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27 March 2003

The Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Email: jscm@aph.gov.au

Subject: Review of Australia's Skilled Labour Migration and Temporary Entry Program

The Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia Ltd (COSBOA) would like to make the following comments:

1. International competition for skilled labour.
This is based on skilled labour wishing to work in Australia compared to other international locations. The facts that are looked at
 - o Is basic entry requirements too restrictive (if you are over 45 why is age discriminatory for example)
 - o Skill work opportunity in metropolitan or regional location clearly defined to migrant
 - o Promotion of skilled migrants requirements to match skills shortage areas
 - o Competitiveness of job opportunity as to relocation expenses, salary, fringe benefits and income tax rates do play a part in skilled migrants decision to which country they move to.
2. The degree to which quality permanent skilled migrants are being attracted to Australia and settling well.
 - o The first twelve months of any migrants stay in a country is critical to whether a migrant stays permanently. If the job opportunity meets expectation, migrants family settles into new surroundings and local friends are made these are critical factors in how a migrant settles well.
3. Whether there are lessons to be learnt by Australia from the entry and program management policies of competing nations, including Canada, New Zealand, USA, Ireland, UK, Germany and Japan.
 - o From personal experience the migration into the USA and Canada was easier than entry into Australia some years ago. The program management should insure swift

passage without undue delay. Monitoring other countries best practice to improve Australia's entry system would be most beneficial.

4. The degree to which Australia's migration and temporary entry programs are competitive.
 - No Opinion
5. Whether there are policy and/or procedural mechanisms that might be developed to improve competitiveness.
 - No Opinion
6. Settlement patterns for new arrivals including the role played by State and local authorities.
 - New migrants need to be simulated into Australian society ASAP. This requires all information for simulation being available upon arrival. This requires information on accommodation, health insurance, taxation and employment provisions, schools etc. being readily available. A hotline telephone number listing for migrants as part of entry would be a welcoming gesture that would help a migrant in knowing who to turn to. Particularly important if arriving in a city where no friends or family reside.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Potter
CEO