



21 July 2020

**Inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker program**

Dear Sir / Madam

I would like to take this opportunity to make two proposals to the Committee with regards to the Working Holiday Maker program.

I make these proposals as the founder and CEO of Backpacker Job Board; the web's leading employment marketplace for working holiday makers is Australia.

**1) Open reapplications from previous working holiday makers**

This proposition would be an amendment to the scheme, which would allow previous participants in the working holiday program to enjoy a second opportunity to visit Australia as a working holiday maker. To clarify, I am not suggesting a second year extension to the visa, which currently exists.

*Example scenario:* Person X took a gap year at the age of 18, before attending university, during which they visited Australia on a Working Holiday visa. Ten years later, that person is now in their late 20s and at a point in their career where they can take a year out to embark on a working holiday in Australia.

This simple change to the program would allow the hundreds of thousands of previous participants, many of whom already have a deep affinity to Australia, the opportunity to return.

An increased intake of backpackers from this demographic would be a boost to tourism and the other industries which are supported by the Working Holiday Maker scheme.

**2) Reform the 'backpacker tax'**

My second proposition is aimed at making the program more appealing to applicants, as well as more competitive when compared to similar schemes from other countries. Making all working holiday makers "residents for tax purposes" would align them with international students (subclass 500 visa) in Australia. The intention of this would be to re-introduce the tax free threshold, which all other residents enjoy. It's already been established that backpackers spend the wages earned in regional communities, within the businesses of these communities. A relaxation of the backpacker tax would be of benefit to regional Australia and the overall appeal of the visa.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Matthew Heyes

Founder  
Backpacker Job Board



<https://www.backpackerjobboard.com.au/>