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15 November 2011

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Attention: Loes Slattery

Dear Ms Slattery

INQUIRY INTO MULTICULTULISM IN AUSTALIA

At the recent Public Hearing held in Parramatta on the 24 October 2011 a request was made to provide more detailed information in relation to the disconnect between skills and migration.

'....That disconnect between skills and employment has been noted everywhere we have gone around the nation. I know that you have been talking a little to DIAC about that. Could you talk a bit more about how you see the matching of skills to employment? What could the committee recommend to government that would be beneficial? (Mr Markus)'

Fairfield City Council's Submission to the Inquiry highlights the following recommendations in relation to this disconnect. Council recommended that

With regard to the profile of skilled migration to Australia and the extent to which Australia is fully utilising the skills of all migrants, the Federal Government should:

- Ensure DIAC continues to work with Industry Accreditation and Industry Standards bodies to ensure that the skills for migration match the skills required for employment in skills shortage areas.
- Ensure that the skills required for employment as well as Industry Standards, Industry Accreditation and/or professional accreditation requirements are well articulated to potential skilled migrants. Further, that provision of this training or accreditation is made available either before or immediately after arrival.
- Provide a structured work experience program through Local, State and Federal Government Departments where possible, or in partnership with large organisations.
- Address the issues created by skills for migration not matching skills for employment in the past. This includes the skilled migrants who have

previously migrated under the program but who have not met industry or accreditation body expectations to obtain employment in the industry that they migrated for. The Federal Government should provide income support for these skilled migrants whilst undertaking the training that will eradicate the gap between the skills they migrated with and the skills they require to obtain employment.

In addition to this, Council's Senior Policy Advisory: Economic Development suggests the following practical solutions for the Committees consideration.

- Flowchart the skilled migration process by identifying the visa types that relate to skilled migration and identify limitations and gaps.
- Identify the gaps between DIAC acceptance and industry acceptance.
- Improve information to potential skilled migrants and ensure qualifications are recognised at a more appropriate time.
- Where qualifications are not recognised, establish a training safety net program to ensure that migrants have access to appropriate training so that their qualifications are recognised. Financial resources should be available to these migrants to prevent them taking less qualified jobs, ending up on welfare or in lower paid jobs. A case management approach with Job Services should be established.
- Analysis needs to occur to identify the geographical locations experiencing the skills shortage. Skilled migrants need to be aware of these locations, which may not be in the city. The Government needs to increase support (infrastructure and services) in these areas to support the transition.
- Additional solutions include:
 - Training Centres for Australian and State standards
 - Mentoring and English language (not basic English but at a level which supports employment)
 - State and Federal Government embracing work placement to provide experience which will increase employability
 - Individual case management

I hope that this information is of assistance to the Committee. If you require any further information, please contact Amanda Bray, Manager Policy and Community Development on 9725 0303.

Amanda Bray
Manager Policy and Community Development