



Golden Mile Unit Trust Trading As **Golden Mile No.1 Pty Ltd**  
ABN 18 419 201 992

9<sup>th</sup> July, 2015

To: The Joint Standing Committee on Migration.

**A few observations from an employer perspective on the PSWP scheme.**

The productivity of our company – horticultural production – has certainly benefitted from the availability of, in our case, Tongan employees.

Certain procedures ie. market job search, seems a little contrived and time consuming. As a company, we are generally sufficiently supplied with local employees. We are getting job searchers coming through the company and people adequately equipped for positions within the company will get employment in case of vacancies. The job search often reveals repeat applicants who appear to have to apply for jobs. We realise the sensitive issue this can be.

The add-on skill funding is great, however some of the courses offered are not very conducive for our employees learning eg eight hours of numeracy and literacy. It provides them with a meal and the course providers with an income but I would say no lasting benefits for the person attending the course. The First Aid course on the other hand is helpful – hands on and applicable in the work place and at home.

A flexible funding model where the \$825 is allocated to the person for his or her choosing ( as practical as possible), would probably be preferable e.g. a chainsaw ticket for our employees, which would benefit the employee at work and back in their own country.

Money transfer. Western Union money transfers appear to be the preferred method but it is a costly solution for our employees. Other on-line options are available but more cumbersome. The \$825 available for courses could alternatively perhaps – partly – be redirected towards subsidising these transfers or set up an alternative system?



We have had a few cases of employees injuring themselves during leisure time activities. Whilst their insurance covers most of the associated medical bills, the absence of any cover for income protection for the recovery period render that situation less than desirable and their subsistence is often then up to the employer – we have supported financially for a period. Perhaps a compulsory insurance cover for those situations - like insurance protection - ought to be considered.

On a slightly more lofty note – and strategic perspective – is the long term future of the Pacific Island nations. Climate and perceived sea level change will for obvious reasons pose a major threat to those nations and Australia may have to accommodate climate change refugees. To anticipate that move now and provide employment and – just as important – training opportunities will bridge that future change. The current government is looking to utilise larger swathes of agricultural land in the country's north and an establishment of a work force in that area potentially populated with people Who have already had a work experience in Australia would be a benefit for everybody.

Finally, but not least, we would like to commend the civil servants working for DEEWR. They are tremendously helpful and diligent in their work. We have only had a positive experience Whenever we need support or otherwise.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our views.