

Corporate Mergers and Acquisitions

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New immigration policy and recent Overseas Investment Act changes open gates for new investment opportunities

In the wake of recent changes to the Overseas Investment Act, the National Government's changes to immigration policy provide a real opportunity to attract foreign investment in your business.

Overseas Investment Act changes

Following the Government's recent proposal to reduce the red tape around the acquisition of land involved in foreign investment in New Zealand under the Overseas Investment Act there has been a series of significant amendments to immigration policy further opening the door to overseas investment in New Zealand businesses.

New immigration policies in place

The new **Migrant Investment Policy** makes New Zealand more attractive for business and investor migrants who are able to make a significant financial contribution to the New Zealand economy.

Investor Categories

The **Investor Plus** category is designed for overseas investors who invest a minimum of NZ\$10 million for at least three years. There are no age or language requirements for investors applying under this category. Following approval for residency under the Investor Plus category the overseas investor will only be required to spend 73 days each year in New Zealand.

The **Investor** category applies to individuals under 65 years with at least three years of business experience and a competent level of

English who invest NZ\$1 million over a minimum of four years.

Other anticipated changes to Immigration Policy

- A new **Entrepreneur Plus** category will be introduced in November 2009 to complement the existing Entrepreneur category. Entrepreneur Plus will offer a faster path to residence for applicants who create at least three full-time jobs and invest NZ\$500,000 in their business.
- The Government has also signalled its intention to introduce a **Silver Fern Visa** for highly-skilled migrants with New Zealand-recognised qualifications. This category will apply to those who have studied in New Zealand as well as overseas graduates. The Silver Fern Visa will allow New Zealand-qualified and visa-free country applicants to enter or remain in New Zealand as visitors for the short-term, while seeking permanent employment in highly-skilled areas in which New Zealand is experiencing a shortage of skills.

- The Government has also proposed a new policy for **retired immigrants**. The proposed policy recognises that New Zealand stands to benefit from individuals of high net worth but will require visa holders to indemnify New Zealand from any health, welfare, or superannuation costs.

Start a conversation

If you have any questions about how your business can make the most of the new immigration policy and changes to the OIA, contact a Kensington Swan expert.

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