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# CYPRUS STAR



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## Hit and run pair surrender to South Cyprus authorities

WAYNE Smith and Julie Skelding, listed on the Crimestoppers recent Operation Zygos "Most Wanted" list have left the TRNC and are now in South Cyprus police custody after surrendering to the authorities on Oct 3. Wayne Smith was convicted of death by dangerous driving in an incident in Bordesley Park, Birmingham, which saw a 22-year-old

## No work permit, No work



**By Marion Stuart**

THE meeting at the Department of Employment held to inform expats of their right to work had a very clear message – No work permit, No work!

The meeting was attended by some fifty interested parties, together with representatives of Government Departments, such as Social Insurance, Tax Office, Ministry of

Labour and the police, and it was made quite plain that under no circumstances could any work be done, whether paid or voluntary without a work permit, and explained with clarity that there are four categories for foreigners who reside on north Cypriot soil - Temporary, Permanent, Student and Work.

The only voluntary work permitted is that which involves a charity

who will ensure that appropriate paper work is completed and in the case of an outdoor activity is authorised by the local municipality.

A team of representatives and translators were at the top table and before the questions began, a sheet of 'Useful Information' was handed out and introductions made as to the purpose of the gathering

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# The government makes it plain – no work permit, no work - for expats

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Chiefly to inform of the 'Law concerning Foreigners Work Permit' which was amended in April of this year from the original 2007 Law, and to answer questions raised. One speaker suggested that the country welcomes retirees with sufficient funding to live independently, and who could enjoy life without working. The response from some present was that they, like President Eroğlu, found pleasure in contributing to life and working - even without pay, which sadly the present laws do not permit.

There was some disquiet and at times raised voices as clarification was sought on certain issues as it was plain that attendees felt discriminated against in certain sectors.

One area of concern was that of DJ's entertaining without pay and consternation that deportation could be the result of giving of one's skills and talents without pay. The newly formed Entertainers agencies had representatives and it was made clear as to how entertainers could join, work and pay their dues to the government, including reduced Social insurance rates. It was discussed as to the complications of DJ's, singers, musicians, karaoke nights, music licences, noise levels and where entertaining was considered as work or merely a party on private premises, or sharing in the fun of a local bar. For certain DJ's who are sharing their talents on government and other radio programmes for an hour or so a week, it had been made plain to them by those inviting them to take part that they are 'guests' on the station and are not working either paid or unpaid.

There was disappointment to learn that even wishing to comply with the law it was not possible to have a work permit for a particular work situation, and be able to entertain at night. Giving up the day job for entertaining purposes was not an option of regular income was required.

Disappointment was also felt as it was explained that work permits were available for 6 and 12 months at costs for 123TL and 135TL respectively, but that on acquiring one, the normal Residency permit became null and void, and should the work cease, then Temporary Residency must again be obtained with the necessary payment and in the case of under 60's a further blood test.

A second blood test could be required if applying for a work Permit whilst currently holding residency.

For those not currently holding Residency, then any application for a work Permit would have to be applied for whilst overseas, but in all cases it is the employer who pays for the work permit, and in the case of anyone working illegally, the employer would pay a sum of 6500TL to the government and the offending employee stood the risk of deportation.

The aspect of Citizenship was raised and it was stated that anyone who has held a Work Permit for 5 days and has not during that time been out of the country for more than 20 days year, might apply for Citizenship. However, there are no guarantees that application will result in Citizenship being awarded.



Officers at the meeting stated that to date no deportation has occurred, but there were those who queried as to why the employer should be let off so lightly.

Other questions were raised concerning taxation rates and the need for accountants, but the officers present made it clear that their role was to explain the law on work and that other departments needed to be consulted on peripheral issues.

The meeting which lasted two hours with a coffee break did not have time to answer all the questions, many of which also contained suggestions on possible ways forward, particularly as many of those attending felt frustration on several levels of the work/charity/visa aspect of life in Northern Cyprus.

One participant handed the officers a list of suggestions in the realm of entertainment, and another suggestion was that the possibility of issuing visas in line with other countries which contained permission for a short working week with pay within the visa itself. This would ensure that all skills and talents could be utilized for the benefit of society, the government would get tax and insurance monies, and there could be a greater sense of belonging to the society in which we all live.

At the end of the meeting it was recognised that further events could be held to clarify certain issues and maybe even discuss at Government level as to whether amendments could be made within the new law to find a way through that was both legal and satisfying to government and residents alike.

Both Yusuf Önderol, the General Director of Labour and Ismael Bayhanli, Line Manager, have suggested that anyone with further queries, suggestions or wishing to discuss what they feel might be of help for future meetings are asked to contact them by e mail:

yusufonderol@gmail.com and ibayhanli@gmail.com.

Both men are keen to have feedback from expats and will call another meeting in the future. All were thanked for attending and thanks were given to the Panel for helping expats to know their status and for the obvious concern of the panel to assist in knowing the facts for expats living here.

Meanwhile, anyone wishing to report any person they suspect of being an illegal worker, is invited to telephone 102.

WHAT EXPATS CAN HAVE! If not working.

Temporary Residence:

Temporary residency for one or two years for which certain documents are required as listed below (information thanks to Trevor Hughes). A visit to the local police station is the starting point for all new applications, but for renewals the situation differs in that over 60 year olds do not require a blood test, where under 60's do not.

It is advised to check with the Police Station or immigration for up to the moment rules on required paper work, but currently for the over 60's it is:

- Your current passport and a copy of your last residence stamp.
- A copy of your latest bank statement.
- A Muhtar's letter, which has been signed in the last three [3] months.
- A copy of your Kocan/rental agreement, but only if you have moved residence since the last application.
- 1 x 8.5 T L postage stamp, per application
- Your blue/pink identity card.

You will be handed a form to complete whilst there, which is the same form as the one which was completed by the police whilst making your previous application[s] at the police station.

Permanent Residence

The government has re-instated permanent Residency status whereby those eligible may apply although there is no guarantee that it will be granted, and the application can take up to 6 months during which time one must have some other kind of residency status. The criteria are:

You must be over the age of sixty [60] years.

You must have a minimum of five continuous years living in the TRNC supported by Temporary Residence stamps.

All residence stamps must be consecutive. Any break in previous Temporary Residence applications will mean that you must start all over again in order to meet criteria.

The earliest you can make your application is when applying for your sixth [6] Temporary Residence application.

When making your application you will need to take with you the following documents:

- Your passport and a copy of the last Temporary Residence stamp, with a copy of the photo page from your current passport.

- A copy of your criminal record, which you must obtain from the police department here in the TRNC.

- A copy of your in's and out's, again from your local main police station, or from a boarder control point.

- A copy of your bank statement showing pension payments made to you.

- A copy of your sales contract, Title Deeds, or rental agreement.

- A copy of your marriage certificate, if applicable.

- A copy of your birth certificate showing the names of your father and mother.

When making your application, the Immigration Office will help you complete the application form whilst there.

The current cost of Permanent Residence is 1486TL.

The Government is currently considering whether applicants will need to submit recent blood test results and an x-ray as part of the application. Watch this space for more information.