

Via email: andrew.giles.mp@aph.gov.au

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18 October 2023

Dear Minister Giles,

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND DESIGNATED AREA MIGRATION AGREEMENT (FNQ DAMA) – REQUEST FOR URGENT FOLLOW UP

I write to you as the CEO of the Cairns Chamber of Commerce, the Designated Area Representative (DAR) for the Far North Queensland Designated Area Migration Agreement (FNQ DAMA).

You kindly met with our Migration Manager, Mr Geoff Heath and I on 13th September 2023 where we discussed the issues being faced by the business community in Far North Queensland in relation to the FNQ DAMA Deed of Variation.

We respectfully request an update from yourself and hopefully a positive move forward on our Deed of Variation which was submitted on the 16th of December 2022 followed by an urgent addendum to the Deed of Variation sent on 21st May 2023 in relation to the impact of the 1 July 2023 TSMIT increase and its impact on employers accessing the FNQ DAMA for many occupations where the market salary rate in our region is well below the new TSMIT.

No response whatsoever has been received by us in relation to this critical request. These Variation need to be addressed as part of the continuation of our Head Agreement which expires on 3 April 2024.

We are fielding calls daily from businesses and organisations who are in a labour crisis and need answers relating to their applications to enable them to move forward therefore your prompt attention to this would be greatly appreciated.

The FNQ DAMA has been extremely beneficial as a regionally nuanced solution assisting our regional employers address chronic skill shortages, complementing standard skilled migration options. The agreement has been accessed by many of our regional employers with great success and continues to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Patricia O'Neil
Chief Executive Officer
Cairns Chamber of Commerce
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