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AGREEMENT

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WHAT IS THE FNQ DAMA?

The Far North Queensland Designated Area Migration Agreement (FNQ DAMA) is a negotiated agreement between the Australian Government and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce (CCC) that was created to provide Far North Queensland (FNQ) employers with the option of sponsoring a broader range of overseas workers than the standard skilled migration program.

The FNQ DAMA was created because of the unique economic and labour market conditions that are experienced by businesses operating in Cairns and the FNQ Region.

The CCC, in its capacity as the Designated Area Representative (DAR) of FNQ based employers, negotiated a five-year agreement that FNQ businesses can use to sponsor workers that are critical to the FNQ region. Broader sponsorship is made possible through the creation of a special list of 164 approved skilled and semi-skilled occupations that can be nominated for sponsorship by an FNQ employer.

An employer that operates within the FNQ DAMA area can apply to become an approved business and use the FNQ DAMA to sponsor an overseas worker that is qualified in one of the approved [FNQ DAMA Occupations](#).

All FNQ DAMA visa applicants need to be sponsored by an employer that is operating within the FNQ DAMA area.



164

Skilled & semi-skilled
occupations available
for sponsorship

10

Non-ANZSCO occupations
included on FNQ DAMA
Occupation List

FNQ DAMA HIGHLIGHTS

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Months of work
experience &
reduced skills
assessment
requirements for
most occupations

96%

of occupations
lead to
permanent
residence

50 55

Relaxation of age
limit to 50 for most
occupations and to
55 for Level 1
occupations

THE FNQ DAMA AREA

The FNQ DAMA covers an area between the Cassowary Coast and the Torres Strait. It includes the city of Cairns and the surrounding towns of:

Atherton	Malanda
Babinda	Mareeba
Cape Tribulation	Mission Beach
Cooktown	Mossman
Daintree	Port Douglas
Gordonvale	Thursday Island
Innisfail	Tully
Kuranda	Weipa



The FNQ DAMA Designated Area includes Australian postcodes 4852, 4854-4856, 4858-4861, 4865, 4868-4875, 4878-4883, 4885-4886 and 4895, within the Cairns, Douglas, Mareeba, Tablelands, Cook and Cassowary Coast local government areas, as well as the Torres Shire Council local government area, and the Weipa Town Authority area.

FNQ DAMA FAQ'S



What visa can I apply for under the FNQ DAMA?

If you are a successfully sponsored under the FNQ DAMA you will be granted one of the following employers sponsored visas:

- Temporary Skills Shortages (TSS) (subclass 482),
- Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) (subclass 494), or
- Employer Nominated Scheme (ENS) visa programs (subclass 186).



Will I get permanent residency under the FNQ DAMA?

96% of the occupations on the FNQ DAMA Occupation list include a pathway to permanent residency. Generally, you will need to have held an eligible employer sponsored visa for at least 3 years before you can be endorsed and nominated for a permanent visa.



What is the role of the Cairns Chamber of Commerce (CCC)?

The CCC is the Designated Area Representative (DAR) and is responsible for overseeing the DAMA, endorsing employers, monitoring and evaluation as per the head agreement with the Australian Government.



Which businesses can access the FNQ DAMA to sponsor an international worker?



Businesses which are actively operating in the FNQ Designated area and:

- Are financially viable and have been actively and lawfully operating for at least 12 months
- Have no adverse history of not meeting their obligations to employees
- Are looking to employ overseas workers to fill full-time positions with duties that align with occupations on the relevant FNQ DAMA Occupation List
- Can demonstrate they cannot fill the position locally with Australian citizens or permanent residents,
- Can provide conditions of employment to overseas workers commensurate with those offered to Australian workers employed in the region.



How can I be sponsored as an overseas worker under the FNQ DAMA?

Individual workers cannot apply independently. Employers must apply to the DAR to access the FNQ DAMA for the occupations, concessions, and number of workers they require. In conjunction with the employer's sponsorship approval you must satisfy the age, English proficiency, skills, qualifications and work experience requirements that have been set out in the terms of the FNQ DAMA or as determined by the Department of Home Affairs at the time the Labour Agreement is approved.



STEPS TO OBTAIN YOUR FNQ DAMA VISA



Initial Inquiry

[Get in contact with our team.](#)



Assess Eligibility

Our agents will assess your situation and determine your eligibility to apply for a visa under the FNQ DAMA.



Commencement

Service contract is signed and deposit is paid.



DAR Endorsement

We prepare and submit your employer's request for DAR endorsement with the CCC.



DAMA Request

Our agents work with your employer to submit a Labour Agreement request with the DHA.



