

PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Interim Report of the Inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker Program

Joint Standing Committee on Migration

September 2020
CANBERRA

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Contents

Committee Membership.....	v
Terms of Reference.....	vii
List of Recommendations.....	ix
Foreword.....	xiii

The Report

1 Working Holiday Maker Program	1
Background.....	1
Australians undertaking work in areas of high need.....	4
Temporary visa holders in Australia.....	11
Reopening the Working Holiday Maker program.....	17
Other matters.....	21
Appendix A. List of Submissions.....	25
Appendix B. List of public hearings and witnesses.....	29

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Terms of Reference

The Joint Standing Committee on Migration shall inquire into and report on the Working Holiday Maker program, with reference to:

- The purpose of the program including history, size, composition, eligibility, and reciprocal access for Australians and recent changes;
- The value of the program to Australia's economy, including tourism, health care and agriculture sectors;
- The ongoing impact of COVID-19 nationally and internationally on the program;
- The potential economic impacts on regional economies due to the disruption of access to Working Holiday Makers relied upon especially for the agricultural and tourism sectors; and the capacity, if any, for Australians made unemployed by COVID-19 to fill the labour shortage;
- The extent to which existing visa criteria and conditions related to Working Holiday Makers are still adequate and appropriate to address the purpose of this program, including cultural exchange and creating job opportunities for Australians;
- The extent to which the program can support economic recovery in regional Australia; and
- Any other related matters.

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

- 1.36 The Committee recommends that the Government urgently develop and implement a 'Have a Gap Year at Home Campaign' to attract young Australians, particularly the current cohort of Year 12s and university graduates, to undertake regional work. The campaign should:
- Appeal to young Australians' patriotism and their sense of adventure, enabling them to see their own country and earn money;
 - Appeal to young people who had planned to take a year off to travel and work overseas;
 - Provide young people with work and work experience opportunities at a time when there are fewer casual jobs available to young people; and
 - Give consideration to a HECS/HELP discount for undertaking this work.

Recommendation 2

- 1.45 The Committee recommends that for the next 12 months, the Government enable workers to stay on JobSeeker payments while undertaking low paid agricultural and horticultural work.

Recommendation 3

- 1.49 The Committee recommends that for the next 12 months the Government establish a one-off payment to help with the travel and accommodation costs

incurred, to be paid after a certain period of time working in regional, rural and remote areas.

Recommendation 4

1.63 The Committee recommends the following amendments be made for the next 12 months to the conditions attached to the Working Holiday Maker visa:

- Enable Working Holiday Makers who have undertaken work in key industries in all peri-urban, regional, rural or remote areas, to count their work towards qualifying for a second and/or third year visa.
- Allow Working Holiday Makers who have transitioned onto the subclass 408 visa to count essential work undertaken on the 408 visa to support any application to qualify for second and/or third year Working Holiday Maker visas.
- Extend the Northern Australia provision, allowing work in hospitality, tourism and other industries to apply in all regional, rural and remote areas.
- Enable all Working Holiday Makers to work for the same employer for more than six months, if they are in peri-urban, regional, rural and remote parts of Australia to provide more certainty for visa holders and employers.
- Recognise the importance for Working Holiday Makers to move across state borders, particularly between locations where there are high labour force needs and no COVID-19 cases, and facilitate appropriate exemptions and permits subject to approval by health authorities.
- Provide further financial and other incentives to encourage Working Holiday Makers who have completed their time in agriculture to stay and engage in more agricultural work.

Recommendation 5

1.75 In regard to temporary amendments to other temporary visa categories, the Committee recommends that for the next 12 months the Government:

- Incentivise international student graduates to stay in Australia after completing their studies, by offering an additional year or two for graduates eligible for a subclass 485 Temporary Graduate visa who undertake work in critical industries in peri-urban, regional, rural and remote parts of Australia.
- Make available incentive payments or support for transport and accommodation costs to international students who undertake work in peri-urban, regional, rural and remote parts of Australia during non-teaching period.
- Enable people on other temporary work visas, such as the subclass 482 Temporary Skill Shortage visa, who have lost their jobs, to work in critical industries in the absence of a specific employer sponsor.
- Consider any work students or subclass 482 Temporary Skill Shortage visa holders do in critical industries as counting towards the extension of visas, or where applicable as counting towards a pathway to permanent residency.

Recommendation 6

1.76 The Committee recommends that the Government review the necessity for the measures in recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 5 after 12 months.

Recommendation 7

1.89 In in order to facilitate the restarting of the Working Holiday Maker program and maintain the reputation of the program overseas, the Committee recommends that the Government:

- Enable current Working Holiday Maker visa holders who have had to leave the country, or were unable to enter the country and make use of their visas, to reapply for either the 417 or 462 subclass visas, paying a nominal fee with priority processing times.
- Extend age limits for current visa holders, if they have exceeded the age limits of 30 or 35 years, while waiting to use their visas. This should also be extended to those who were already granted visas so they can re-enter the country despite exceeding the age limits.

- Consider granting visas on a country by country basis as borders start to reopen, prioritising countries where there are lower levels of COVID-19 infection rates. Alternatively, consider prioritising countries where Working Holiday Makers usually undertake work in Australia for which there is the greatest need.
- Consider a sponsorship program requiring peak bodies, businesses or governments to help sponsor quarantine arrangements, or alternatively reimburse the costs of quarantine incurred by Working Holiday Makers after a certain period working in jobs where shortages exist.

Recommendation 8

- 1.95 The Committee recommends the establishment of a hotline for Working Holiday Makers where they can access all the advice they need regarding their work rights, workplace exploitation concerns, accommodation and employment options in one place.

Recommendation 9

- 1.96 The Committee recommends that Australians, Working Holiday Makers, and other temporary visa holders be made more aware of the Harvest Trail to enable the service to be better utilised and to facilitate the matching of willing workers to the areas where the need is greatest.

Recommendation 10

- 1.103 The Committee recommends that the Federal Government work with State and Territory governments and industry peak bodies to recruit additional people under the Seasonal Worker Program and Pacific Labour Scheme to fill urgent agricultural shortfalls.

Foreword

The Joint Committee on Migration has decided to produce this interim report for the inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker Program because of the urgent need to address the substantial labour shortages Australia's agricultural and horticultural industry is facing for the upcoming harvest season.

While the Working Holiday Maker program remains a key cultural exchange program, the agricultural and horticultural industry has also come to rely on working holiday makers to play a substantial role in harvesting. The shortage of working holiday makers has arisen primarily because of border closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee has received around 80 submissions from working holiday makers, businesses, organisations, industry bodies, academics and government agencies. We have interviewed 70 witnesses and conducted nearly 25 hours of hearings.

The Committee is still finalising its work on this inquiry. However, given the importance of the agricultural and horticultural sector not only to our economy but to domestic and international food supply, we want the evidence we have heard and our deliberations to help inform the Parliament and the Government's response to this crisis.

