



MOIRA SHIRE COUNCIL

**SUBMISSION TO THE SECRETARY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE
RELATIONS**

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL SKILLS LOCATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To inquire into and report on the applicability of government employment policies to address the skills shortages in regional Australia focusing on opportunities to support the relocation of unemployed workers from areas of high unemployment to areas experiencing skills shortages.

15 April, 2010

MOIRA SHIRE COUNCIL FEEDBACK

Moira Shire requests that the following be given your consideration relative to the Terms of Reference provided:

To inquire into and report on the applicability of government employment policies to address the skills shortages in regional Australia focusing on opportunities to support the relocation of unemployed workers from areas of high unemployment to areas experiencing skills shortages.

- Moira Shire supports this inquiry as the skills shortages in regional Australia has been, and continues to be an ongoing challenge.
- The Terms of Reference state *the relocation of unemployed workers*, not **skilled** unemployed workers. Moira Shire recommendation is that the Terms of Reference should state the “relocation of *skilled* unemployed workers”. If just the unemployed were being targeted then there would be no need for relocation as those unemployed locally could be targeted for skills training.
- Moira Shire believes that there are limited numbers of skilled workers like nurses, dentists and tradespeople etc currently unemployed. Is the assumption that there are an adequate number of skilled unemployed workers available for relocation flawed?
- However, assuming there are skilled unemployed workers available for relocation - then there would then need to be a strategic and coordinated approach to relocation information for both individuals and the entire family (when appropriate). This would need to include, but not be limited to:
 1. Secondary job opportunities.
 2. Career development.
 3. Work conditions.
 4. Infrastructure.
 5. Housing.
 6. Health provision.
 7. Education and Training.
 8. Place identity and social networks.
- Relocation assistance would probably need to be provided as the unemployed targeted would probably be cash-poor or potentially debt-ridden.
- A successful delivery mechanism would be for those businesses requiring skilled workers to combine and coordinate a uniformed approach to successfully engaging with the new skilled workers arriving. This could include:

1. Organising private accommodation.
2. Socialization activities.
3. Transport (including providing vehicles).
4. Development/distribution of promotional material.
5. Settlement services.

CONCLUSION

Moirashire's submission supports this inquiry as the skills shortages in regional Australia is an ongoing challenge. Future government employment policy addressing the skills shortages in regional Australia would need to address opportunities supporting the relocation of skilled unemployed workers, not just the general unemployment base. The Terms of Reference needs to state this.

Quantification is needed on the pool of skilled unemployed workers potentially available for relocation, is there a substantive number on hand? Assuming the answer is yes, there would then need to be a strategic and coordinated approach to relocation from both an information delivery and coordinated approach from local businesses. That coordination would deliver a uniformed approach to successfully engaging with the new skilled workers arriving.