

I am absolutely dismayed at the sudden changes proposed to LAFHA. We were moved to Australia's with my husband's job and whilst we are very happy to be here in this beautiful country for a few years we accepted the job offer based on LAFHA arrangements. We have accordingly signed a 2-year lease on a property based on a salary which included LAFHA. We maintain and pay tax on a property in the UK which we will return to. Whilst I can understand the Government not wishing to extend LAFHA beyond people's initial visa period it seems very unfair to remove it from people who have based their decision to move here on an overall income package with very little notice (possibly less than 6 months). As non-residents we have to pay for our children to attend public school in NSW plus we are expected to make voluntary contributions each year and receive an invoice at the end of each term for 'extras' such as Japanese and sport. We would not have to pay at all for our children's education in England and nor do Australians who move there temporarily. We are not entitled to any of the benefits that residents can claim i.e. family credit, social security, part compensation on before and after school care. My husband has turned around a failing business which has kept over 20 Australian citizens in employment. Without LAFHA we will probably leave and many talented people will choose not to come to Australia. The cost of living is extremely high in Australia and that is saying something considering we have lived in central London all our adult lives.

We are also wondering if consideration has been given to the impact it will have on the housing and rental market. There will be fewer expats able to pay the extremely high rents in Sydney and many Australian homeowners will be left without tenants to pay their mortgages.

Please consider a phased approach to the removal of LAFHA and for those that have already committed to work contracts based on LAFHA arrangements to be able to continue with LAFHA until the end of their initial visa period.

Regards
Helen Bird