This interim report contains recommendations for dealing with the present labour shortages, including the novel idea of developing a "Gap Year at Home" campaign to appeal to young Australians who might have chosen to travel overseas to instead see some of their own country and undertake work in the agriculture and horticulture sectors.

We have also made recommendations on how to enable and encourage other Australians as well as temporary work visa holders residing in Australia to take up this work.

Further recommendations about the structure of the program more broadly will be included in the final report which will be handed down by the end of 2020.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank all those who have provided evidence to the Committee so far. That evidence has informed this report and will also guide the final report.

Mr Julian Leaser MP
Chair

1. Working Holiday Maker Program

Background

- 1.1 On 19 June 2020, the Acting Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Alan Tudge MP, referred an inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker program to the Committee.
- 1.2 The focus of the terms of reference for this inquiry was, in part, on the economic impact of the disruption of access to Working Holiday Makers (WHM) caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.¹
- 1.3 The terms of reference also included a range of other matters relating to the WHM program. However, due to issues that arose during the course of the evidence gathering for this inquiry, the Committee has chosen to produce a brief report, focused on the most pressing matters that require urgent attention from Government.
- 1.4 The Committee has not yet completed its public hearings and expects that a final report will be presented to Parliament by the end of 2020. The final report will deal with issues in depth and will contain more detailed examination of evidence and provide further recommendations.
- 1.5 However, given the significant evidence the Committee has heard and the fact that the harvest season is imminent the Committee wanted to make its preliminary thinking public given the extensive range of stakeholders consulted.

¹ The full terms of reference are available on the Committee website at https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Migration/WorkingHolidayMaker/Terms_of_Reference, accessed 4 September 2020.

- 1.6 The Committee's observations focus on using Australians and temporary work visa holders currently residing in Australia to fill the shortfall for the current season. In addition the Committee also considers that the Federal Government with the State and Territory governments and industry organisations should work together to recruit additional people under the Seasonal Workers Program and Pacific Labour Scheme to fill urgent shortfalls in agriculture.
- 1.7 The Committee also made some observations about the recommencement of the WHM program as well as the need for greater support for WHM in Australia through mechanisms such as a hotline and website and greater promotion of the Harvest Trail website.

Working Holiday Maker program

- 1.8 In its submission, the Department of Home Affairs provided some background on the WHM program:
- Australia's WHM program was established in 1975 as a cultural exchange program to advance Australia's international standing and bilateral links with partner countries and regions. The program was created to provide opportunities for young people to travel and undertake short-term work or study to supplement their holiday experience.²
- 1.9 The program – often referred to as the 'backpacker visa' – is comprised of two visa classes:
- The Working Holiday (subclass 417) visa; and
 - The Work and Holiday (subclass 462) visa.³
- 1.10 The Working Holiday visa is open to applicants between 18 and 30 years old (35 for Canada, France and Ireland), who meet the financial, health and character requirements and are not accompanied by dependent children during their time in Australia.⁴

²Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 4.

³Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 4.

⁴Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 8.

- 1.11 The Work and Holiday visa has the same requirements, as well as applicants having completed two years of post-secondary study (except for the United States), possess functional English, and in some cases, a letter of support from their government.⁵
- 1.12 While WHMs are not required to work while in Australia, around 84 per cent of people on a WHM visa were in the workforce.⁶ All WHMs receive full work rights for any occupation or industry anywhere in Australia, for up to six months with a single employer, or the full 12 months if working with more than one employer.⁷
- 1.13 However, WHMs can undertake work for the same employer for longer than six months if the work is:
- In different locations and work in any one location does not exceed 6 months;
 - In plant and animal cultivation anywhere in Australia;
 - In certain industries in Northern Australia;
 - Assisting bushfire recovery efforts; or
 - In critical sectors during the COVID-19 pandemic, including agriculture, food processing, health, aged and disability care and childcare.⁸
- 1.14 In 2005 and 2016 respectively, Working Holiday and Work and Holiday visas were changed to allow WHM to extend their visas for a second year if they undertake specified work in specified locations. The types of work included plant and animal cultivation, fishing and pearling, tree farming, mining and construction. The specified areas were focused on regional Australia, where agriculture, mining and construction labour shortages were the greatest.⁹

Committee Comment

- 1.15 The WHM program began in 1975 as a cultural exchange program. It is underpinned by a series of bilateral agreements to provide, in most cases, reciprocal exchange for young people to combine holidaying and work.

⁵ Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 9.

⁶ Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 6.

⁷ Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 10.

⁸ Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 10.

⁹ Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 10.

- 1.16 Despite the continuing importance of cultural exchange WHM visa holders also provide a vital labour source in the agriculture, horticulture, food processing, tourism, hospitality, health and aged care sectors.
- 1.17 Unlike employer sponsored visas, WHM visa holders have full work rights to work in any occupation or industry anywhere in Australia, for up to six months with a single employer, or the full 12 months if working with more than one employer. The transient nature of a labour force which also combines a tourism experience makes these workers ideal for short term labour intensive work such as harvesting.
- 1.18 One of the central issues for the inquiry has been the economic impact of the disruption of access to WHM caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Australians undertaking work in areas of high need

- 1.19 The Committee received evidence about an urgent shortage in the agricultural workforce that is likely to emerge in the very near future. The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) told the Committee that between 20 to 60 per cent of some farms workforces are made up of WHMs. Given the number of WHM in the country fell from approximately 140,000 in March 2020 to 70,000 in June 2020, the NFF stated that 'the industry will be confronted with a labour crisis, the likes of which it has never seen before'.¹⁰
- 1.20 The evidence of Mr Craig Pressler, CEO of 2PH Farms in Emerald, Queensland indicated the drastic actions that farmers are already taking as a result of the predicted labour shortages:

The need for labour is one of the critical needs at the moment and it's going to get more critical for us over the next 12 months, to the point where we have actually removed 100 hectares of trees and taken them out of production because we don't see there is going to be the need next harvest, there's no point spending up on the resources and time and money on those trees and then find we can't harvest them... it will take six to seven years [to get full production back]. 15 per cent of our income [will be] lost [representing]... many millions of dollars.¹¹

¹⁰ Mr Ben Rogers, National Farmers' Federation, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 28.

¹¹ Mr Craig Pressler, 2PH Farms, *Committee Hansard*, 11 September 2020.

