



Restaurant
& Catering

SAVOUR
AUSTRALIA

20 June 2013

Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
PO BOX 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Committee Secretary

Migration Amendment (Temporary Sponsored Visas) Bill 2013

Restaurant & Catering Australia (R&CA) is the only peak organisation representing the interests of the 38,000 restaurants, cafés and caterers in Australia and this industry turns over some \$17 billion per annum and employs 250,000 Australians.

The industry is looking down the barrel of significant employment growth in the next twelve (12) months. This growth is on top of a sizeable attrition from the industry due to the large number of casual employees engaged. The cafes, restaurants and take-away food sector dominates employment in the Accommodation and Food Service industry accounting for 456,600 workers (or 61.6% of the industry employment).

R&CA's Workforce Development Plan is to promote and employ Australian workers, however there is a substantial need to for small businesses in this industry to consider employing chefs, cooks and restaurant managers from overseas where by this experience is not available in Australia.

The Association has written a number of submissions to the previous Immigration Minister on template labour agreements which can lead to a more flexible and streamlined approach to the 457 for this industry. The Federal Government has seen the labour shortage in this industry and extended its Pacific Island Workers Program to a new Seasonal Workers Program extending the program other hospitality industries such as accommodation.

The Tourism Minister's Labour and Skill Taskforce has recognised the shortage in Chefs and Cooks, this has been consistent with the general analysis by Deloitte Access Economics which was commissioned by the Government on the need to increase employment by 36,000 in the tourism sector alone.

In the short term R&CA supports the need to employ overseas workers in the profession's such as Chefs, Cooks and Restaurant Managers. R&CA also supports the notion of employing Australian's, however currently there is a very low uptake of Australians entering into apprenticeships or traineeships in the culinary field. This drop off can be attributed to several reasons, such as low unemployment, downturn in many trades and apprenticeships in all industries and competition from other industry's such as mining and IT. There has also been a disconnect between employment services and the hospitality industry.

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RESTAURANT & CATERING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

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There is a critical shortage of Chefs, Cooks and Restaurant Managers in regional areas. Many State and Territory Governments have realised this and included these profession's in the State Migration Skilled Occupation List.

The Association believes the major impediment to the employment of out of work Australians is the failure of the employment Services to engage with the hospitality industry and businesses. It is apparent that Job Services Australia has no incentives to deal with this industry including small and regional businesses.

R&CA believe the Government should be concerned when occupations such as Chefs, Cooks and Restaurant Managers are difficult to fill; these occupations are just not in the tourism and hospitality industry but the aged care facilities, canteens and regional work camps.

Many businesses who employ overseas workers would feel the Government's introduction of additional compliance requirements of labour testing to be onerous and extra layer of red tape bureaucracy. The introduction of the stringent labour market testing could cause significant time delays that may see regional areas not having access to many restaurants and cafes, as businesses may be forced to close down or move elsewhere as they are unable to employ people to fill the roles.

Finally, the Association believes the Federal Government should not introduce any changes to Temporary Sponsored Visa program without subjecting the Bill to a Regulatory Impact Statement and allow industry and businesses give their view point on the proposed changes.

If you would like to discuss this submission further, please call me on

Yours faithfully

John Hart
Chief Executive Officer

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