



The Rock Resourcing Group  
Level 18, 44 Market Street  
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Thursday, 15 August 2002

FAO – Joint Standing Committee On Migration – Request For Information

Dear Sir / Madam,

Following your recent request for information I am writing to give some insight into our organisations views on the current Australian Migration Policy and how Australia's migration program is performing against the requirements of both our corporate clients and the migrants arriving in Australia.

Firstly, let me explain the nature of our business and how we qualify to provide this advise to your organisation. The Rock Resourcing Group is a specialist IT recruitment company, based in Sydney, that recruits high calibre IT professionals for clients across Australia. As an organisation we see first hand the skills in demand in the IT industry locally, which area's of IT are growing and which are in decline and how effective Australia's migration program is at assisting with the "Skills Shortage".

Our submission is based exclusively on the IT sector as this is our area of speciality. We are unable to provide you with any "formal" evidence to backup our comments but our views are based on speaking with hundreds of local employers and hundreds of local and international candidates on a weekly basis and discussing Australia, and the local employment marketplace. We are neither experts on the current Australian migration system or experts on migration in general however we can give input from a "recruitment" perspective on how we see the system working currently.

Firstly, you are interested in knowing how international candidates that approach us perceive Australia as appose to other potential locations for migration. This is a very easy question to answer, Australia remains a very popular choice for skilled migrants. The standard of living, the choice of careers and Australia's great weather are the most common reasons why migrants choose Australia as a destination.

Secondly, you asked how Australia's migration program compares to that of other countries. Unfortunately, as we only operate in Australia we do not know enough about the migration policies of other countries to comment on this.

Next you asked for comments on how, by policy changes you could improve the system & this is where we think we can add the most value to your process. In the IT Sector "In Demand" skills change very quickly and it can be very hard, if you do not work in the technology sector, to review which skills are required and which are not. Over the past 18 months the permanent labour migration program, because of the length of time it can take to process applications, has been delivering, in some cases, IT skills which are not in demand in the Australian workforce whilst leaving gaps in other sectors where demand is strong.

As a company that specialises in recruiting staff we often find it challenging when new migrants arrive in Australia with, for example, skills in older computer systems, looking for employment and we are unable to assist them. These migrants, although having gained residency in Australia through their skills, too often end up working in other industries because there is no call for their knowledge in the local marketplace.

In terms of how you address this, the answer is not simple however I think their needs to be closer communication between the migration system and the local IT employment marketplace. This would help ensure that Australia locates the skills that are in demand and migrants find work in areas where they can benefit Australia. One way to do this would be to hold a monthly review of the IT skills in demand with local IT Recruitment Agencies, major IT employers and the immigration department to ensure the skills coming in meet the demands of a rapidly changing marketplace.

I hope we have added some value and insight into your review process and if you require any further information, please feel free to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

Richard Talbot  
Director