1.21 The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance underscored the economic effect of a shortage of WHMs:

- The WHM program accounts for the majority, approximately 80 per cent, of the fresh produce industry's harvest labour workforce.¹²
- There is a short-term concern (September-December 2020) that the low number of WHMs in Australia, coupled with Australia's domestic border closures and restrictions will culminate in significant workforce shortages during peak horticulture production periods.¹³
- Work undertaken by Deloitte Access Economics... demonstrates that the removal of WHMs from the fresh produce industry would have a \$13 billion impact on Australia's GDP, or \$6.3 billion reduction in the value of the horticulture industry. Removal of WHMs from the fresh produce industry will result in an estimated fall in jobs of 127,900 (headcount) across Australia's economy, with food manufacturing and retail in addition to fresh produce being the hardest hit.¹⁴

1.22 AUSVEG highlighted the urgency of the problem:

The impact of COVID-19 on WHMs and on the horticulture industry should also not be understated. There has already been about a 35 per cent decline in working holiday makers in Australia and that is likely to worsen as we get closer to Christmas, as well as leave Australia with a significant shortfall of workers in early 2021.¹⁵

1.23 The NFF also discussed the difficulties in getting Australians to undertake this work:

The reality is that displaced Aussie workers may be reluctant to leave their homes and support networks in the cities and suburbs to relocate to rural and regional Australia to perform physically demanding work from early in the morning until late in the evening and, perhaps, to spend their nights sleeping in caravan parks or tents.¹⁶

¹² Australian Fresh Produce Alliance, *Submission 32*, p. 3.

¹³ Australian Fresh Produce Alliance, *Submission 32*, p. 4.

¹⁴ Australian Fresh Produce Alliance, *Submission 32*, p. 3.

¹⁵ AUSVEG, *Submission 46*, p. 5.

¹⁶ Mr Ben Rogers, National Farmers' Federation, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 28.

- 1.24 One possible way of addressing this, raised by the NFF, was the concept of an alternative gap year:

We've also put in a proposal for a gap year, given that there's not going to be a lot of international travel over the next 12 months I wouldn't have thought. Certainly the gap year uni students aren't going to be able to go to Europe and South-East Asia the way they would have in previous years. Getting them to do a bit of adventure tourism within their own nation and go and experience rural life, we think is a positive.¹⁷

- 1.25 The Northern Territory Government raised the potential value of the work experience gained as a result of the gap year in Australia concept:

If I had two resumes in front of me, and one was from a person who hadn't shown any get-up-and-go and the other one had had a job doing something in an outback area, the fact that one of them had and one hadn't would probably be enough of a benefit on someone's resume.¹⁸

- 1.26 The Northern Territory Government also stated that it would welcome the 'idea of some sort of additional giving of thanks and appreciation' to any young people willing to take up this idea.¹⁹

- 1.27 Ms Bree Grima, Director of Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers, detailed the success her organisation is already having recruiting young Australians to pick fruit in their school holidays:

Just recently, for the coming school holidays, we put a call out to all of the schools to see if anybody in grades 10, 11 or 12 could be looking for two weeks of work. We did quite well out of that and we are currently placing the students on farms to help them in their school holidays, and we will do it again at Christmas time.²⁰

- 1.28 Agri Labour noted the high regard that agricultural work experience can bring for those seeking subsequent work in other fields:

If you are a young Australian and you have experience working in agriculture on your CV, in my experience it is received extremely well and it is extremely preferable. I've had that experience myself, growing up in the country and

¹⁷ Mr Ben Rogers, National Farmers' Federation, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 32.

¹⁸ Ms Valerie Smith, Department of Tourism, Sports and Culture, Northern Territory, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 41.

¹⁹ Ms Valerie Smith, Department of Tourism, Sports and Culture, Northern Territory, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 41.

²⁰ Ms Bree Grima, Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers, *Committee Hansard*, 11 September 2020.

obtaining numerous jobs when moving to the city, purely based on the fact that I was a country boy and I had agricultural experience. That served me really well.²¹

- 1.29 Agri Labour told the Committee that perceptions of spending time working in agriculture ‘needs a lot of work’, and that more effort was required in marketing the industry. The Committee heard that, ‘if we were to market it differently, with a specific strategic marketing campaign’, this would lead to greater success in attracting more Australian workers into the sector.²²

Committee Comment

- 1.30 The Committee acknowledges the anecdotal evidence that in a time of full employment the agricultural sector, in particular, has had difficulties attracting Australians to undertake harvesting and other labour intensive work.
- 1.31 Part of the preference of many in the sector for WHM has been because of the reliability and the different motivations that WHM visa holders have for doing agricultural work. Representatives of the agricultural and horticultural sector told the committee that it was difficult to get Australians to relocate to remote locations for short term work. The Committee also heard evidence that JobSeeker and JobKeeper acted as disincentives for Australians to undertake this work.
- 1.32 Much of the reluctance to support Australians undertaking this work relates to the perception that the only available pool of Australians to undertake this work are the long-term unemployed. However COVID-19 provides an opportunity to broaden the available pool of Australians to undertake such work.
- 1.33 While in recent years Australia has hosted between 150,000-250,000 people on WHM visas, a significant number of Australians have also taken the opportunity to travel overseas for a ‘gap year’. While the precise number of Australians travelling internationally for such an experience is unknown, there are many young Australians who would have planned to have a gap year overseas at the completion of their school or university studies or as part of a career break. While international borders are closed there is an opportunity to promote the idea of having a ‘Gap Year at Home’. Such a program could provide opportunities for Australians to travel and

²¹ Mr Casey Brown, Agri Labour, *Committee Hansard*, 13 August 2020, p. 25.

²² Mr Casey Brown, Agri Labour, *Committee Hansard*, 13 August 2020, p. 26.

undertake much of the same work and use the same accommodation and tourism experiences as WHM have traditionally done.

- 1.34 The proposal for a Gap Year at Home received support from some in the agricultural and tourism sectors. Such a scheme would need to be properly marketed and may need some incentives like HECS/HELP discounts for participants to ensure maximum take up.
- 1.35 A Gap Year at Home scheme not only provides the chance to fill labour shortages but gives young people a greater sense of their own country, the chance to meet Australians from other parts of the country and the opportunity to learn more about industries which are vital to our national prosperity.

Recommendation 1

- 1.36 **The Committee recommends that the Government urgently develop and implement a ‘Have a Gap Year at Home Campaign’ to attract young Australians, particularly the current cohort of Year 12s and university graduates, to undertake regional work. The campaign should:**
- **Appeal to young Australians’ patriotism and their sense of adventure, enabling them to see their own country and earn money;**
 - **Appeal to young people who had planned to take a year off to travel and work overseas;**
 - **Provide young people with work and work experience opportunities at a time when there are fewer casual jobs available to young people; and**
 - **Give consideration to a HECS/HELP discount for undertaking this work.**
- 1.37 The Committee received evidence that there are a range of barriers to getting unemployed Australians to take up agricultural work:
- What we hear from industry is that some of the work is very short term and in more regional or remote areas, so it's hard to attract people to move from what

might be city areas or close to cities for short periods of time, given the kind of start-up costs in terms of finding accommodation and travel and so on.²³

