



Information for labour hire companies

Up to 2500 visas will be granted over the three years providing Pacific seasonal workers with the opportunity to work for up to seven months (and at least six months) in every 12 month period, in areas of regional Australia where there is demonstrated unmet demand for labour. Pacific seasonal workers who work for one season will be able to apply for work (and a further visa) in subsequent years under the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme (the Pilot).

Labour hire companies approved by the Australian Government to employ and place Pacific seasonal workers for Phase 1 of the Pilot include Summit Personnel and Tree Minders. These companies have signed a Deed and Special Program Agreement with the Australian Government.

It is anticipated that a further expression of interest process for the remaining visas will take place later in 2009 once arrangements with Papua New Guinea have been finalised.

Each labour hire company will need to demonstrate to the Australian Government that they have appropriate arrangements in place in the region for the pastoral care of the workers. Ensuring that appropriate pastoral care is provided for each Pacific seasonal worker is an important element of the labour hire company(s) responsibilities. Please see the fact sheet entitled 'pastoral care' for more information.

It is desirable that labour hire company(s) employ Pacific seasonal workers from all participating countries (Tonga, Vanuatu, Kiribati and Papua New Guinea) as each country's capacity to participate in the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme is established. However, the labour hire company(s) may elect to operate in only one specified region in Australia for a specific number of workers from a specific country.

The upper limits on visas over the three years of the Pilot are:

- 800 available each for Tonga and Vanuatu
- 250 for Kiribati
- 650 for Papua New Guinea.

Roles and responsibilities of the labour hire company include:

- providing appropriate pastoral care for Pacific seasonal workers in consultation any local consultative body such as a local advisory body; this includes paying the full upfront cost of the Pacific seasonal workers' airfare (and recoup half from the worker over the period of the visa grant);
- arranging transport to and from the Australian port of arrival and departure;
- guaranteeing Pacific seasonal workers a minimum average of 30 hours of work per week for six months;
- employing workers in accordance with the relevant industrial instrument; and
- providing appropriate training for Pacific seasonal workers.