

BULLETIN

Industry Divisions



Reference No: Skills Shortage 09-01-19

Date issued: 11/01/2019

Dear Member

With the Victorian State election behind us, the focus is now on the upcoming Federal election where VACC on behalf of the automotive industry is calling on the Federal Government to commit to serious policy reforms across a range of areas including automotive skills shortages.

Some key recommendations highlighted in the soon to be released Federal Election Manifesto via the Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) include the following:

- *Promote the value of automotive apprenticeships to employers, job seekers, parents and students.*
- *Introduce improved support measures and incentives to employers to hire and retain automotive apprentices.*
- *Introduce meaningful industry-led VET advisory councils and KPIs to TAFEs to engage with industry.*
- *The next Australian Government should introduce tighter enforcement of current VET regulation.*
- *The Federal Government should make changes to the migration program to improve its accessibility and responsiveness to better meet skill and labour needs.*

More recently, the MTAA put in a submission into the legal and constitutional affairs references committee inquiry into the effectiveness of the current temporary skilled visa system.

There are 5 key recommendations from the submission which are listed below:

1. The Commonwealth Government and appropriate Departments and Agencies partner with the MTAA and its Members, for a comprehensive program to produce:
 - a. Detailed qualitative and quantitative data of current automotive sector industry workforce, skills shortages and future workforce requirements.
 - b. Improved Skill Shortage Research Methodologies, including application of ANZSCO codes.
 - c. Identify all current Government initiatives, programs and assistance across immigration, skilled migration cities, population growth and control, employment and others, to determine automotive industry specific outcomes that are funded from existing programs or allocated funding for identified specific identified needs.
 - d. Identify specific cost effective and efficient pathways for linking sector / industry wide ancillary and support services including migration agents and infrastructure to support skilled migrants particularly in regional and rural areas.
 - e. Identify and streamline industry specific market testing and assessment
 - f. Reinstate an immigration (skilled migration) Industry Outreach Officer to MTAA facilitate the development and implementation of an awareness and education program specific to outcomes achieved from the above program and more generically for skilled migration and policy and process. Materials should include explanatory tools featuring diagrams and flow charts and be written in plain English.

2. A two-tiered system whereby business in the first tier that can demonstrate a long term commitment to and investment in relevant trade apprentices and trainees receive preferential treatment through an automotive sector specific skilled migration program including having applications fast tracked, a substantial reduction in fees and charges, and preferential access to ancillary resources and assistance as recognition of those businesses commitment to local employment and to apprentices and/or trainees.
3. The Commonwealth Government provide specific funding from the Skilling Australians Fund, or similar, or provide a specific funding package in the 2019/2020 Budget for the program for three years given the not for profit nature of the MTAA and Members, their capacity to provide jurisdiction and localised solutions nationwide, the mutually beneficial outcomes to be achieved, and the current critical structural adjustment and critical skills shortages facing the automotive sector.
4. Current labour market testing requirements be “managed by exception” for the automotive sector for the duration of the program rather than the utilisation of whole of economy approaches used as a ‘blanket means’ of control. This will enable greater use of resources for enforcement and appropriate action where there is evidence of misuse of visa arrangements that disadvantage local jobseekers.
5. Departmental Key Performance Indicators be developed to ensure processing of skilled visa applications within 30 days and performance against such KPI’s is publicly reported.

A copy of the full submission can be found [here](#).

If you have any feedback, please do not hesitate to call me.

Regards

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