

# Experiences of an Australian Lawyer abroad



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Registered Nurse, Barrister & Solicitor, Accredited Mediator

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## Aims of this Brief

- My experiences abroad
- The Law in KSA
- Culture Shock
- Tips for relocation



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## Brief Overview - Background

- Graduated as a Nurse in 1996.
- Graduated from Law in 2000.
- Admitted in 2002 (GDLP).
- Employed as in-house counsel/military lawyer with Department of Defence (Air Force).
- Associate with B & M based in Riyadh – KSA.
- Practising Muslim



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## Riyadh

- Capital of KSA
- Pop: 4.5 million - Avg Temp of 40 degrees
- Almost every modern convenience\*



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## Work

- Weigh up pros and cons
- Interesting work - especially CML (fusion on Shariah law precepts and common law).
- Be patient - give yourself time.
- Have a time line and an exit plan.



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## The Law in KSA



- The legal regime in Saudi Arabia is based on Islamic Law (the *Shariah*) - consists of precepts that are often expressed as general principles.
- A Saudi Arabian court (or other adjudicatory authority) has considerable discretion as to how to apply such precepts.
- The *Hanbali* School of Islamic jurisprudence is followed in Saudi Arabia - within this School there are majority and minority views on various issues, either of which may be applied in any particular case.
- Do not report their decisions and previous decisions of the courts and other adjudicatory authorities of Saudi Arabia – no binding precedent for the decision of later cases.

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## Office Routine

- Working week
- Clients are based EVERYWHERE!
  - Billing
  - Office profile
  - Calls/emails
  - Tea boy



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## Things to consider

- Pre-arrival (interview, visa, IGAMA)
- Health insurance in AUS (suspend?)
- Tax issues – Australia (non resident)
- Bank Account - overseas
- Register with AUS Embassy
- Remuneration Package
  - Return flights (how many/family/when)
  - Removals
  - Accommodation
  - Health insurance with firm
  - Interest free loan from firm?



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## Things to consider - cont

- Housing - Compounds
- Schooling
- Shopping
- Food/Expenses-Petrol
- Time Difference
- Arabic and other languages
- Car
- Safety/Security
- What if you are female?



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## Culture Shock

- Clash of Modernity
- Division of wealth
- Dress and bearing
- Driving and traffic
- Gender



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## Some final comments

- Be open to differences
  - Climate & Culture



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