

Question on notice no. 71

Portfolio question number: 71

2021-22 Additional estimates

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio

Senator the Hon. Penny Wong: asked the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on 16 February 2022—

- (1. How many Pacific workers arrived in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme during each of calendar 2019, 2020 and 2021?
2. How many Pacific workers have arrived in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme in each month from August 2021 to February 2022?
3. How many Pacific workers participating in each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme have left Australia in each month from August 2021 to February 2022?
4. What was the total number of Pacific workers currently in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme as of the end of February 2022?

Answer —

Please find answer attached

QUESTION ON NOTICE / Written

071 – Additional Estimates

Topic: Pacific Labour Mobility

Senator Penny Wong

Question

1. How many Pacific workers arrived in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme during each of calendar 2019, 2020 and 2021?
2. How many Pacific workers have arrived in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme in each month from August 2021 to February 2022?
3. How many Pacific workers participating in each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme have left Australia in each month from August 2021 to February 2022?
4. What was the total number of Pacific workers currently in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme as of the end of February 2022?

Answer

1. How many Pacific workers arrived in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme during each of calendar 2019, 2020 and 2021?

The Pacific Labour Scheme commenced in 2018 with the first workers deploying from July onwards that year.

505 workers arrived over the course of 2019, with this number almost doubling by the end of 2020 and then growing to close to 5,000 by the end of 2021.

The SWP commenced in 2012 and had been growing at around 40 per cent per year up to 2019. Reduction from 2019 to 2020 reflects the impact of COVID-19.

	PLS	SWP
2019	505	14,386*
2020	922	8,300**
2021	4,925	9,835**

* Data derived by reference to 'placements approved'. Includes workers who may have deployed more than once within a calendar year owing to the seasonal nature of the work.

**Includes many workers who deployed and have been unable to return to their home country due to COVID-related border closures and subsequently been redeployed to new workplaces under the 408 pandemic visa.

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2. How many Pacific workers have arrived in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme in each month from August 2021 to February 2022?

	PLS	SWP
2021		
August	282	1,031
September	529	779
October	511	1,094
November	551	652
December	439	929
2022		
January	207	469
February	238*	223*

* Data accurate as at 25 February, 2022.

3. How many Pacific workers participating in each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme have left Australia in each month from August 2021 to February 2022?

	PLS	SWP**
2021		
August	3	89
September	3	21
October	1	150
November	11	201
December	13	104
2022		
January	3	7
February	3*	29*

* Data accurate as at 25 February, 2022

**SWP figures are based on reporting from a range of sources including employers and Pacific/Timor Leste and may omit some workers' departures.

4. What was the total number of Pacific workers currently in Australia under each of the Seasonal Workers Program and the Pacific Labour Scheme as of the end of February 2022?

	PLS	SWP
Workers currently employed in Australia	6,108	14,639

*Data accurate as at 25 February, 2022