



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

**Joint Standing Committee on Migration**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

Issued: 23 February 2016

*Chair: Mrs Louise Markus MP  
Deputy: Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP*

## **Changing Seasons: Integrity of worker programme examined**

With more than 3,000 seasonal workers employed in Australia in the horticulture, agriculture and accommodation industries, Federal Parliament's [Joint Standing Committee on Migration](#) will continue its [inquiry into the Seasonal Worker Programme \(SWP\)](#).

Committee Chair Louise Markus MP said the SWP provides many benefits, including ensuring a supply of labour in areas of shortage and remittances for seasonal workers.

"The SWP contributes to the economic development of participating countries and assists Australian employers who are unable to source enough local Australian workers to meet labour needs," Mrs Markus said.

"It is vitally important that the integrity of the SWP is maintained in order to grow our industries, reduce illegal labour practices, and protect seasonal workers."

The Committee will take evidence from the Fair Work Ombudsman and the Department of Employment.

The inquiry is focused on:

- the visa regime for seasonal workers, labour regulation and compliance issues;
- the role of seasonal workers in growing the horticulture, agriculture and accommodation industries;
- the expansion of the SWP to other countries;
- labour recruitment issues and the impact on Australian jobs;
- increasing access for overseas women and youth workers; and
- how the SWP supports development in the Pacific.

### **Public hearing details:**

**Date:** Wednesday, 24 February 2016

**Time:** 9.50 am to 10.45 am

**Location:** Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra

[Live webcast \(Audio only\)](#)

**Date:** Wednesday, 2 March 2016

**Time:** 9.50 am to 10.45 am

**Location:** Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra

[Live webcast \(Audio only\)](#)

### **Media enquiries:**

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For a program and submissions, visit the [Committee's website](#) or contact the [committee secretariat](#) on (02) 6277 4560