

Question 1:

In your submission you state that “for every job that is offered to an overseas person, one less job is available to an unemployed Australian.” However the evidence we have heard from employers is that they face real difficulties in finding local workers to fill employment gaps in their businesses. Would you agree that it also the case that some businesses in the maritime industry also face labour shortages?

Currently the Union is aware of least 347 Australian seafarers, skilled and job ready waiting for work. This number does not include Seafarers that are:

1. not eligible to be Members of the Union (such as engineers, officers and masters), or
2. are eligible to be members of the Union, but have not contacted the Union to advise of their unemployment. In this regard we refer to the Australian shipowners website *Careers at Sea* (which incorporates Sea Recruit <http://www.careersatsea.com.au/selectsearegtype.php> a list of qualified staff looking for work at sea and a Jobs Board which enables advertisements for vacant positions both at sea and ashore.
3. or working outside the Australian jurisdiction as Seafarers because they were unable to find suitable Australian employment.

Putting those significant caveats aside, we reasonably anticipate that several thousand Australians are not employed in the Maritime industry that otherwise could be.

These 347 seafarers we are explicitly aware of have been waiting for work as long as 4 years and each year they revalidate their medicals and other certification to ensure they remain job ready. The breakdown of each classification is below.

Numbers of Seafarers seeking work by occupational classification that have informed the MUA at August 2015

Able Seaman	17
Caterer	33
Chief Caterer	8
Chief Integrated rating	4
Cook	16
Chief Cook	11
Marine Cook	9
Chief Marine Cook	6
Crane Driver	20
Deck hand	91
Greaser	8
Integrated Rating	90
Medic	1
Training Integrated Rating	32

If employers want to fill employment shortages with Australians, they need only contact the Union or better advertise potential and actual vacancies. From our perspective it is not credible to suggest that employers (or the Government's oversight) is taking reasonable efforts to fill all current shortages by Australian citizens or permanent residents.

While the Union may concede that some highly specific skilled roles may be difficult to fill, the roles would be the exception to the overwhelming rule of unemployment of Australians in the Australian maritime industry.

Question 2:

What types of jobs are filled by temporary work visas in your industry? Do you have data to back this up?

The Government's decisions on the regulation of offshore oil and gas industry employment, given effect by Legislative Instruments IMMI 15/073 and IMMI 15/074 that are intended to:

- exclude non-Australian workers engaged in offshore resources activities from the migration zone and from the visa requirements under the Migration Act 1958 (Cth); and
- grant a special purpose visa to all non-Australian workers on vessels engaged in offshore resources activities so that those workers can avoid difficulties with Australian migration laws

shows that *all* employees involved in the offshore oil and gas industry are now able to be employed in preference to Australians. As for the precise numbers of, the union does not have comprehensive data, a point made by the Migration Maritime Task Force in 2012 which reported that there was no comprehensive data on the numbers or location of overseas temporary guest labour in the offshore oil and gas industry, suggesting a very significant breach in Australia's border security arrangements.

We nevertheless have anecdotal evidence of significant numbers of overseas temporary workers in the maritime components of the Gorgon project e.g. on the pipe laying vessels, on flotels, in crane operations and other niche aspects of the offshore industry such as on seismic vessels.

We encourage you to consider our response above and to table any enquiries made by this Senate Committee regarding the grant of special purpose visas by the Federal Government in these circumstances.

Question 3:

Would you accept that there may not be a good match between people on unemployment benefits and the types of skills and experience needed by employers in the maritime industry?

See our answer at question 1.

Please contact me for further information, otherwise the Union looks forward to being invited to appear before this Inquiry at short notice.