1.38 Another barrier was raised by the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance:

One of the key factors is the continuation of JobSeeker and JobKeeper, which are a safety net for Australians to ensure they maintain their health and their standard of living. There is a really practical challenge. If we have people living in a capital city and receiving JobSeeker or JobKeeper, there's a perfectly rational set of decisions in saying, 'If I were to seek full-time employment in another location—not down the road, where I can stay in my home—I would have to move to another location and arrange temporary accommodation'.²⁴

1.39 The NFF echoed this concern, noting that relative rates of pay were a possible barrier:

While farm wages are as good as any other sector—ABS data indicates that as much as \$1,000 a week can be earned in entry-level positions—displaced workers with established careers in other fields may find entry-level salaries unattractive. While farms are prepared to absorb the hit to productivity, one might wonder whether displaced workers will tolerate a drop in their incomes, especially when they can receive generous JobSeeker and JobKeeper payments.²⁵

1.40 AUSVEG elaborated on how JobSeeker can act as a disincentive:

Even recently, when JobSeeker payments were raised, many growers have reported that they've had workers collect their final pay cheques and leave because they'd rather go home and receive the JobSeeker payment than work on the farm. To put it in perspective, after tax there's only about a \$250 per fortnight difference in take-home pay for a level 1 on the horticultural award to that of the JobSeeker payment, but for many that's a disincentive to work.²⁶

²³ Ms Rosemary Deiningner, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 21.

²⁴ Mr Michael Rogers, Australian Fresh Produce Alliance, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 4.

²⁵ Mr Ben Rogers, National Farmers' Federation, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 28.

²⁶ Mr James Whiteside, AUSVEG, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 10.

- 1.41 At a public hearing, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) told that Committee that steps were being taken to incentivise Australians to take up agricultural work. For example:

[Victoria has] established programs to try and encourage domestic workers to move into the agricultural sector, and they are providing incentive payments and that kind of thing to help with the level of domestic unemployment in their jurisdiction. More recently, of course, with the more recent border closures, we've seen Victoria and New South Wales working to make sure that agriculture workers, whether they're seasonal or otherwise, are able to move.²⁷

- 1.42 The NFF also discussed incentivising agricultural work for unemployed Australians, raising the Seasonal Work Incentives Trial:

In case you're not familiar with that program, that allowed people who were on social welfare benefits to earn up to \$5,000 while working on a farm without affecting those payments. It was effectively a financial inducement to work on farms.²⁸

- 1.43 AUSVEG also commented on the Seasonal Work Incentives Trial, noting that while on paper it was 'quite a good trial', the results were mixed:

Unfortunately, the aim was to get 7½ thousand domestic workers into horticulture, yet it only got 789 people over the two years and, out of that 789, there were mixed results.²⁹

- 1.44 Given the low take up of the Seasonal Work Incentives Trial outlined in evidence, the Committee suggests that any financial incentive offered be time bound.

Recommendation 2

- 1.45 The Committee recommends that for the next 12 months, the Government enable workers to stay on JobSeeker payments while undertaking low paid agricultural and horticultural work.**

²⁷ Ms Rosemary Deininger, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 21.

²⁸ Mr Ben Rogers, National Farmers' Federation, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 33.

²⁹ Mr Tyson Cattle, AUSVEG, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 16.

1.46 The location of the workforce gaps was raised as a possible barrier to Australians taking up agricultural work. According to the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance:

A key difficulty in recruiting Australians in fresh produce is the regional location of the employment. In order to address this issue, a relocation payment should be offered to incentivise Australians to move from metropolitan areas to regional locations where there is harvest work.³⁰

1.47 The Committee also received evidence on obstacles like accommodation. According to the NFF:

Obviously there are issues with accommodation which we probably need to address—for example, getting an Aussie to go stay in a caravan park or group accommodation on farms. Something that might be okay for a backpacker who's having an adventure holiday may not be acceptable to a 35-year-old former chef or baggage handler, as I said before. So something to assist with those sorts of obstacles would probably be important.³¹

1.48 The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance proposed direct financial support for Australians willing to work in agriculture and to agricultural businesses. Specifically, it proposed a \$1,200 relocation support payment for workers and a \$1,200 induction support payment for businesses, to be paid retrospectively after three months of work is completed.³² The Committee sees value in extending this support to include accommodation as well.

Recommendation 3

1.49 The Committee recommends that for the next 12 months the Government establish a one-off payment to help with the travel and accommodation costs incurred, to be paid after a certain period of time working in regional, rural and remote areas.

Temporary visa holders in Australia

1.50 Evidence was presented to the Committee on the impact that the postcode-based definition of areas eligible for the 88 days of regional work was having on some agricultural producers.

³⁰ Australian Fresh Produce Alliance, *Submission 32*, p. 6.

³¹ Mr Ben Rogers, National Farmers' Federation, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 32.

³² Australian Fresh Produce Alliance, *Submission 32*, p. 6.

1.51 For instance, Growcom told the Committee that:

Growers with operations immediately outside eligible postcodes will be trying to recruit backpackers from the same pool of labour and are at a significant disadvantage because they cannot confirm and assure those backpackers that they will have their time on their farm recognised as part of their 88-day commitment. It makes it really unfair and it's really quite difficult.³³

1.52 According to Growcom, this issue extends beyond the regional nature of the work, and also affects the type of work undertaken:

As a grower, because you get to a more metropolitan area, there are many more job opportunities available to the same workforce than are available to people in more remote areas. So it's not just that they are competing with their fellow growers or backpackers or all Australian resident workers for that matter; it's that they are competing with cafes, pubs and other employers of low-skilled workers as well.³⁴

1.53 The Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel (BYTAP) argued that the restrictions on the time WHMs spent with a single employer should be adjusted. Specifically, that the visa conditions should be changed to:

Enable WHMs to work an additional six months with one employer if they work in the following high demand and critical sectors in any part of regional Australia (i.e. extending beyond Northern Australia), which are unable to be filled by Australians:

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Tourism and hospitality
- Mining and construction
- Childcare/au pair
- Health care, disability care and aged care (similar to the current relaxation of work hours for international students).³⁵

1.54 The Department of Home Affairs discussed a range of changes to WHM visas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

To ensure continuing access to essential goods and services, the Government introduced changes to allow temporary visa holders, including WHMs, to remain working in critical sectors including health and aged care, disability

³³ Mr Richard Shannon, Growcom, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 23.

³⁴ Mr Richard Shannon, Growcom, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 23.

