

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2012–2013**

Outcome 3 – Employment

DEEWR Question No. EW0255_13

Senator Marshall asked on 29 May 2012, Hansard page 50

Question

Seasonal Worker Program – Recruitment Agent Arrangements

CHAIR: Is the employer or anyone else allowed to accept a fee for getting onto the program? Mr Roddam: No, not Australian employers. CHAIR: Is anyone else, from the country of origin able to accept a fee? Mr Roddam: I might provide on notice the details of the recruitment agent arrangements and the countries that have recruitment agents, to get that right.

Answer

The Australian Government has entered into Memoranda of Understanding with participating countries. These MoU outline that government-managed labour sending units and recruitment agents cannot accept fees from seasonal workers or prospective seasonal workers for the opportunity to be considered for the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme. There is no role in the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme for recruitment agents that are not approved or licensed by the governments of participating countries.

An Approved Employer may pay a fee for service to a recruitment agent. The Approved Employers must not pass this expense onto seasonal workers.

Recruitment agents may accept payment directly from prospective seasonal workers for a health check, a police check and for the visa application charge, but only if the recruitment agent uses these funds to arrange and pay for these checks and the visa application charge on behalf of the prospective seasonal worker. The health and police checks are part of the screening process that the Australian Government and participating countries have agreed to in Memoranda of Understanding. All prospective seasonal workers must complete these checks.

Recruitment agents are licensed and monitored by participating countries.