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Consultation on Canada Gazette Part 1 Notice - 28 February 2015
Amendments to IRPR to support CRA Income Verification

The Canadian Association of Professional Immigration Consultants (CAPIC) is the official voice of the immigration consulting profession, and represents over 1000 members across Canada and around the world. In turn our members represent many thousands of CIC clients each year and have vast experience in matters of Family Class Sponsorships and Permanent Residence Card matters.

We thank you for this opportunity to provide stakeholder input as part of the consultation process. CAPIC has solicited input from our membership and have summarized the feedback below.

We are aware that this has been on CIC's radar for quite some time. The concept of CRA information sharing as a method of fraud detection was a recommendation contained in the 2013 report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration.

Generally, our members are very supportive of measures to enhance the integrity of CIC's program delivery and we can certainly see the greater level of certainty that officers would have if they were able to verify this financial documents directly from the CRA. Stopping fraud is in everyone's interest.

With the very small number of applications currently being considered each year for parental sponsorships, and the higher amount of income required than in the past, there is probably greater incentive for fraud in this program than there has even been in the past.

Some members have expressed concern with the procedure that officers might follow when this is implemented and the series of events that would occur should a



discrepancy be found between submitted documents and the CRA Income Verification System.

As an example the CRA sometime re-assesses tax payers, and not always accurately. Sometimes this leads to a time period of back and forth with the CRA to correct or update information. In such a situation the current assessment may negatively affect an applicant who had applied with one set of figures on a legitimate Notice of Assessment, but verification from CRA is now conflicting with that. We feel that in the interests of procedure fairness, any discrepancies must be brought to the attention of the applicants, and it's imperative that they be given time to address them.

Another concern aired by our members, deals with an element of the rationale from the Gazette Notice:

These individuals may be unlawfully receiving benefits and services (e.g. child tax benefits and health benefits) at the expense of Canadian taxpayers. Implementation of regulations to enable CIC to detect this sort of fraud would increase public confidence in the immigration process.

This statement gives the impression that CIC officers may be considering whether or not social services or taxation benefits are being fraudulently received. It's not clear what the exact elements of an information sharing agreement between CIC and CRA would entail, but if CIC is to start considering the validity of benefits being received from other departments it seems that officers may be overstepping both their authority and their expertise.

While the pre-published amendments to IRPR do not go into such details, CAPIC feels it's important that CIC consider these concerns as the policy & procedures that will instruct the day to day operations of the department are developed. CAPIC would like to be able to view the CIC-CRA information sharing agreement in order to better advise the membership on how its implementation will affect their clients.

Again, CAPIC thanks you for this opportunity to contribute and have its member's opinions considered on this important matter.



Yours truly,
Dory Jade, RCIC, C. Dir.
President