³⁵ Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel, *Submission 29*, p. 21.

services, agriculture, food processing and childcare during the COVID-19 pandemic. WHMs employed in these critical sectors are exempt from the usual six month work limitation with one employer.³⁶

- 1.55 Additionally, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to the 2019 bushfires, the Department of Home Affairs changed the definition of 'specified work' to include 'bushfire recovery efforts in a declared disaster zone'.³⁷
- 1.56 The Department of Home Affairs also relaxed the conditions for international student visa holders' work rights in response to COVID-19:
- On 7 March 2020, the 40 hour work limit for student visa holders was temporarily relaxed for supermarket workers. This measure ceased on 1 May 2020.
 - On 18 March 2020, approved aged care providers were given access to a temporary relaxation of working hours for student visa holders. This relaxation remains in place.
 - On 23 April 2020, registered National Disability Insurance Scheme providers were allowed access to the temporary relaxation of student visa holders' working hours. This measure also remains in place.³⁸

Committee Comment

- 1.57 While the Committee supports these changes, in the Committee's view they do not go far enough. Further immediate reform is required to address the temporary shortages produced by COVID-19.
- 1.58 Due to COVID-19 there are a number of temporary visa holders in Australia who have access to work subject to limits, and who do not have access to benefits.
- 1.59 The Committee believes that the Government should utilise the available pool of temporary visa holders to work in critical industries. These include WHM, international students and holders of temporary skilled visas.

³⁶ Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 11.

³⁷ Department of Home Affairs, *Submission 42*, p. 10.

³⁸ Department of Home Affairs, *Australian Government COVID-19 Travel Restrictions and Information for Visa Holders*, 'Temporary relaxation of working hours for student visa holders', <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500/temporary-relaxation-of-working-hours-for-student-visa-holders>, accessed 5 September 2020.

- 1.60 The Committee suggests that the Government consider some adjustments to visa conditions as appropriate, including permitting extensions to their time in Australia, and allowing visa holders to work more hours, which may help address the labour shortages as a result of fewer WHMs coming to Australia.
- 1.61 For people with a permanent residency pathway, time spent working in critical sectors should also count towards such a pathway.
- 1.62 The Committee notes that there have already been a range of changes to WHM and other visas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These recommendations build on those changes.

Recommendation 4

- 1.63 **The Committee recommends the following amendments be made for the next 12 months to the conditions attached to the Working Holiday Maker visa:**
- **Enable Working Holiday Makers who have undertaken work in key industries in all peri-urban, regional, rural or remote areas, to count their work towards qualifying for a second and/or third year visa.**
 - **Allow Working Holiday Makers who have transitioned onto the subclass 408 visa to count essential work undertaken on the 408 visa to support any application to qualify for second and/or third year Working Holiday Maker visas.**
 - **Extend the Northern Australia provision, allowing work in hospitality, tourism and other industries to apply in all regional, rural and remote areas.**
 - **Enable all Working Holiday Makers to work for the same employer for more than six months, if they are in peri-urban, regional, rural and remote parts of Australia to provide more certainty for visa holders and employers.**
 - **Recognise the importance for Working Holiday Makers to move across state borders, particularly between locations where there are high labour force needs and no COVID-19 cases, and facilitate appropriate exemptions and permits subject to approval by health authorities.**

- **Provide further financial and other incentives to encourage Working Holiday Makers who have completed their time in agriculture to stay and engage in more agricultural work.**

1.64 Evidence was provided on the role other visa holders can play in filling workforce gaps. Specifically, the Migration Institute of Australia stated:

The COVID pandemic has forced many temporary work visa holders to be stood down from their employment or to be laid off but are not able to return to their own countries. However, displaced workers holding Temporary Work (Skilled) Subclass 457 and Temporary Skill Shortage Subclass 482 visas are not permitted as a condition of their visa to work for any employer other than their visa sponsor. They are also not eligible for Australian government assistance or support.³⁹

1.65 As a result, the Migration Institute of Australia proposed that certain visa conditions for these visa holders be temporarily waived so as to allow for them to 'undertake seasonal work until the economy improves'.⁴⁰

1.66 In the Committee's view, there is value in extending this idea beyond temporary skill shortage visas who have been stood down, and including other temporary work visa classes. This would act to increase the pool of available workers, as well as providing opportunities to visa holders who may be facing difficulties supporting themselves and may otherwise be forced to leave the country prematurely. Additionally, for those visa holders who have been stood down, rather than made redundant, their former employers would benefit by being able to re-employ them once the worst of the pandemic has passed.

1.67 The Refugee Council of Australia noted that there are already 17,000 people on Temporary Protection Visas or a Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV) who would be able to fill labour shortages around Australia. They recommended that the SHEV pathway be modified to provide a pathway to a more permanent visa.⁴¹ The Committee is still receiving evidence on that point.

1.68 Agri Labour raised the possibility of international students playing a role in filling vacancies in agriculture, noting that the 'close to 100,000' student visa

³⁹ Migration Institute of Australia, *Submission 72*, p. 12.

⁴⁰ Migration Institute of Australia, *Submission 72*, p. 13.

⁴¹ Refugee Council of Australia, *Submission 49*, pp. 1-6.

holders could 'live and work in remote locations and do their studies online'.⁴²

1.69 However, at present, the international student visa conditions would preclude such an option:

Unfortunately, those student and working holiday makers are restricted to working hours, as we know, but I believe that if we were to strike up the same criteria as the working holiday-maker visa for regional location and agricultural tasks, they may have unlimited working rights for a period while we're under this current environment impacted by COVID.⁴³

1.70 Agri Labour provided survey data to support this proposal:

We actually surveyed a few thousand student visa holders to ask them if they would take up work in agriculture if they had unlimited working rights. We had 96 per cent say that yes, they would.⁴⁴

Committee Comment

1.71 The Committee notes the suggestion to allow students to move to regional areas and study remotely. To this point in the inquiry, the Committee has not received additional evidence either for or against this suggestion.

1.72 The Committee is aware that the international student visa purpose is to allow students to study at the institutions that they are enrolled in. The Committee is also aware of the desire of many international student graduates to stay in Australia on the subclass 485 Temporary Graduate visa after completing their study.

1.73 Many graduates seek work in their professional field however they may struggle to secure such a position in the current economic climate. Therefore it may be an attractive option to offer graduates an extension on the subclass 485 Temporary Graduate visa for a period of one to two years provided they undertake work in key industries in regional, rural and remote areas.

1.74 International students are already able to work more hours outside teaching periods, however, the provision of an incentive payment to support transport and accommodation may facilitate international students undertaking work in key industries in regional, rural and remote areas.

⁴² Mr Casey Brown, Agri Labour, *Committee Hansard*, 13 August 2020, p. 26.

⁴³ Mr Casey Brown, Agri Labour, *Committee Hansard*, 13 August 2020, p. 26.

⁴⁴ Mr Casey Brown, Agri Labour, *Committee Hansard*, 13 August 2020, p. 26.

