



IMMIGRATION ALERT!

Business/Tourist Visa Waiver for Belgians Available Only With Machine-readable Passport

Effective May 15, 2003, only those citizens of Belgium who possess a machine-readable passport may travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program ("VWP"). The new machine-readable passports being issued by the Belgian government contain embedded security features that allow for more effective screening.

The VWP permits nationals from specific countries to apply for admission to the United States for up to 90 days, for business or pleasure, without first obtaining a nonimmigrant visa at a United States Consulate or Embassy. The Departments of Justice and State have determined that Belgium will be allowed to continue participating in the VWP on this provisional basis for one year. At the end of that year, Belgium will be evaluated in order to determine if its continued participation in the program altogether meets the security interests of the United States.

Seyfarth Shaw's Business Immigration Group provides periodic Immigration Alerts about noteworthy developments in the business immigration field. The information that we provide is of a general nature and should not be interpreted as legal advice applicable to a specific factual situation. If you have questions about the information contained in this Immigration Alert or would like to know more about Seyfarth Shaw's Business Immigration Group and our inbound and outbound visa processing capabilities, please contact either of our co-chairs: Jim King in Atlanta at jking@seyfarth.com or Russell Swapp in Boston at rswapp@seyfarth.com. If you would like to receive notice about future Immigration Alerts, please go to the navigation bar and click "Subscribe" under the Immigration Updates section.