Australia Migrate Issues Employer Guidance on Trade Skills Fast Track

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CHATSWOOD, NSW - June 17, 2026 -
Registered migration agency Australia Migrate has published guidance for construction and electrical employers on Federal Budget reforms that aim to cut up to six months from skills assessment processing for qualified migrant tradespeople.

Australia Migrate, a registered migration agency established in 2000, has published guidance for employers on the skills assessment reforms announced in the 2026?27 Federal Budget. The reforms aim to cut up to six months from processing times for qualified migrant tradespeople and could add up to 4,000 extra trades workers to the Australian workforce each year, mainly in construction and electrical occupations.

The Budget allocates $85.2 million to the reform package, including $75.1 million over four years for Trades Recognition Australia to deliver a modern skills assessment system. The package also supports the integration of occupational licensing and introduces simplified licensing pathways for priority trades, so that recognised tradespeople can start work in their nominated occupation sooner.

"Employers in construction and electrical contracting have told us for years that the gap between hiring a qualified overseas tradesperson and that person actually being assessed, licensed and on the tools is where projects lose money," said Ian Singer, Director and Principal Registered Migration Agent at Australia Migrate. "Cutting up to six months from that timeline changes the maths on sponsorship for a lot of businesses."

The guidance also covers the rise in the Core Skills Income Threshold, which takes effect on 1 July 2026. The threshold increases by 3.9 per cent to $79,499 and applies to Skills in Demand (subclass 482) nominations lodged on or after that date, as well as nominations still undecided on that date. Employers must also continue to pay at least the Annual Market Salary Rate for the nominated occupation.

Mr Singer said the two changes should be read together. "A faster skills assessment brings workers into the labour market sooner, while the new income threshold lifts the salary floor for sponsorship. Employers planning to nominate tradespeople in the second half of 2026 should review their salary budgets now and confirm that candidate qualifications will satisfy Trades Recognition Australia requirements before lodgement."

Employers are encouraged to take a proactive approach in reviewing their recruitment pipelines ahead of the July 2026 changes. By auditing current salary structures against the updated Core Skills Income Threshold and confirming that potential candidates meet the revised Trades Recognition Australia criteria, businesses can minimise the risk of application delays. Engaging with migration experts early in the hiring process can ensure that all documentation is compliant and that nomination strategies are aligned with the new, faster processing pathways, ultimately providing a competitive advantage in securing skilled international talent.

Ultimately, these legislative adjustments signal a concerted effort by the Federal Government to streamline the migration system in response to persistent labour shortages in essential trades. As Australia Migrate continues to monitor the implementation of these reforms, the focus remains on empowering businesses with the clarity needed to navigate the evolving migration landscape. By prioritising compliance and strategic planning, the construction and electrical sectors are well-positioned to leverage these changes, effectively shortening the time from sponsorship to active project deployment.

Australia Migrate reports growing enquiry volumes from building, civil and electrical contracting businesses seeking to sponsor overseas workers under the Skills in Demand visa, the Employer Nominated Scheme (subclass 186) and Designated Area Migration Agreements. The agency's guidance sets out nomination timing, labour market testing obligations and salary threshold planning for each option.

Australia Migrate is based in Chatswood, Sydney, and has assisted businesses and individuals with Australian visa applications for more than 25 years. The firm's agents are registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority and advise employers across the construction, electrical, engineering and healthcare sectors. For more information about the Skills in Demand visa, or to read the employer guidance, visit the Australia Migrate website.

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AustraliaMigrate is a trusted leader in immigration & visa services. Led by Director Ian Singer and a team of five registered migration agents, we provide expert visa solutions for individuals and businesses of all sizes.

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