Recommendation 5

- 1.75 In regard to temporary amendments to other temporary visa categories, the Committee recommends that for the next 12 months the Government:
- Incentivise international student graduates to stay in Australia after completing their studies, by offering an additional year or two for graduates eligible for a subclass 485 Temporary Graduate visa who undertake work in critical industries in peri-urban, regional, rural and remote parts of Australia.
 - Make available incentive payments or support for transport and accommodation costs to international students who undertake work in peri-urban, regional, rural and remote parts of Australia during non-teaching period.
 - Enable people on other temporary work visas, such as the subclass 482 Temporary Skill Shortage visa, who have lost their jobs, to work in critical industries in the absence of a specific employer sponsor.
 - Consider any work students or subclass 482 Temporary Skill Shortage visa holders do in critical industries as counting towards the extension of visas, or where applicable as counting towards a pathway to permanent residency.

Recommendation 6

- 1.76 The Committee recommends that the Government review the necessity for the measures in recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 5 after 12 months.

Reopening the Working Holiday Maker program

- 1.77 The Australian Tourism Export Council told the Committee that planning for the resumption of international tourism needs to be prioritised, and that WHMs were an ideal place to start:

It is complex and intricate, but the inbound tourism sector is very well placed to both manage and facilitate safe and responsible travel. The working holiday-makers segment, given its demographic profile and its tourism profile, is an excellent example of a specific group of travellers that may be a cohort that is first boots on the ground, and, thanks to those long stays and

higher spends, will be instrumental in the economic kickstarts we are all seeking as part of a broader recovery plan.⁴⁵

1.78 The Committee received a detailed proposal for resuming the WHM program from BYTAP, which was also endorsed by the NFF. This proposal set out four goals:

- 1 Restart youth travel safely and responsibly, with a trial period of inbound travel programs in three critical sectors: agriculture, bushfire recovery and child care (au pairs).
- 2 Develop a framework for COVIDsafe travel phases as international travel ramps up post-COVID-19.
- 3 Support the Australian tourism, agricultural industries and working families, dependent on WHMs to fill a surplus of jobs, whilst maintaining job opportunities for Australia.
- 4 Support the health, safety and wellbeing of tourism staff, travellers and the Australian public.⁴⁶

1.79 One important component of this proposal is mandatory onshore quarantine for all arrivals, which BYTAP characterised as essential. To support this essential requirement, BYTAP recommended the establishment of ‘affordable traveller quarantine at suitable hostel or budget accommodation’ as a shared expense, where operators can be ‘provided access to any government funded program to offset quarantining costs’.⁴⁷

1.80 BYTAP raised concerns about a significant drop in the number of WHMs once the program resumes, noting that there are a significant number of WHMs who either had to leave the country early, were unable to make use of their visas, or having to stay, have found it difficult to secure the work required to receive a second year visa.⁴⁸

1.81 To address these issues, BYTAP recommended that, amongst other thing, the Government:

- Enable extensions for WHMs who left Australia early or could not activate their visas;
- Extend age limits to 35 years; and

⁴⁵ Ms Anna Taylor, Australian Tourism Export Council, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, p. 48.

⁴⁶ Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel, *Submission 29*, Appendix V.

⁴⁷ Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel, *Submission 29*, Appendix V.

⁴⁸ Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel, *Submission 29*, pp. 12-13.

- Establish a COVIDsafe corridor to enable WHMs to enter Australia, with cost-neutral or affordable quarantine options.⁴⁹

1.82 MADEC Australia echoed the call for opening travel corridors, stating that the Government should:

Explore the option to immediately allow WHMs from low risk countries such as Taiwan and South Korea to enter Australia with self-funded, Commonwealth supervised quarantine at point of entry, but with quarantine costs refunded upon completion of 88 days of specified work.⁵⁰

Committee Comment

- 1.83 Eventually international borders will start to reopen and the WHM program should recommence.
- 1.84 The Committee heard evidence that WHM visa holders made a significant contribution to the economy not just for the work they do but because of the economic contribution they make to the tourism and travel industry. Tourism Australia figures suggest the program is worth about \$3.1 billion to the Australian economy. The Committee heard that WHMs stay longer, spend more and visit regional Australia for longer periods than other visa holders.
- 1.85 One of the strengths of the program is its ability to bolster Australia's soft power by providing citizens of other countries with the chance to live and work in Australia and return home with friends and experiences that leave them positively disposed to Australia and its people.
- 1.86 However, the goodwill is undermined where people think they have been treated unfairly especially where they have qualified and paid for a visa and circumstances beyond their own control have removed that opportunity.
- 1.87 The Committee has received lots of evidence and requests from WHM visa holders who have had had their time in Australia cut short as a result of COVID-19 or who have qualified for a WHM visa but because of COVID-19 they have not been able to come to Australia. Some of these people may find themselves too old for the program by the time it restarts. The fair thing to do in these circumstances is, subject to the usual health and security checks, allow people in these situations to continue or commence their time in Australia for a nominal fee with priority processing times.

⁴⁹ Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel, *Submission 29*, pp. 20-21.

⁵⁰ MADEC Australia Pty Ltd, *Submission 70*, p. 11.

1.88 The Committee has also received evidence from stakeholders especially in agriculture and tourism of the desire to reopen international borders on a country by country basis. While health advice will need to be the primary consideration, there is some support for opening the borders to countries with WHM visa holders who have a strong track record of working in agriculture. Part of any re-opening will involve strong quarantine arrangements. State Governments or Industry bodies might consider bearing those costs for WHM visa holders. Another method of defraying the cost of quarantine might be for WHM visa holders to be refunded their quarantine costs after they have worked for a certain period in critical industries.

Recommendation 7

1.89 In order to facilitate the restarting of the Working Holiday Maker program and maintain the reputation of the program overseas, the Committee recommends that the Government:

- **Enable current Working Holiday Maker visa holders who have had to leave the country, or were unable to enter the country and make use of their visas, to reapply for either the 417 or 462 subclass visas, paying a nominal fee with priority processing times.**
- **Extend age limits for current visa holders, if they have exceeded the age limits of 30 or 35 years, while waiting to use their visas. This should also be extended to those who were already granted visas so they can re-enter the country despite exceeding the age limits.**
- **Consider granting visas on a country by country basis as borders start to reopen, prioritising countries where there are lower levels of COVID-19 infection rates. Alternatively, consider prioritising countries where Working Holiday Makers usually undertake work in Australia for which there is the greatest need.**
- **Consider a sponsorship program requiring peak bodies, businesses or governments to help sponsor quarantine arrangements, or alternatively reimburse the costs of quarantine incurred by Working Holiday Makers after a certain period working in jobs where shortages exist.**

Other matters

1.90 The Committee heard evidence that, while the information about employment, accommodation and other issues that WHMs need is available, it may not necessarily be easy to access. According to BYTAP:

The [Department of Home Affairs] have quite extensive information, but I'm not sure whether it's concise and whether it's in a format that is easy for travellers to understand and whether there is the support that they need. It is quite difficult to get clear and concise information... That's probably the biggest challenge – finding that one source of truth that is quite easy and acceptable for them to understand.⁵¹

1.91 The Committee notes that MADEC Australia's Harvest Trail Information Service website provides detailed information on the Harvest Trail, and includes three major components:

