Skills in Demand Visa: What Replaced the TSS 482 and What You Need to Know

Author: Nilesh Nandan, BBus(Accy) LLB MBA | Head of Practice, MyVisa Lawyers Pty Ltd

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The Transition

Since 7 December 2024, the **Skills in Demand (SID) visa** has replaced the Temporary Skill Shortage (TSS) visa (subclass 482). If you are an employer looking to sponsor a worker, or a skilled worker seeking employer sponsorship, this is the visa framework you now need to understand.

The SID visa introduces a fundamentally different structure from the TSS, with three distinct pathways based primarily on salary level rather than occupation alone.

The Three Pathways

1. Specialist Skills Pathway

- **Salary threshold:** AUD 135,000 or above
- **Occupation list:** Not restricted to a specific list — any legitimate skilled occupation qualifies

- **Key advantage:** Maximum flexibility for high-earning professionals

This pathway is designed for senior professionals, executives, and specialists whose salary alone demonstrates their value to the Australian economy. If you earn above the threshold, you do not need to be on any occupation list.

2. Core Skills Pathway

- **Salary threshold:** AUD 73,150 to AUD 135,000
- **Occupation list:** Must be on the **Core Skills Occupation List** (456 occupations as of December 2024)
- **Key advantage:** Broadest pathway for mid-level skilled workers

This is the pathway most comparable to the old TSS visa. The Core Skills Occupation List was released on 3 December 2024 and covers a wide range of occupations across healthcare, engineering, IT, trades, and professional services.

3. Essential Skills Pathway

- **Salary threshold:** Below AUD 73,150
- **Industries:** Restricted to critical sectors (aged care, disability, healthcare, and other essential industries)
- **Key advantage:** Provides a pathway for lower-paid but essential workers
- **Note:** Higher compliance requirements for employers

What Employers Need to Know

The higher **Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT)** of AUD 73,150 is a significant increase from the previous threshold. This is designed to protect local wages and ensure that sponsored workers are being paid at market rates.

Employers must also be aware of increased compliance obligations, particularly under the Essential Skills Pathway, where the Government is taking a more active role in monitoring working conditions and pay.

What Workers Need to Know

If you are currently on a TSS 482 visa, your visa remains valid until its expiry date. You do not need to apply for a new SID visa. However, if you are planning a new application or a renewal, you will need to apply under the SID framework.

I recommend checking whether your occupation is on the Core Skills Occupation List and confirming your salary meets the relevant threshold before proceeding with an application.

My Advice

The SID visa is a positive development overall. The salary-based structure is more transparent than the old occupation-list-only approach, and the Specialist Skills Pathway provides genuine flexibility for high-earning professionals. However, the Essential Skills Pathway needs careful monitoring to ensure it does not create a two-tier system where lower-paid workers receive less protection.

If you need advice on which pathway applies to your situation, or if you are an employer looking to sponsor a worker under the new framework, contact my office for a consultation.

About the Author

Nilesh Nandan is the Head of Practice at MyVisa Lawyers Pty Ltd, a specialist immigration law firm with offices across Australia. With 33 years of legal experience and 27 years specialising in immigration law, Nilesh is admitted as a solicitor in New South Wales and holds a practising certificate issued by the Law Society of New South Wales under the Legal Profession Uniform Law (NSW).

Contact: 1300 558 472 | enquiry@myvisa.com.au | https://myvisa.com.au

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