



26 July 2024

By email: legcon.sen@aph.gov.au

Re: Migration Amendment (Strengthening Sponsorship and Nomination Processes) Bill 2024

To whom it may concern,

The Electrical Trades Union of Australia ('the ETU') is the principal union for electrical and electrotechnology tradespeople and apprentices in Australia, representing well over sixty-thousand workers around the country. ETU members make up a critical pillar of the licensed electrical workforce responsible for delivering the Australian Government's commitments on providing a more efficient, affordable, and secure emissions-free energy network.

The ETU has never opposed skilled migration, subject to three core principles: it must not be used to undercut wages, it must not be used to suppress training opportunities, and it must be free of visa exploitation. As such, we have been actively involved in consultations regarding reforms to the migration system so that it will meet these principles.

As an affiliate member of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the ETU fully supports and has made contributions to the ACTU's submission to this Inquiry. The ETU supports the recommendations of the ACTU, specifically:

1. The Senate pass the bill.
2. The Government must expand the public register to include businesses that employ other temporary migrants to promote transparency and accountability.
3. The bill should be amended to delete the amendments proposed at 140GBA(3)(b)(ii) and 140GBA(4) that extend the validity of labour market testing from 4 to 6 months.

Further reforms to Labour Market Testing (LMT)

The ETU notes that the current system of employer-conducted LMT is not fit for purpose. The aim of LMT is to ensure that employers wishing to sponsor temporary migrant workers test the local labour market to first check if a suitable local worker is available to fill the role. Sponsors must provide information about their attempts to recruit local workers to the Department and demonstrate how they have determined that there are no suitably qualified and experienced local worker to fill the position.

Significantly, there is no requirement for employers to demonstrate that have attempted to attract local workers through improving conditions of employment (e.g. increasing wages) or putting in place requirements that employers employ apprentices as a condition of accessing skilled visa pathways. The ETU has proposed a model for how skilled migration can work alongside the training of the future electrical workforce and is engaging government on this as part of the broader government reforms to the migration system.



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In the meantime, the ETU does not support the further weakening of LMT by extending the validity of labour market testing to six months. And we look forward to JSA's role in independently verifying labour market need becoming more established.

Kind regards,

Michael Wright
National Secretary
Electrical Trades Union of Australia