

16th Jan 2003

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

Dear Sir,

RE FINDING SKILLED MIGRANTS

I write in response to your invitation to provide comments on experiences in attracting skilled migrants. I am employed in the field of town planning, with some 23 years work experience, mostly at a senior level in Local Government Planning and more recently as a planning consultant.

The town planning profession, particularly in NSW, is suffering from a critical shortage of experienced town planners. Vacancies for planners with more than 5 years experience are extremely difficult to fill and in most cases employers are obliged to appoint recent graduates with minimal experience in these relatively senior roles.

Current immigration rules do not allocate many "points" in the occupational category of town planning. This has placed potential migrants in the planning field at a disadvantage when seeking to enter Australia to live or work either on a permanent or longer term temporary basis. It is recommended that the planning profession be allocated much higher "points" in the immigration assessment process in order to encourage and facilitate the entry of more professional town planners into Australia.

There are a number of overseas planners working in Australia and they have generally adapted well to the Australian planning environment and Australian culture. In recent years rising remuneration for planners has given Australia an ability to create more interest amongst overseas planners in coming to Australia. However there is a need for many more overseas planners than can qualify for entry under the current rules. This is the main constraint to more skilled town planners coming to Australia.

I am an active member of the NSW Division of the Planning Institute of Australia and believe the Institute would strongly support moves to facilitate the entry of more skilled overseas town planners to Australia. I would invite you to contact the Planning Institute of Australia in Canberra should you require further information on the employment situation in Australia and the need for more planners.

Nick Juradowitch