

30 October 2026

To: All firms employing construction Work Permit holders (WPHs)

**[From 1 Jan 2027] Bringing in New Construction Work Permit Holders (WPHs) from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Thailand**

1. On 30 April 2026, it was announced that to expedite the process of bringing in new workers, the pre-entry Skills Evaluation Certificate (Knowledge) (SEC(K)) testing<sup>1</sup> will cease for workers from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Thailand from January 2027. This cessation will be extended to all source countries from January 2028.
2. Prospective workers who have attained SEC(K) through overseas testing in PRC and Thailand prior to 1 January 2027 will be allowed to enter and work as new Construction WPHs since they possess the relevant SEC(K) qualification, subject to prevailing Work Permit criteria, including the firm's Dependency Ratio Ceiling (DRC).
3. From 1 January 2027, firms that wish to bring in new Construction WPHs who do not have the relevant SEC(K) qualifications from PRC and Thailand are required to tap on the Alternative Entry Pathway (AEP) programme.<sup>2</sup>

**Vocational Certifications recognised by BCA under AEP**

4. Under the AEP, firms can bring in new workers from source countries that have obtained vocational certifications recognised by BCA. To date, BCA has recognised nine vocational certifications offered in PRC and Thailand, spanning six trades already available for testing at PRC and Thailand Overseas Testing Centres (OTCs) today.

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<sup>1</sup> Currently, all new Construction Work Permit holders (WPHs) are required to obtain the Skills Evaluation Certificate (Knowledge) or SEC(K) in their source countries before entering Singapore (construction WPHs can also enter via the AEP programme). The SEC(K) assesses a Construction WPH's essential trade knowledge and practical craft-skills competencies.

<sup>2</sup> The Alternative Entry Pathway (AEP) programme allows Construction WPHs with relevant experience in specific trades, training and/or vocational certifications to work in Singapore in lieu of passing the SEC(K) test overseas. More details on the AEP Programme can be found here: [Alternative Entry Pathway \(AEP\) Programme](#) | [Building and Construction Authority](#)

5. As the standards of these vocational certifications have been recognised to be on par with existing SEC(K) skills standards, new workers from PRC and Thailand who possess the recognised vocational certification can be brought in to work in Singapore without obtaining the SEC(K) locally.

6. Furthermore, these nine BCA-recognised vocational certifications are assessed to be equivalent to attaining SEC(K) at a higher skill level. New PRC and Thai workers who possess these vocational certifications and earn a minimum fixed monthly salary of \$1,600 will be eligible for R1 (Higher-skilled) status via the Direct R1 pathway.

7. For the full list of recognised vocational certifications, please refer to [Alternative Entry Pathway \(AEP\) Programme | Building and Construction Authority](#).

Process to bring in new workers possessing Vocational Certifications recognised by BCA under AEP

8. For firms intending to bring in new Construction WPHs from PRC and Thailand from 1 January 2027 with vocational certifications recognised by BCA, the process is as follows:

| Step | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | <p>Firms are to approach the vocational centres directly to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Arrange for their prospective workers to enrol in the relevant vocational training and certification, or</li> <li>ii. Indicate that they would like to employ the vocational centres' graduates who hold the recognised vocational certification.</li> </ul> <p>The respective vocational centres' contact information can be found at <a href="#">Alternative Entry Pathway (AEP) Programme   Building and Construction Authority</a>.</p> |
| 2    | <p>The vocational centres will provide BCA with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Information about prospective graduates or workers</li> <li>ii. Verification of their vocational certification</li> </ul> <p>This process will take up to approximately 4–5 weeks. Once this process has been completed, the vocational centre will notify the firms.</p>                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3    | <p>After being notified, firms may proceed to submit a Work Permit application to the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) on <a href="#">myMOM Portal</a>. The Work Permit application process with MOM remains unchanged.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

9. To ensure that the recognised vocational certifications remain on par with existing skills standards, BCA may conduct sample audits.

Employer-led Process under AEP

10. Firms can also apply to BCA to pilot their own recruitment channel under AEP to bring in new Construction WPHs from PRC and Thailand without SEC(K) or BCA-recognised vocational certifications.

11. To apply, firms must submit a proposal to BCA outlining how they intend to select and train better quality Construction workers from PRC and Thailand in specific trades, using this form: [Alternative Entry Pathway \(AEP\) to bring in Better Quality Worker | FormSG](#)

12. Firms bringing in new Construction WPHs from PRC and Thailand must continue to meet MOM's prevailing Work Permit criteria, including DRC. This applies to all new Construction WPHs, whether they had previously attained SEC(K) in PRC or Thailand, or are being brought in via employer-led AEP processes or with recognised vocational certifications.

13. These changes will enable firms to bring in new Construction WPHs from PRC and Thailand faster while maintaining the quality of new workers.

14. For any questions, you may contact us via the BCA Feedback Form (<https://www2.bca.gov.sg/feedback/>).

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## FAQs

### **1. When is the last date to enrol workers for overseas testing in PRC and Thailand?**

Leading up to 1 January 2027 when overseas testing will cease for PRC and Thailand, firms should approach the existing OTCs in PRC and Thailand early for more information on the final enrolment and testing dates.

### **2. How did BCA select the vocational certifications from PRC and Thailand to be recognised under AEP?**

Based on the vocational schools' long-running track record in training workers who perform well in SEC(K) tests, BCA has assessed that these vocational certifications are on par with existing skills standards.

### **3. From 1 January 2027, how should firms source workers from other source countries besides PRC and Thailand?**

As part of a phased implementation leading up to the full removal of the overseas testing requirement from January 2028, mandatory pre-entry SEC(K) testing will continue in all other source countries. New Construction WPHs from all other source countries must continue to obtain SEC(K) overseas before entering Singapore. Alternatively, firms may bring in new Construction WPHs without SEC(K) via their own AEP pilots. More details will be shared nearer to January 2028, to prepare firms for upcoming changes.