

## **CANADA - Changes to Work Permit Policies as a Result of the 2010 Olympic Games**

**August 31, 2009** - On August 17, 2009, the Canadian government released Operational Bulletin 147, which includes several policy changes that will be enacted as a result of the Olympic Games, to be held in Vancouver and Whistler, British Columbia in February and March 2010. The following amendments have been made:

1. **Work Permit Exemptions for News Reporters:** This category for work permit exemptions will now extend to managerial and clerical news personnel provided that the news event is short term (defined as 6 months or less).
2. **Work Permit Exemptions for Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC):** This category is now expanded for VANOC seconded international business visitors provided that certain conditions are met, which include proving that the purpose of the work is to obtain experience that will later be utilized in the applicant's home country and proving that the individual will not earn any wages or receive benefits from VANOC while in Canada.
3. **Work Permit Policy for Major Event Unpaid Workers:** Citizenship and Immigration Canada is conducting a pilot program to evaluate the use of an amended Labor Market Opinion (LMO) or work permit policy for unpaid workers. If eligible, foreign nationals in unpaid occupations at events will be exempt from having to obtain an LMO or work permit. The pilot program will run through March 31, 2010, and all foreign nationals wishing to benefit from this program must enter Canada before that date.
4. **Labor Market Opinion (LMO) Exemption for Sponsor Incentive Programs:** Event sponsors are now eligible to employ foreign nationals at an event under a corporate incentive program without having to obtain an LMO provided they can demonstrate that Canadians have benefitted from a similar program in another country.
5. **Work Permit Policy for Crews on Cruise Ships Utilized as Accommodation Vessels:** This provision exempts crew members of a cruise ship from having to obtain an LMO or work permit if the vessel is engaged primarily in moving passengers internationally.
6. **Work Permit Exemption for National Security Accommodations:** The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has contracted two cruise line companies for 3 vessels to house RCMP and CF (Canadian Forces) personnel before and during the Games. The crew members aboard these ships are exempt from LMO and work permit requirements.
7. **Work Permit Process - Primary Workforce Fee Payment:** The Primary Workforce Opinion (PMO) process has been created to facilitate fee payment for work permits requested during the Olympic Games.