



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Migration

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 12 November 2015

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

New opportunities for women under the Seasonal Worker Programme

The potential to increase opportunities for women under Australia's Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) will be investigated tomorrow when the Joint Standing Committee on Migration holds a public hearing as part of its inquiry into the Programme.

Committee Chair Louise Markus said that the majority of jobs under the SWP in the horticulture and agricultural industry have been filled by men, but there are indications that more women would be welcome in these sectors, and under an expanded scheme:

“Reforms to the Seasonal Worker Programme could encourage more women to take jobs in the accommodation sector, and potentially in tourism under planned trials in Northern Australia. Key government agencies, farmers and tourism representatives, along with TAFE Queensland, will discuss the opportunities, challenges and benefits of the SWP and its expansion into new sectors and regions.

The Committee will also hear from the New Zealand High Commission on the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme, which has grown the horticulture and viticulture industries substantially while reducing illegal labour activities in those sectors,” she said.

In the full day of hearings, the Committee will discuss:

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

Public hearing details:

Date: Friday 13 November 2015

Time: 9.30 am

Location: Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra.

The hearing will be audio webcast live on: www.aph.gov.au/live

For a program and more details, visit the committee's website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/mig>

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair, Mrs Louise Markus MP on (02) 4577 2631 (Electorate Office) or (02) 6277 2371 (Parliament House)

For further information: please contact the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4560, via email at jscm@aph.gov.au or visit the inquiry website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/mig>