



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Migration

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 10 November 2015

*Chair: Mrs Louise Markus MP
Deputy: Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP*

Seasonal work: a development partnership with the Pacific

The mutual benefits of the Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) to Australian industry and Pacific island participants, and the potential to extend those benefits to other nations in the region, will be investigated tomorrow when the Joint Standing Committee on Migration holds a public hearing as part of its inquiry into the Programme.

Committee Chair, Louise Markus said the SWP provides potential economic and development benefits to seasonal workers, their families and communities:

“Over 20 per cent of people in most Pacific Island Countries live in hardship and are unable to meet their basic needs. The Seasonal Worker Programme is part of Australia’s Pacific Regional Aid Programme which funds a number of activities to support labour mobility, thus increasing opportunities for remittance incomes”, she said.

The Committee will hear from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to discuss issues including:

- how the SWP contributes to Australia’s development priorities in the Pacific region;
- the potential benefits of the SWP’s expansion to include other countries and sectors;
- obstacles and access to the SWP for women and youth in the region; and
- how the visa regime for seasonal workers might be adjusted to enhance industry and development outcomes.

Public hearing details:

Date: Wednesday, 11 November 2015

Time: 9.50 am

Location: Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra.

The hearing will be audio webcast live on: **www.aph.gov.au/live**

For a program and more details, visit the committee’s website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/mig>

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair, Mrs Louise Markus MP on (02) 4577 2631 (Electorate Office) or (02) 6277 2371 (Parliament House)

For further information: please contact the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4560, via email at jscm@aph.gov.au or visit the inquiry website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/mig>