



Public hearing

Educating the tourism workforce

The tourists are here, but are our workers well trained? Skills shortages and the training needs of the tourism industry will be among the issues discussed at a public hearing of the House of Representatives Employment Committee's public hearing in Canberra this week.

The Committee will hear from the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and Tourism and Hospitality Skills ACT at the hearing on Thursday, 22 March as part of its inquiry into employment in the tourism sector. In its submission to the inquiry (No. 60), DEST notes that the tourism sector is facing is facing specific skills shortages, particularly in the food trades.

Tourism and Hospitality Skills ACT Region (Submission No. 58) has found that there is a need for increased collaboration between training providers and employers, with 34 per cent of employers reporting limited to no understanding of available training programs.

On the inquiry, Committee Chair, Hon Gary Hardgrave MP, commented, "The tourism sector is of vital importance to Australia's economy and to promoting Australia on the world stage."

"The incorrect perception that the tourism sector does not provide long-term, satisfying career prospects is a serious impediment to its future employment growth. Training is essential to support continued employment growth in the industry and ensure Australia remains a top tourist destination."

The Committee is to inquire into and report on workforce challenges in the Australian tourism sector, with particular reference to the following:

- Current and future employment trends in the industry;
- Current and emerging skill shortages and appropriate recruitment, coordinated training and retention strategies;
- Labour shortages and strategies to meet seasonal fluctuations in workforce demands;
- Strategies to ensure employment in regional and remote areas; and
- Innovative workplace measures to support further employment opportunities and business growth in the tourism sector.

Public hearing program: Thursday, 22 March 2007

Time: 11.15am – 12.45pm
Venue: Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House Canberra
Witness: Department of Education, Science and Training
Tourism and Hospitality Skills ACT Region

Further details on the membership of the Committee, the inquiry and advice on making submissions can be obtained on the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ewrwp/> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4162 or emailing ewrwp.reps@aph.gov.au.

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Hon Gary Hardgrave MP, on (02) 6277 4585 or (07) 3344 2622

For background information, contact the Committee Secretary, on (02) 6277 4162 or 0407 406 337