of the expiration of the first DAMA on December 31st.



“The NT has seen first-hand the benefits of using a Designated Area Migration Agreement to respond to their unique workforce shortages,” Mr Coleman said.

CLP Senator for the NT, Nigel Scullion said, “The Territory desperately needs more workers across a range of occupations and the DAMA will assist Territory businesses who are struggling to find appropriately skilled workers domestically.”

Australia to trial new ways for settling migrants in regional areas

The government is hoping to resolve the issue of overcrowding in the cities and the lack of population in certain parts of Australia by encouraging new arrivals to settle in regional and rural areas.



In Victoria, this agreement will assist key agriculture, hospitality and other businesses on the Great South Coast fill critical employment gaps by providing them access to a broader range of overseas workers than is available through the standard skilled migration programs.

Warrnambool City Council Mayor Cr Tony Herbert said the permanent residency pathway makes it an attractive proposition for skilled workers.

“Being also a pathway to possible permanent residency makes this a very attractive proposition for prospective workers and for the population growth of our region,” he said.

In Northern Territory, the first DAMA helped a number of employers fill positions in areas such as childcare, tourism and hospitality and the second edition will broaden the field of occupations to ensure the agreement includes more occupations.

“Employers struggling to fill any of the 117 skilled and semi-skilled occupations identified as being in shortage will need to demonstrate they are unable to employ a suitably skilled and experienced Australian to fill a position, before applying to sponsor an overseas worker,” NT Minister for Workforce Training, Selena Uibo said.

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs David Coleman said the Government is committed to supporting the skills needs of regional Australia where Australian workers are not available to fill those jobs.

“The Government is working to improve our immigration program to better match the needs of specific locations,” Mr Coleman said.



Win-win for the government and migrants

Migration agent Rohit Mohan says this new special visa agreements could be a win-win for everyone involved.

“The government is looking at ways to settle skilled migrants outside Sydney and Melbourne. These new visa agreements are aimed at settling people in these regional areas while filling up the labour skills gap and increasing population in these areas.

“Also, this visa is initiated by the employer. This means the migrant will have a job in the area, giving them the required initial start and also provide them with a pathway to permanent residency. It is a win-win for everyone involved,” Mr Mohan told SBS Hindi.

Regional migrants ‘being forced to move out’ for jobs and education

Regional migrants say the lack of a robust regional policy to create jobs and education avenues is the main reason why migrants choose to leave regional areas and move to bigger cities such as Sydney and Melbourne.

More regions on the radar

The Federal Government is currently in discussions with a range of other regions around the country experiencing skill shortages, including the Pilbara and the Kalgoorlie-Boulder regions in WA, Cairns in far North Queensland, and the Orana region in central NSW.

Warrnambool on Victoria's south-west coast is expected to have a DAMA in place before the end of the year.