

**From:** [Peter Martin](#)  
**To:** [Committee, Migration \(REPS\)](#)  
**Cc:** [O'Neil, Clare \(MP\)](#)  
**Subject:** Terms of reference for JSC on Migration  
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Dear Joint Standing Committee on Migration

As an ecologist with a past career in scientific institutions and a deep concern for an ecologically sustainable future, I write to request a complete rework of the terms of reference that have been adopted for your enquiry.

As they stand they appear to pre-empt any finding that our long-standing bipartisan policy of high immigration might be ill advised. They appear to assume that continuing high levels of immigration is excellent policy, and all the enquiry has to do is some fine tuning.

The ToR need to be rewritten to allow us to challenge the basic assumptions of the entire immigration program. There are many objective, disinterested voices already questioning its rationale, in particular its assumption that the endless population growth it is driving is easy to manage and has a neutral environmental impact.

The government's own SoE reports clearly state that population growth is a major factor in environmental degradation. Many scientists agree. However, government seems to consistently embrace the views of a loose coalition of advocates of high immigration with clear interests in its continuation.

I implore you to review the international literature on the impact of human population growth on sustainability, and give those who seek other ways to national prosperity, environmental stability and human well being a chance to make submissions that will be given equal weight.

As things stand, it is easy to imagine a submission that challenges the current ToR being deemed 'off track' in failing to address how high levels of immigration promote nation building, or how immigration can be used as a 'strategic enabler of vibrant economies', or to 'strengthen skilled migrant pathways', and so on. The ToR are stacked against any submission that fundamentally questions the program. Clearly the program has not delivered on its core aim of the last 20 years of relieving skills shortages, since we are told they are still chronic and we need more immigration as a result. In the meantime, the program seems to exist in a bubble entirely ignorant of the manifest problems associated with rapid growth in human numbers and per capita consumption.

We can do so much better. Please revise the ToR so the review has intelligence and integrity.

Peter Martin  
