



**MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE NORTH-WEST REGION INC.**

ABN: 944 440 426 277 Registered Incorporation No A0021391E

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08 JUN 2005

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**Inquiry into skills recognition, upgrading and licensing**

Committee Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee on Migration  
Department of House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
AUSTRALIA

Submission No.....	2
Date Received.....	8-6-05

Thank you for the opportunity to input to this standing committee. The responses below have been prepared jointly between MRC North West Region and YES West Employment services. MRC North West provides settlement support to migrants and refugees in the North West of Melbourne. YES West is both a Job Network provider and provider of Community Jobs Programs through the State Government of Victoria.

It has been our experience that new migrants have not been adequately informed about what they must do to have their skills recognized in Australia, most think that because for migration purposes they have had their skills assessed as been equivalent to an Australian degree that means they are assessed as been able to work and look for jobs in the area of their qualification.

They also are not adequately prepared for the cost of life in Australia especially the set up costs.

Many are asked to leave sponsors home after the first 1-3 months and often must seek help financially through community relief services.

Many are not accessing Overseas Qualification Process till they have been here some time as they have not been aware of what to do. By the time they then get skills assessed they are often in the country for over six months and desperate to work so they then prefer to take a labouring job just to feed the family, some then do not go back and get the assessment or even go back in their field.

**Recommendation**

- Improved pre embarkation information particularly around cost of living and employment prospects and the Australian qualifications recognition process and costs.
- Clearer information about bringing all documents with them when they come to Australia, if they do not then there are huge delays in trying to get overseas documentation.

The length of time it takes to get skills assessed creates difficulty for the skilled migrants and based on the assessment they often have to undertake a bridging course at high cost. There is no financial help during this long period. E.g. a teacher must redo their Diploma of Education as they are not able to be registered in Victoria, it takes one year full time during which they are not given any help to study. They often wait till the two year waiting period is over and go on Austudy.

There is also differences between states in skills recognition: A teacher can register in New South Wales but not Victoria.

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60 Belfast St, Broadmeadows 3047  
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Under Job Network skilled migrants are considered JSSO that is Job Search Support Only and are not eligible for anything more than a one of consultation with a Job Network for 45 mins and a vocational profile. They are only connected to the Jobsearch website and the jobs they are looking for are rarely advertised on this site. They are not shown all the other websites especially those specific to their industry. They are not shown how to write a cover letter, etc. Many bring their resumes or CV's from their country thinking this is ok here but the resumes we use here are very different.

Some occupations are not welcoming to overseas trained professionals, (Physiotherapists, Accountants, Doctors, IT etc.) They prefer those with Australian Qualifications. Many who have come in under the skills shortage stream have not been successful in gaining employment in these industries.

During the very lengthy period that it takes for Doctors and Nurses to get assessments to work in Australia, they can not work in any medical capacity not even in aged care facilities as they must have Certificate III in Aged Care. For e.g. I have one Nurse who must do a very expensive bridging course to register as a Nurse or go and retrain in Certificate III in Aged Care. The cost of the bridging course is in the thousands which this client does not have, although he has over 30 years experience as an emergency Nurse. I also have a cardiologist doctor who is patiently sifting through the medical process and has to go do her Certificate III in Aged Care just to get some work in the medical field. She has tried courses for Medical Receptionist etc. but has been unsuccessful so far. She now volunteers in a hospital, visiting patients.

Hairdressers from overseas are not automatically qualified here they can work in salons where the owner allows them to. But to get assessed here, it is a one off assessment and is not realistic in some cases.

### **Recommendations**

- A Skills Qualification Centre that directs people to the right organisation to have their qualifications assessed. One stop shop, for both Skilled and Trade workers.
- Help with the financial cost for trade qualified people like BOTPLS.
- bridging course if coming in on a skilled migrant visa specific to the industry.
- Breaking down the barriers between the industries that say there is a skill shortage and a direct response from them that they **WILL** take on overseas trained professionals and trade persons.
- Community Jobs Program –Early Intervention in Victoria, extension with 20,000 new migrants coming in to Victoria over the next year.
- Extending the program such as NMIT Overseas Qualified Professional Program to be accessed in the West and South of Melbourne.
- Programs such as Victoria CJP-J&T where new migrants can get a minimum wage at the same time getting Australian experience by working in an Australian workplace environment, which in turns provides them Australian workplace experience and a referee.

- Industries with Skill shortages set up similar programs whereby they train and give work experience to new migrants.
- Incentives for business to take on new migrants in skill shortage areas.
- More programs like the Department of Health and Ageing ran for overseas qualified Doctors to help them through the lengthy and difficult process in gaining registration in Victoria. Maybe also for other industries like Nurses and Accountants, etc.

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8.6.05

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