Nomination Application

Our agents work with you and your employer to submit an employer nomination application with DHA in accordance with the DAMA Labour Agreement.



Visa Application Lodged

Our agents work with you to prepare and lodge your visa application with the DHA.



Visa Approval

Your visa is approved. You can work full time and are now on track to becoming eligible for PR.

OUR INVOLVEMENT



Pictured (L-R): Natale Menniti (Migration Agent, Immigration Gurus), Joshua Ferreira (Migration Agent, Immigration Gurus), Hon. Warren Entsch MP (Federal Member for Leichhardt), Debbie-Anne Bender (Former CEO, Cairns Chamber of Commerce), Nicole Tobin, Joe Moro (President, FNQ Growers).



Cairns Chamber of Commerce

May 13, 2019 · 🌐

We were pleased to be part of the Far North Queensland Designated Area Migration Agreement (FNQ DAMA) announcement this morning!

The FNQ DAMA will play a vital role in filling skills gaps across our region. Our CEO, [Debbie-Anne Bender](#), together with [Joshua Ferreira](#) from [Immigration Gurus](#), have put in a substantial amount of work over the past months to get this agreement in place and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce is absolutely thrilled with this successful outcome.

More information on the agreement will be made available in the coming weeks.

In consultation and collaboration with the Cairns Chamber of Commerce, Immigration Gurus successfully lobbied the Federal government to acknowledge the specific needs of our region and found a solution which will assist in filling specific skills shortages facing the Cairns region.

“The Cairns Chamber of Commerce would like to acknowledge the hon. Warren Entsch MP and Joshua Ferreira, Immigration Gurus for their ongoing support. Without their assistance there would not be this successful outcome.”

*Debbie-Anne Bender,
Former CEO Cairns Chamber of Commerce*

CASE STUDY

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Miguel



Home Country:	Argentina
Age:	33
Current Employment:	Cook
Qualifications:	Certificate IV Commercial Cookery & Diploma of Hospitality
Work Experience:	2 years of Uber eats delivery and then 9 months as a cook with his current job
Employer:	Port Douglas Resort Restaurant
Current Visa:	485 Graduate Visa due to expire in 9 months

Overview:

Miguel completed his qualification on the Gold Coast. Upon receiving his graduate visa Miguel moved to Port Douglas to start working as a full-time cook. Miguel enjoys living in Port Douglas and wants to stay permanently. Miguel's employer is very happy with his work, has offered him a permanent position and is willing to sponsor him.

FNQ DAMA Outcome:



Under the FNQ DAMA, Miguel will be able to apply for a Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional Provisional (494) visa in 3 months. A 494 Visa will allow Miguel to continue to work for 5 more years and after 3 years, Miguel will be able to apply for Permanent Residence.

No FNQ DAMA Outcome:



Miguel does not have an immediate long term visa outcome. To apply for a Temporary Skill Shortage Visa (482) as a Cook, Miguel would need 2 years work experience. As his Graduate Visa will expire in 9 months, he will not be able to accumulate the necessary work experience and would need to apply for another temporary visa or depart Australia.

CASE STUDY

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Imogen

Home Country:	United Kingdom
Age:	30
Current Employment:	Bar (Supervisor)
Qualifications:	High School diploma
Work Experience:	2 years Hotel Reception & 3 months bartending with current job
Employer:	Cairns Cocktail Bar
Current Visa:	Second Working Holiday Visa (417) due to expire in 2 months

Overview:

Imogen has been enjoying the adventure of backpacking around Australia and New Zealand for the last 3 years. 3 months ago she moved to Cairns and started working as a bartender. She has loved her time in Australia and does not want to return home yet. Imogen is an invaluable member of the cocktail bar team, the business wants to keep her and is willing to sponsor her.

FNQ DAMA Outcome:



To be sponsored under the FNQ DAMA as a Bar Attendant (Supervisor) Imogen will need to obtain a relevant Certificate III qualification and 12 months work experience. Imogen applies for a student visa (500) to complete her Certificate III qualification and continues to work in her current job as a Bar Attendant (Supervisor). Upon completion of her Certificate, Imogen will satisfy both the qualification and work experience requirements and will apply for a Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional Provisional (494) visa. A 494 Visa will allow Imogen to continue to work for 5 more years and after 3 years she will be able to apply for Permanent Residence.

No FNQ DAMA Outcome:



No immediate long term visa outcome. Only the FNQ DAMA allows an applicant to be sponsored in a semi-skilled occupation such as Bar Attendant (Supervisor).

CONTACT



Level 1, 14 B Aplin Street
Cairns City, 4870, QLD



Info@immigrationgurus.com.au



07 4212 4332



www.immigrationgurus.com.au



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