

Joint Standing Committee on Migration Inquiry into the Seasonal Workers Program Request for further information - ACTU

In evidence before the Joint Committee on 28 October 2015, the ACTU discussed the issue of job advertisements and recruitment methods that appear to give preference to overseas workers on temporary work visas over and above Australian workers. This is particularly the case with job ads directed at working holiday visa holders seeking to get a second year visa extension.

A simple search through jobsites such as Gumtree uncovers numerous examples of job advertisements directly targeted at overseas workers, enticing them with the lure of a second working holiday visa, with Australian workers seemingly not even being considered in some cases. In some cases, even 1st and 2nd year apprentice positions are being offered to temporary visa workers. The prevalence of these second year visa job ads also points to the difficulty, discussed during our evidence, of any expansion to the Seasonal Workers Program occurring while employers continue to have such ready access to labour from the working holiday visa program.

The ACTU undertook to provide the Committee examples of such job ads. These examples are presented in **appendix 1** below for the information of the Committee, with relevant extracts from each job ad and a link to the full ad. We note that this is just a small sample of hundreds, if not thousands, of such 2nd year visa job ads.

An argument could be made that Australians are not being excluded from applying for these jobs, but on our reading of the ads, a reasonable assumption could be made that 'backpackers' are the preferred, if not the only, option being considered by the employer. In many cases, the ads go beyond simply indicating that the second year visa option is available and they clearly single out backpackers as the intended target for the job. In all cases, the second year visa sign off features prominently as a way to attract applicants.

In addition to such job ads, widespread use is also made of backpacker and country-specific websites. For example, a recent Fairfax investigation in combination with Monash University surveyed more than 1000 foreign language job ads and found 80% targeted overseas workers with wages well below the legal minimum wage and award rates in Australia. The investigation identified Mandarin language websites such as <http://yeeyi.com/> being used for this purpose.¹

We note also the finding in the Department's own submission to the Inquiry that '*relatively few lower skilled seasonal jobs are advertised on three major job boards – SEEK, Career One, Australian Job Search – probably because they use other recruitment methods, such as word of mouth, social media, signs in youth hostels, bus and train stations, or websites aimed at backpackers*'. This is not a surprising finding and as the ACTU indicated in its evidence, there is no intrinsic problem in employers using a wide variety of recruitment methods such as these; the problem is if those recruitment methods are targeted specifically at overseas workers, usually working holiday visa holders, to the exclusion of Australian workers who are willing and able to do the work.

¹ See for example, Schneiders, B., & Millar, R., Thousands exploited in 'black jobs', The Age, 2 October 2015, p. 2; and "Tip of the iceberg", The Saturday Age 3 October 2015, p. 23.

Appendix one

Examples of second year visa job ads

2ND year visa position 88 days

We have a short term position available for a traveller looking to have their 2nd year visa signed off

http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/dubbo-2830/other-jobs/2nd-year-visa-position-88-days/1092901658?utm_campaign=joraau&utm_medium=organic&utm_source=joraau

2nd year visa farm work

We require some strong, fit, intelligent backpackers to assist us with our macadamia farm...We will provide payslips as required.

<http://au.indeed.com/cmp/Nightcap-Orchards/jobs/Year-Visa-Farm-Work-cdd58e15812c2d1d?q=2nd+Year+Visa>

2 Pickers needed ASAP

We are looking for 2 energetic people who need their second year visa
This work will qualify you for a second year visa.

<http://au.indeed.com/m/viewjob?jk=ef4d6d979b9942b4&from=ja>

Trade assistants needed for immediate start. Get 2nd year visa

Can apply for 2nd year visa

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/hillston/other-jobs/trade-assistants-needed-for-imediate-start-get-2nd-year-visa/1091220761>

Immediate start Cherry Tomato Picking second year visa

Visa days signed no problem

<http://www.jobaroo.com/Job.16978>

Nanny/Farm hand required...2ND year sign OFF!!

2nd year sign off available

2nd year visa sign off

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/chinchilla/live-in-nannies/nanny-farm-hand-required-2nd-year-sign-off-/1092105890>

Second year visa work – Coffs Harbour

Position Title: Second Year Visa Work

http://au.jobomas.com/second-year-visa-work-iiid-44066151?utm_source=jobrapido&utm_medium=xml&utm_campaign=xml&utm_content=xml-avisos

Backpackers for mango season

Work counted toward second year visa

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/burdekin-area/farming-veterinary/backpackers-wanted-for-mango-season/1091471385>

Backpackers for Farm Hand

Need **backpacker (s)** to work on Farm maintenance tasks....

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/burdekin-area/farming-veterinary/backpackers-wanted-for-mango-season/1091471385>

Farm work second year visa

Job description: second year visa position

<http://www.backpackerjobboard.com.au/job/21710/farm-work-second-year-visa-at-nardoo-family-investments/>

Farm labourers multiple positions

Applicants must hold a current working visa...[goes] towards 2nd year visas

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/tolga/farming-veterinary/farm-labourers-multiple-positions/1093432458>

Backpackers looking for labouring work in Melbourne

Looking for skilled and experience labourers and tradesmen...ideal for backpackers...you can only work for our clients for 6 months but you can work through us for as long as you like!

Includes 'jobs classified as regional Australia which count towards getting your 2nd year

<http://www.tradeslabour.com.au/job/melbourne-cbd-and-surrounding-suburbs-9-backpackers-looking-for-labouring-work-in-melbourne/>

Banana Farm looking for working holiday travellers

<http://au.indeed.com/viewjob?jk=e6b3b2597a2bbea4&tk=1a37v8l7u10af2tf&from=recommendedjobs>

Backpackers wanted for farm work.

All days will be signed for the second year visa

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/apple-tree-creek/farming-veterinary/backpackers-wanted-for-farm-work-own-transport-preferred-/1091444633>

Orange picking, Farmhand work WHV

...a number of weeks work for WHV backpackers

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/mildura-centre/farming-veterinary/orange-picking-farmhand-work-whv/1092634469>

2nd year Visa seekers (Kitchen Porter/Dishwasher)

Accommodation provided....plus 2nd year visa

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/albany-6330/farming-veterinary/2nd-year-visa-seekers/1072080588>

Zuchinni picking

All work for 2nd year visa

All you work is signed off for 2nd year holiday visa

<http://www.gumtree.com.au/s-ad/iryple/farming-veterinary/zuchinni-picking/10934>

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