

## Myanmar Alert – Securing Visas Upon Arriving in the Country on the Increase

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The number of visitors obtaining visas when they arrive at Yangon International Airport in Myanmar has increased significantly. In the first eight months of 2014, **74,503 individuals entered the country** without first getting a visa at a Myanmar Consulate abroad; instead opting to obtain tourist or business visitor visas when arriving at Yangon International Airport. According to Myanmar immigration authorities, **Chinese and Japanese nationals top the list of individuals using Myanmar's visa-on-admission process**. Travelers should be warned that even though this process was enacted more than two years ago, the majority of airlines still do not let passengers to fly to Yangon pursuant to this process for fear of paying return transportation costs if a passenger is denied admission. As such, travelers should check airline visa requirements prior to purchasing a ticket to Yangon.

As part of Myanmar's initiative to open up the country to foreign visitors, on September 1, 2014 authorities also started a new online "E-Visa" process for *TOURISTS* only. The current fee for this visa is \$50.00 and it is available to tourists via the Myanmar Consular website in their home countries. These visas will be valid for travel to the country for a three-month period and for a twenty eight-day period upon entering the country. Authorities indicate that the online visa system will be expanded to other visa categories sometime in the future.

Employers should monitor the travel of its employees to this region to ensure that individuals entering Myanmar do not require work permits, particularly considering the ability to enter the country as a tourist or business visitor is getting easier and faster.

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