



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

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[salutation]

I am writing to you about this department's efforts to tackle the issue of unregistered migration agents.

It is a requirement of Australian law that people providing assistance with visa applications and some other immigration matters should be registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority. This registration requirement provides some protection to consumers who might otherwise be vulnerable to exploitation, and helps ensure that people working as migration agents are aware of relevant legislation and procedures and provide correct advice to clients.

The law provides that some people such as departmental officials, parliamentarians and immediate family members of visa applicants are exempt from the need for registration.

The requirement to register as a migration agent before providing immigration assistance in Australia has been in place for nearly 20 years. Nonetheless, there are some people in the community who operate as unregistered migration agents in contravention of the *Migration Act 1958*. Consumers who use their services are at significant risk of exploitation, and may find both their dreams shattered and their savings lost.

In an effort to help people identify unregistered migration agents who might take advantage of them, we have developed the following products:

1. YouTube video

A YouTube video has been developed on the dangers of using an unregistered migration agent. You can view this video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RacpuZ3NQ0> and we would be very happy for you to link to it from your website. Instructions for doing so are provided.

Please let us know if you have a website and would like to host the video direct instead of linking to Youtube. We would be happy to provide you with a copy of the file on CD/DVD.

2. A4 printable flyer

The flyer "Using a Migration Agent in Australia" brings together information currently available from a wide range of sources into a single sheet. It is available in our client contact centres, on our website (<http://www.immi.gov.au/visas/migration-agents/using/inside-australia.htm>) and other locations, including some community organisations.

people our business

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A copy of “Using a Migration Agent in Australia” is provided.
Please let us know if you would like further copies and we can arrange printing and delivery free of charge.

3. Opinion Piece from high level DIAC officer

The attached opinion piece is being sent to a number of ethnic newspapers for publication. The opinion piece discusses how illegal operators may take advantage of people’s desire for a new life in Australia, tips on choosing a registered migration agent and the consequences for illegal operators.

A copy of the article is provided.

You may wish to include the opinion piece and/or pamphlet in your newsletter, website, bulletin boards or public notices. Please advise if you would like either of these in electronic format.

It isn’t easy to reach the vulnerable people in our community who could fall prey to illegal operators. Your assistance in distributing these messages to members of your community is much appreciated.

For further enquiries please contact Julie Streatfield on (02)6264 4846 or via email at: julie.streatfield@immi.gov.au.

I thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Greg Phillipson
Director
Migration Agents Section
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