

FAST FACTS

DOL Publishes Proposed Rule for Permanent Employment Cases

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) on May 6, 2002, published a proposed rule to replace the current labor certification program with an attestation and audit system, ostensibly to allow for the quick certification of permanent employment cases. The proposed program, referred to as PERM ("Program Electronic Review Management" System), sets forward a number of mandatory recruitment steps that would need to be completed before a labor certification application could be submitted to a DOL regional office, where it would be reviewed electronically. A case could be approved or audited based on "flags" in the system, or a random selection. The process for a non-audited case approval is expected to take about three weeks, a decrease from current processing times of several years in some jurisdictions.

While PERM could provide relief from the staggering backlogs, the proposed rule contains several unwelcome provisions. The mandatory recruitment steps would mark a departure from the spirit of reduction in recruitment (RIR) processing. The rule would restrict the ability of employers to use experience gained on the job as a factor when sponsoring already-employed foreign nationals, and would limit the use of novel requirements that often result from a changing economy and new technologies.

The comment period for the proposed rule is 60 days and implementation is expected during calendar year 2003 at the earliest.

IHT Executive Editor to Speak at Global Workforce Summit

David Ignatius, executive editor of the *International Herald Tribune* (IHT), will speak at the opening plenary session of ERC's joint meeting with IHT (The Global Workforce Summit: Focus on Asia-Pacific, Hong Kong, June 25-26, 2002). Beginning with *The Washington Post* and migrating to IHT (jointly owned by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*), Ignatius has had a wide-ranging career in the news business, from reporter, foreign correspondent, editor, and columnist to his current post at IHT where he is responsible for the global newspaper's news and editorial content. Ignatius's personal and professional experience as an expatriate led him to create a new monthly feature in the *International Herald Tribune*, *At Home Abroad*, dedicated to the unique lifestyle of those who live and work outside their country of origin. *At Home Abroad* is also an online expat resource center at www.iht.com/athome.html.

Full details, exhibitor and sponsor opportunities, and registration options for the Summit are located on ERC's Web site at www.erc.org/Global_Summit/Global_Summit.shtml. For information on the Summit, contact Karen Reid at 202/857-0857 or e-mail kreid@erc.org, or Brenda Fender at 770/943-7261 or e-mail bfender@erc.org.

IRS Will Not Seek to Tax Frequent Flier Miles

On February 20, 2002, in Announcement 2002-18, the Internal Revenue Service reiterated publicly the position it has taken for the last several years informally, that in view of numerous unresolved technical and administrative issues, it will not seek to tax receipt or personal use of frequent flier miles or other promotional benefits earned by individuals on business or official travel. Any future guidance on the issue would only be applicable to years after it is issued.

Canada to Hire Thousands of Tax Collectors

The Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) is planning to hire 9,600 tax collectors over the next three years to pursue tax avoiders and both businesses and individuals who owe back taxes, according to press reports. The CCRA said that more than \$12.7 billion was outstanding, and that it was also concerned about tax evasion by those taking advantage of the so-called "underground economy." Private economists have estimated the amount of missing tax revenues to be as high as \$160 billion, or 18 to 20 percent of the Gross Domestic Product.

ERC Global Workforce Symposium Set for Boston, MA

Are you keeping pace with innovations in domestic relocation policy and international trends? There is no better opportunity to stay current than ERC's Global Workforce Symposium, Thursday, October 10–Sunday, October 13, in Boston, MA. During the specialized Management and International Forums, attend skills development workshops presented by professional development experts, expand your knowledge of U.S. and international relocation, network with colleagues, and benchmark with industry peers. ■