- 1 The National Contact and Communications Centre (NCCC), which provides information to jobseekers, growers and industry, and can refer workers to Harvest Trail vacancies, to a dedicated Harvest Office or other potential work sources.
- 2 Harvest Trail Website (HTW), which lists vacancies for harvest work. Vacancies can be listed on the website by the NCCC, individual Harvest Trail Offices (who operate in specific horticulture regions under separate contracts with the Commonwealth Government), or directly by individual growers or business. The HTW is a component of the much larger jobactive website.
- 3 National Harvest Guide. This document provides extensive information on locations of harvest work in Australia as well as the types of crops in specific towns/areas, peak demand for labour and travel, tourism and accommodation information for each town and is available online.⁵²

1.92 The Migration Institute of Australia recommended the establishment of a 24 hour hotline for WHMs to provide comprehensive employment and other advice to visa holders.⁵³

1.93 The Committee is in the process of hearing evidence about allegations of exploitation of WHMs. Over the last few years this has been a serious issue

⁵¹ Mr Brendan McKenna, Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel, *Committee Hansard*, 3 August 2020, pp. 45-46.

⁵² MADEC Australia, *Submission 70*, pp. 1-2.

⁵³ Migration Institute of Australia, *Submission 72*, p. 5.

and has been the subject of investigations by the Fair Work Ombudsman and a Migrant Worker Taskforce chaired by Professor Alan Fels AO. The Committee is considering those reports and their implementation, and will have more to say in the final report.

- 1.94 However the Committee has received evidence that it would be valuable to provide more comprehensive support to WHMs in general through the provision of a 24 hour hotline and associated one-stop website for WHMs to provide comprehensive advice to visa holders which would include but not be limited to employment and accommodation matters.

Recommendation 8

- 1.95 The Committee recommends the establishment of a hotline for Working Holiday Makers where they can access all the advice they need regarding their work rights, workplace exploitation concerns, accommodation and employment options in one place.**

Recommendation 9

- 1.96 The Committee recommends that Australians, Working Holiday Makers, and other temporary visa holders be made more aware of the Harvest Trail to enable the service to be better utilised and to facilitate the matching of willing workers to the areas where the need is greatest.**
- 1.97 The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) noted the importance of the Seasonal Worker Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme to the agricultural workforce. It further stated that addressing the resumption of these labour sources will be important in providing the best outcomes for the fresh produce industry.⁵⁴
- 1.98 In this regard, the AFPA proposed:
- the creation of a ‘Pacific Bubble’ as soon as possible, within the extant health requirements;
 - An increase in the number of places under these schemes to 15,000 annually; and
 - Improved operation and administration of the program.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Australian Fresh Produce Alliance, *Submission 32*, p. 6.

⁵⁵ Australian Fresh Produce Alliance, *Submission 32*, p. 6.

1.99 According to the Migration Institute of Australia, the SWP is ‘ideally placed to quickly pick up the unexpected shortfall’ of WHMs.⁵⁶

1.100 In this regard, it raised a range of initiatives currently taking place in relation to the SWP:

The government announced earlier this week a pilot program to bring in 170 seasonal workers from Vanuatu for the mango season in the Northern Territory. Seasonal workers have guaranteed work and wages for the duration of their stay in Australia. The government has commenced a portability pilot for approved employers to share seasonal workers under a multi-sponsor arrangement, which should address the needs of employers requiring seasonal workers for relatively short periods.⁵⁷

1.101 As a result, the Migration Institute of Australia told the Committee:

The MIA believes that the Seasonal Worker Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme can be stepped up rapidly to ensure an adequate supply of seasonal labour for 2021 and beyond. The added advantage of these visa streams is that the Pacific nations have largely escaped being affected by COVID-19. The Seasonal Worker Program is also well regulated to prevent the exploitation of this overseas labour force.⁵⁸

1.102 The Migration Institute of Australia also emphasised the benefit this expansion would provide the Pacific Island countries, noting that demand for access to the program far outstrips the number of places available:

For example, Papua New Guinea: 87,000 people will enter the labour force each year in Papua New Guinea, competing for just 12,000 formal sector jobs created annually. Timor-Leste has 5,900 people already in the seasonal worker work ready pool. The conservative numbers of a seasonal worker pool from the Pacific and Timor-Leste region is over half a million. Realistic numbers are quoted as 875,000, and an ambitious number is 1.3 million.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Mr John Hourigan, Migration Institute of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 18.

⁵⁷ Mr John Hourigan, Migration Institute of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 18.

⁵⁸ Mr John Hourigan, Migration Institute of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 18.

⁵⁹ Mr Jonathan Granger, Migration Institute of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 6 August 2020, p. 22.

Recommendation 10

1.103 The Committee recommends that the Federal Government work with State and Territory governments and industry peak bodies to recruit additional people under the Seasonal Worker Program and Pacific Labour Scheme to fill urgent agricultural shortfalls.

**Mr Julian Leeser MP
Chair**

A. List of Submissions

- 1 Mr Simon Aniere
- 2 HealthWISE
- 3 Mr Barak Maimon
- 4 Name withheld
- 5 Mr Rowan Ramsay MP
- 6 Michael Fotheringham, INTRO Travel
- 7 NT Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture
- 8 Backpacker Job Board
- 9 Whitsunday Charter Boat industry Association
- 10 Central Highlands Development Corporation
- 11 Costa Group
- 12 Dried Fruits Australia
- 13 2PH Farms
- 14 Howe Farming Enterprises Pty Ltd
- 15 Australian Table Grape Association
- 16 Cultural Au Pair Association of Australia (CAPAA)
- 17 Adventure Tourism Victoria
- 18 Ms Esther Yew
- 19 Bowen Gumlu Growers Association
- 20 Australian Banana Growers Council

- 21 Consulate-General of France in Sydney
- 22 AUSVEG SA
- 23 Growcom
- 24 MacKays Marketing
- 25 Tolga Country Lodge
- 26 American Institute for Foreign Study (Australia) Pty Ltd
- 27 ImmigrationHelp
- 28 Howe Farming Enterprises Pty Ltd
- 29 Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel (BYTAP)
- 30 Berries Australia
- 31 National Farmers' Federation
- 32 Australian Fresh Produce Alliance
- 33 Business NSW
- 34 Adventure Queensland
- 35 Murray River Group of Councils
- 36 Whitsunday Regional Council
- 37 Miss Erin Evans
- 38 Fruit Growers Victoria
- 39 Migrant Workers Centre
- 40 Mrs Peggy Sullivan-Smith
- 41 Cairns Chamber of Commerce
- 42 Department of Home Affairs
- 43 YHA Australia
- 44 Cambrai Backpacker Hostel & Tours Pty. Ltd.
- 45 Town of Port Hedland
- 46 AUSVEG
- 47 Australian Tourism Export Council
- 48 South Australian Tourism Commission
 - 48.1 Supplementary to submission 48

