



October 2017

## AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP UPDATE

As reported in previous IMC Immigration updates, on 20 April 2017 the Australian Government announced its intention to make significant changes to the eligibility criteria for Australian Citizenship. This included the requirement that applicants provide evidence of English language competency as well as requiring applicants to have physically resided in Australia for a minimum period of 4 years as Australian Permanent residents.

The proposed changes have been strongly opposed and as a result, the proposed Bill legislating these changes has not been passed. Accordingly, the existing requirements for the grant of Australian Citizenship will continue to apply. It should however be noted that on 18 October 2017, the Government again proposed amendments to the legislation so that only applications lodged on and after 1 July 2018 will be assessed against the new criteria as previously proposed, subject to the passage of legislation through the Australian Parliament.

These recent developments give eligible applicants a window of opportunity to apply for Australian Citizenship under the existing Legislation and we strongly recommend eligible applicants apply without delay.

### Current requirements for Australian Citizenship (until possibly 1 July 2018)



The requirements for Australian Citizenship can vary in different circumstances however most applicants are Migrants in Australia who have been granted permanent residence and now wish to apply for Australian Citizenship. The requirements in this case include that you:

- are a permanent resident at time of application and time of decision
- meet the residence requirements detailed below
- are of good character
- have a basic knowledge of the English language
- intend to reside in or maintain a close and continuing association with Australia
- Successfully pass the citizenship test to demonstrate that you have an adequate knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship. If you are 60 years of age or over you are not required to sit the citizenship test.

## General residence requirement

The general residence requirement is based on the amount of time you have lived in Australia. All of the following requirements must be met:

- have lived in Australia on a valid Australian visa for four years immediately before application of which up to 3 of the 4 years may have been on a temporary visa.
- must have been a permanent resident for the 12 months immediately before making an application and not have been absent from Australia for more than one year in total, during the four-year period, including no more than 90 days in the 12 months before application.

For further information or advise on any of the matters dealt with in this Citizenship update or any matter regarding Australian permanent or temporary residence contact Ivan Chait (MARN: 9253612) by email [ivan@imcmigration.com](mailto:ivan@imcmigration.com) or telephone + 61 418 404 604.

