



CHINA: NEW IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS AND VISA CATEGORIES TAKING EFFECT SEPTEMBER 1ST

The Chinese government has issued new immigration regulations to supplement the new Exit-Entry regulations that have recently gone into effect. These regulations will increase the number and type of visas available to foreign travelers and are expected to be implemented September 1, 2013.

The new regulations will increase the number of visa classifications from 8 to 12. Most importantly for business travelers is that the traditional **F Business Visitor visa** category will be split into two separate categories. There will be a revised **F visa** category for individuals engaging in exchanges, visits, and exploration/inspections and a new **M visa** category will be created for more typical commercial business visitors. This new M visa will effectively replace the F visa for most business travelers.

There will also be a new **R Highly Skilled Worker visa** category. While the government has not yet confirmed the requirements for the highly skilled classification, we expect more detailed information to be issued shortly to clarify the relevant definitions, visa specifications, application procedures, and benefits for **R visa** holders.

The traditional **L Visitor visa** will be split into three categories to include a new **L Tourist visa**, a new **Q Family Reunion visa**, and a new **S Dependent visa** for the family members of individuals working or studying in China. The new **S and Q visas** will also be divided into the **S1 and Q1 visas** for long-term visits of over 180 days and the **S2 and Q2 visas** for short-term visits of 180 days or fewer.

Given the wide-ranging changes set to go into effect, it is advisable to take these changes and the potential for adjudication delays into consideration when planning upcoming travel to China.

As always FosterQuan will continue to monitor global immigration regulations and procedures and will provide additional information in future Immigration Updates®, and on our firm's website at www.fosterquan.com.