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Submission No. 66  
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Joint Standing Committee on Migration  
Department of House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
AUSTRALIA

**Subject: Inquiry into Skills Recognition, Upgrading, and Licensing**

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission to the standing committee. My submission relates less to the skills recognition procedure but more so to the actual migration application process that prospective skilled migrant applicants have to endure.

The submission relates to my experience of the skilled migration process. After undertaking a series of self-financed skills education in Australia and having received a positive 'Skilled Migration' assessment for the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2003 I submitted my application to the Adelaide Skills Processing Office on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2003.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2004 my application was returned unprocessed for the following reasons:

- I had by mistake provided a 'National Police Clearance' certificate instead of a 'Federal Police Clearance Certificate', which seems like an exercise in semantics to any foreigner trying to understand what actually is required – the correct certificate was subsequently supplied to the office as soon as possible after Christmas.
- The qualifying visa (supplied by the same Adelaide Skills Processing Centre) had lapsed. It was valid on the date of submission of the application to the office (17<sup>th</sup> December), but lapsed whilst the office was considering 'not to process' the application.

A request was made to the office for a visa extension to enable the application to be re-submitted, this being the same office who that issued a visa to me in August 2003 to enable my application to be lodged, had handled the application process, being aware of all the circumstances, the office declined to extend the visa. Hardly a helpful or

accommodating gesture from the office that is there to process, and therefore promote 'skilled migrant' applications.

This matter has yet to be resolved – my application has yet to be processed.

This begs the question as to whether all the departments involved in the 'Skilled Migration' scheme have the same aims of promoting the scheme and helping and assisting those who wish to participate.

I have received much help and encouragement from government departments involved in the assessment process; however, my experience of the final migration application process has not been a pleasant experience. My experience is not unique there are many other people with similar experiences to mine. My recent dealings with the local immigration office in Perth have been met with un-helpfulness and sometimes-outright rudeness from officers (a vast majority of them migrants themselves). There seems to an ethic within the Immigration office is that it is the officer's primary job function to keep people out of Australia – which seems contrary to the aims of the skilled migration programme.

It should be remembered that the immigration office is generally the primary interface to skilled migrant scheme participants and as such need to understand that people applying for a visa under the scheme are entering Australia to work and be a valuable member of society – as I hope to be eventually. The process is very intimidating as such all departments need to be aware of this and be prepared to assist as opposed to hinder applicants.

Again thank you for this opportunity to make this submission.

Yours faithfully,