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- 49 Refugee Council of Australia
- 50 Community Refugee Sponsorship Initiative
- 51 VisitOz/Australian Working Adventures
- 52 Tourism & Transport Forum
- 53 Citrus Australia Ltd
- 54 Northern Territory Farmers Association Inc.
- 55 Greater Shepparton City Council
- 56 Driscoll's
- 57 Piñata Farms Pty Ltd
- 58 Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
- 60 Sri Ernawati
- 61 *Name Withheld*
- 62 Ms Clodagh McIlhatton
- 63 Ms Inés Carol
- 64 Rome Malik-Cameron
- 65 Ashleigh Kydd
- 66 The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania and The Salvation Army Australia
- 67 Australian Hotels Association and Tourism Accommodation Australia
- 68 ANU Development Policy Centre
- 69 Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Tourism Australia
- 70 MADEC Australia Pty Ltd
- 71 Ventnor Grove Pty Ltd
- 72 Migration Institute of Australia
- 73 Avocados Australia Limited
- 74 Mr Richard Lomman
- 75 Associate Professors Bassina Farbenblum and Laurie Berg
- 76 Law Institute of Victoria
- 77 Australian Chamber - Tourism

78 Retail Supply Chain Alliance

79 Settlement Services International

B. List of public hearings and witnesses

Monday, 20 July 2020 - via teleconference

RDA Tropical North

Mr Joe Moro, Board Member

Cairns Chamber of Commerce

Mr Geoff Heath, Migration Manager, Cairns Chamber of Commerce

Immigration Help

Ms Natalia Arens

Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network

Ms Leanne Kruss , Agricultural Workforce Manager (Far North Queensland Region)

Monday, 3 August 2020 - via teleconference

Department of Home Affairs

Mrs Peta Dunn, First Assistant Secretary, Immigration Programs Division

Ms Michelle Pearce, Acting Assistant Secretary, Migration Planning and Visa Policy Branch

Mr Michael Willard, First Assistant Secretary, Immigration and Community Protection Policy Division

DFAT & Austrade

Ms Lynne Ashpole, Head, Policy and Coordination Branch, Austrade

Mr Angus Mackenzie, Assistant Secretary, Competitiveness and Business Engagement Branch

Ms Kelly Ralston, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

Mr Peter Gooday, Assistant Secretary, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics

Ms Cassandra Kennedy, First Assistant Secretary, Agricultural Policy Division

Ms Joanna Stanion, Assistant Secretary, Markets and Competition Branch,

National Farmers' Federation

Mr Thomas Cullen, Policy Officer, National Farmers Federation

Mr Ben Rogers, General Manager, Workplace Relations and Legal Affairs

South Australian Tourism Commission

Mr Rodney Harrex, Chief Executive Officer

NT Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture

Ms Valerie Smith, General Manager, Destination Development, Tourism NT

Backpacker & Youth Tourism Advisory Panel (BYTAP)

Mr Brendan McKenna, Committee member

Australian Tourism Export Council

Ms Anna Taylor, National Manager, Membership and Policy

Thursday, 6 August 2020 - via teleconference

Australian Fresh Produce Alliance

Miss Claire McClelland, Manager, Communication and Engagement

Mr Michael Rogers, Chief Executive Officer

AUSVEG

Mr Bill Bulmer, Chairman

Mr Tyson Cattle, National Public Affairs Manager

Mr James Whiteside, Chief Executive Officer

Migration Institute of Australia

Mr Jonathan Granger, Policy and Advocacy Committee Member

Mr John Hourigan, National President

Ms Bronwyn Markey, Professional Services Manager

Ms Julie Williams, NSW/ACT State President

Growcom

Mr Richard Shannon, Manager, Policy and Advocacy

Cultural Au Pair Association of Australia (CAPAA)

Ms Wendi Aylward, Spokesperson

Thursday, 13 August 2020 - via teleconference

Greater Shepparton City Council

Mr Michael Carrafa, Team Leader, Business and Industry Development

Miss Sarah Hardwick, Economic Development Project Officer

Fruit Growers Victoria

Mr Michael Crisera, Grower Services Manager

MADEC Australia

Mr Peter Angel, State Manager, Harvest Trail Information Service

Mr Robert Hayes, State Manager, Harvest Trail Information Service

Mr Gavin Krake, National Manager, Harvest Trail Information Service,

Agri Labour

Mr Casey Brown, Managing Director

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Ms Benedikte Jensen, First Assistant Secretary, Labour Market Strategy

Ms Margaret Kidd, First Assistant Secretary, Delivery and Employer Engagement

Ms Helen McCormack, Assistant Secretary, Seasonal Work Programs,

Mr David Turvey, First Assistant Secretary, National Skills Commission

Wednesday, 26 August 2020 - via Teleconference

YHA Australia

Ms Silke Kerwick, Public Affairs Manager

Mr Paul McGrath, Chief Executive Officer

Wednesday, 2 September 2020 - via Teleconference

Tourism & Transport Forum

Ms Margy Osmond , Chief Executive Officer

Wednesday, 9 September 2020 - via Teleconference

Adventure Queensland

Mrs Hana Robertson, Secretary

Adventure Tourism Victoria

Mr Alex Hill, Vice President

Mr Adam Ogle, Committee Member

Fair Work Ombudsman

Ms Louise Peters, Executive Director, Engagement

Mr Steven Ronson, Executive Director, Enforcement

Mr Mark Scully, Deputy Fair Work Ombudsman

The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania and The Salvation Army Australia

Ms Heather Moore, Policy and Strategic Projects Advisor, Salvation Army

Dr Mark Zirnsak, Senior Social Justice Advocate, Uniting Church

Migrant Workers Centre

Miss Sherry (Yuhsuan) Huang, Community Organiser

Dr Hyeseon Jeong, Research and Policy Officer

Mr Mathew Kunkel, Director

Thursday, 10 September 2020 - via Teleconference

ANU Development Policy Centre

Professor Stephen Howes, Director

Ms Beth Orton, Research Officer

Australian Chamber – Tourism

Ms Jenny Lambert, Director

Settlement Services International

Mr Jack Archer, Regional Strategy Advisor

Mrs Violet Roumeliotis, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Kylie van Luyn, Director Employment Services

Mrs Agha Yamamah, General Manager Service Delivery Settlement

Refugee Council of Australia

Mr Asher Hirsch, Senior Policy Officer

Professor Allan Fels and Dr David Cousins

Friday, 11 September 2020 - via Teleconference

Roundtable - Individuals

Ms Jacqsyn Dieziger

Miss Vanessa Klaus

Ms Esther Yew

Roundtable

Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers

Ms Bree Grima, Managing Director

2PH Farms

Mr Craig Pressler, Chief Operation Officer

Central Highlands Development Corporation

Mr Arjan Bloemer, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Sonya Comiskey, Agtech Community Officer