



Regional Classification for Perth

On 19 July 2011 the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship announced the inclusion of Perth in the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS). The minister also agreed to include Perth as a regional area for family sponsored applications through the regional General Skilled Migration (GSM) programs.

In summary, Perth will be classified as a regional area for the following migration programs:

- Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (subclass 119 / 857)
- Skilled Regional sponsored provisional (subclass 475)
- Skilled Regional sponsored provisional (subclass 487)
- Skilled Regional permanent (subclass 887).

As a result, employers located in Perth and surrounding areas will be able to access the RSMS and the family sponsored regional GSM visa subclasses above to recruit and sponsor skilled workers for a greater range of occupations than currently available under the Temporary Business (Long Stay) Subclass 457 and other permanent skilled visa programs. This means that the whole of Western Australia will be eligible for these programs.

The department has commenced work on these changes and will make further announcements once they are in place.

Why are these programs being extended to Perth?

The government recognises that different regions face different opportunities and pressures. The diverse nature of the Australian labour market means that it is important to recognise unique local circumstances and tailor migration solutions accordingly.

Due to Perth's low unemployment rate businesses rely heavily on the subclass 457 and permanent employer sponsored visa programs to source the skilled workers they need. The inclusion of Perth as an eligible area for the RSMS and the family sponsored regional GSM is one of the ways the government can help to address the particular skill needs of Western Australia.

About the RSMS

The RSMS is a visa program that allows Australian employers in regional and low population growth areas of Australia to nominate foreign skilled workers to fill skilled vacancies within their business. This visa program provides concessions for employers and visa applicants in recognition of the difficulties many regional or remote communities are faced with when attracting skilled workers.

RSMS applicants generally need to be less than 45 years old, hold an Australian diploma or higher qualification and have at least a functional level of English proficiency. Applicants who are unable to satisfy any of the age, skill and English language requirements may still be considered if they can demonstrate that exceptional circumstance exist.

In the 2011-12 Budget, the government announced that the RSMS program would be expected to deliver up to 16 000 skilled migrants to regional and low population growth areas of Australia.

Since 1 July 2011, applications from people who apply for permanent residence through the RSMS are accorded the highest processing priority of all skilled visas. This ensures that regional employers can quickly access the skills they need for their business.

About the family sponsored regional GSM visas

The family sponsored regional GSM visas are for skilled people who are sponsored by an eligible family member who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident that lives in a designated area of Australia. This visa is a three year provisional visa and visa holders will have the opportunity to apply for permanent residence after they have lived for two years and worked at least 12 months in a specified regional area of Australia.

The applicant must be able to satisfy the basic requirements of skills, age, work experience and English language ability. Applicants are assessed against the skilled migration points test, and applicants receive 10 additional points for sponsorship by an Australian relative.