

EA Alert Dated: 11 Nov 2016

EA Alert (20/2016) : Amendments to EALCs to take effect from 1 Dec 2016

Dear Key Appointment Holder and EA Personnel,

We would like to inform you of revisions to the Employment Agency Licence Conditions (EALCs) that will take effect from 1 December 2016. The changes affect all Comprehensive Licence holders.

Conditions 9A, 9B & 9C

2 The In-Principle Approval (IPA) letter informs the foreign employees about their key employment terms and their rights and responsibilities. They must receive their IPA letter before departing their home country to work in Singapore. Having early sight of their IPA letter allows foreign employees an opportunity to clarify their key employment terms with their local agents and be better prepared for their employment in Singapore.

3 Although the EALCs already require EAs to ensure that the foreign employees' copy of their IPA letters are sent to them within a reasonable time prior to their departure for Singapore, our checks showed that majority of the foreign employees do not receive their IPAs in a timely manner. Therefore, the EALCs have been revised to require the EAs to implement measures by working with your overseas counterparts to ensure that the IPA letter will be received by the foreign employees prior to their departure for Singapore. To allow foreign employees sufficient lead time to review their key employment terms as stated in their IPA letter, the Ministry further requires that foreign employees receive their IPA letter at least 3 to 7 days¹ prior to their departure for Singapore. EAs shall also allow the foreign employees to retain their IPA letter. This will apply to all work pass applications made on or after 1 December 2016.

4 The Ministry will conduct periodic checks to assess the compliance of the above guidelines. The Ministry may take action against EAs who do not take appropriate steps to ensure that their foreign employees receive their IPA letter as required by Condition 9B.

Conditions 11B & 11C

5 All EAs are reminded to repatriate foreign employees to an international port of entry within the foreign employee's home country. This allows reasonable access to the foreign employee's hometown. A different destination is permissible if it is mutually-agreed between the foreign employee and the employer, or if the Controller of Work Passes so determines. This was also earlier communicated to FDW-placing EAs via EA Alert (18/2016).

6 The revised EALCs that will take effect from 1 December 2016 are attached. All Comprehensive Licence holders are to take note of the revised licence conditions.

Yours sincerely

Brian Wong

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Assistant Commissioner for Employment Agencies

¹The 3 to 7 days refer to calendar days. For instance, if a foreign employee is due to depart his or her home country to Singapore on 5th January 2016, then he or she should have received the IPA letter no later than 2nd January 2016.