

SUBMISSION - GOLD COAST

PARLIAMENTARY JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION

MIGRATION, PATHWAY TO NATION BUILDING INQUIRY

Submission

This submission is presented by Regional Development Australia Gold Coast (RDAGC). It also reflects the views of the Gold Coast Regional Jobs Committee (GCRJC) which shares common leadership with RDAGC. Regional Jobs Committees (RJC's) are funded by the Queensland Government Department of Employment, Small Business and Training. They are part of a broader plan to work with key stakeholders to create more jobs, improve training pathways and drive economic activity across Queensland.

Context

There have been a series of studies commissioned by the RDAGC over the last two years which provide local insight into sectors including hospitality & tourism¹, biomedical², and manufacturing and Industry 4.0³. These studies have also been supported more recently with Industry workshops specifically focused on discussions around worker shortages.

We note current worker shortages on the Gold Coast in industries including manufacturing, biomedical, health, tourism, hospitality, marine, construction and ICT. Whilst open International borders and a return to normal, post pandemic may assist, most Industries believe that migration has a key major role in meeting future need.

It would be pre-emptive to define specific occupations of which there are shortages on the Gold Coast for this submission, as this is dynamic. It is considered more beneficial to respond to issues associated with process which constrain the ability for migration to support and grow our regional economy.

Issues

In response to significant worker shortages on the Gold Coast over the last 2 years, the RDAGC and GCRJC have reviewed vehicles like the Designated Area Management Agreement (DAMA) as a means of leveraging migration to support the urgent need for staff. Review of this arrangement with Industry indicates that the process is long (potentially 2 years), expensive and success is uncertain.

1

https://goldcoastrjc.org.au/images/documents/Gold_Coast_Regional_Jobs_Committee_Jobs_of_Today_Discussion_Paper_Dec_2021.pdf

² <https://goldcoastrjc.org.au/images/biomed/Regional-Biomedical-Supply-Chain-Development-Project-Presentation.pdf>

³ <https://goldcoastrjc.org.au/images/documents/GC-Industry-40-Business-and-Investment-Profile.pdf>

It has been noted by our GCRJC that other comparable countries to Australia⁴⁵ are reducing friction in the system due to the realisation that countries are competing on a global level for global talent.

Opportunities

There is opportunity to support migration that provides workers for industries currently experiencing worker shortages and which are likely to continue to be constrained due to their projected growth and increasing complexity. On the Gold Coast these include ICT, biomedical, Industry 4.0, marine, space and advanced manufacturing.

It has been noted that Australia is in competition for the best and brightest with other developed nations with ageing populations, and the migration process should be reviewed to reflect this. Where possible the process should take less time, be less expensive and carry less risk.

Moving Forward

We value the opportunity to provide advice regarding migration opportunities at a regional level. We look forward to hearing the outcomes of this process and genuinely hope that it results in the best and brightest being able to migrate to Australia for migrant benefit and Australia's economic and social benefit.

⁴ https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/mandate/stronger-immigration-system.html?utm_campaign=not-applicable&utm_medium=vanity-url&utm_source=canada-ca_stronger-immigration-system.html

⁵ <https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Australias-migration-opportunity-how-rethinking-skilled-migration-can-solve-some-of-our-biggest-problems.pdf>