



Australian
National
University



MAKING PACIFIC MIGRATION WORK: AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND EXPERIENCES

Tuesday 3 April 2011

9.00am – 5.00pm

Springbank Room,
Crawford School of
Economics and Government, ANU

Information

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Presented by

Development Policy
Centre,
Crawford School of
Economics
& Government

Research School of
Asia & the Pacific

Since the 1980s, Australian academics and official reports have called for Pacific Islanders to be given better access to the Australian labour market. The Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme was introduced in August 2008. The scheme allows Pacific Islanders to engage in farm work in Australia for up to seven months a year. The Government has just announced that the scheme will be made permanent. But, while numbers are increasing, participation in the scheme has been disappointingly low.

In contrast to Australia, New Zealand has always offered preferential migration treatment to its Pacific neighbours. New Zealand also introduced a seasonal workers scheme one year before Australia, in 2007. The Recognised Seasonal Employer program has proven popular, with some 8,000 Pacific Islanders working in New Zealand under the scheme in 2009. The RSE program has also been extensively evaluated, from both a domestic and international perspective. The findings of the evaluations have been overwhelmingly positive.

This conference will draw on the latest research on both the NZ and Australian schemes, from a domestic and an international perspective. Key questions to be explored are:

> What are the lessons of the NZ experience?

> Why has take-up for the Australian Seasonal Workers Scheme not been higher, and what are the prospects for the Scheme?

> What policy reforms are required for Australia to provide win-win outcomes: beneficial for the Pacific, and beneficial for our economy?

The conference will hear from prominent academics that have studied the Australian and New Zealand seasonal worker migration programs, as well as government and industry stakeholders involved in Australia's Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme.

Agenda

9.00–9.30am

REGISTRATION

9.30–9.40am

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Tom Kompas, Crawford School of Economics and Government, ANU
Stephen Howes, Development Policy Centre, Crawford School of Economics and Government, ANU

9.40–11.10am

PACIFIC MIGRATION: SURVEY, PROSPECTS AND IMPACTS

Population movement in the Pacific: a perspective on future prospects

Graeme Hugo, University of Adelaide and Richard Bedford, University of Waikato

The development impact of pacific migration to Australia and New Zealand

John Gibson, University of Waikato

11.10–11.30am

BREAK

11.30am–1.00pm

AUSTRALIA'S PACIFIC SEASONAL WORKER PILOT SCHEME

Danielle Hay and Stephen Howes, Development Policy Centre, Crawford School of Economics and Government, ANU

Discussants:

Mark Roddam, Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Judith Damiani, Citrus Australia

Alf Fangaloka, Tree Minders Pty Ltd

Lionel Kaluat, Vanuatu Labour Commission

1.00–2.00pm

LUNCH

2.00–3.50pm

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND PACIFIC MIGRATION: POLICIES AND EXPERIENCES

New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Program: an evaluation

Mathea Roorda, Evaluate Research

Experience of NZ growers with the RSE

Richard Bedford, University of Waikato

“Pacific windows” in NZ's permanent migration regime

Sankar Ramasamy, Labour and Immigration Research Centre, New Zealand Department of Labour

An analysis of recent survey data on Pacific island migrants in rural and urban Australia

Richard Brown, University of Queensland

Ni-Vanuatu at home and abroad

Kirstie Petrou and John Connell, University of Sydney

3.50–4.10pm

BREAK

4.10–5.00pm

CLOSING DISCUSSION: WHAT (MORE) NEEDS TO BE DONE?

Graeme Dobell, Lowy Institute

5.00pm

CONFERENCE CLOSE AND RECEPTION

Presenter Biographies

Richard Bedford

Richard is Pro Vice-Chancellor Research, Auckland University of Technology and Professor of Population Geography, National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis (NIDEA), University of Waikato. He is a specialist in migration research and since the mid-1960s has been researching processes of population movement in the Asia-Pacific region. He is a member of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Official Statistics (ACOS), and an adviser to the Department of Labour on the Recognised Seasonal Employment (RSE) work policy.

Richard Brown

Richard is Associate Professor, School of Economics, University of Queensland. He has substantial experience as an applied development economist in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the South Pacific. His recent research has been on the design and implementation of household surveys to study income transfers of migrant labour and how these impact on the recipient communities' welfare. His current ARC-funded project focuses on Pacific island migrants in rural and urban New South Wales.

Judith Damiani

Judith is the Chief Executive Officer at Citrus Australia Limited. She previously held this position for Australian Citrus Growers Incorporated since their relocation from Adelaide to Mildura in 2001.

Graeme Dobell

Graeme has been reporting on Australian and international politics, foreign affairs and defence, and the Asia Pacific since 1975. He writes The Canberra Column for Lowy Institute's blog, The Interpreter. Graeme was the ABC's South East Asia radio correspondent in Singapore and did several stints as the Canberra-based Foreign Affairs and Defence Correspondent for Radio Australia. In 2008 he became Radio Australia's Associate Editor for the Asia Pacific.

Alf Fangaloka

Alf is a Director of Tree Minders Pty Ltd, which provides seasonal labourers to the almond industry. In 2009, Tree Minders was the first Australian company to recruit workers from the Pacific under the Pacific Seasonal Workers Pilot Scheme. Alf's experiences with the scheme have been positive, as it enables his company to guarantee staff numbers and is a source of reliable trained staff that are available during the peak season.

John Gibson

John is Professor, Department of Economics, University of Waikato and Senior Research Associate, Motu Economic and Public Policy Research. He taught previously at the University of Canterbury and in the Economics Department and Center for Development Economics at Williams College. He has worked throughout Asia and the Pacific and is widely published, including recently in the *Review of Economics and Statistics*, the *Journal of the European Economic Association*, and the *Journal of Development Economics*.

Danielle Hay

Danielle is a Research Associate with Sapere Research Group. Prior to this she worked as a research assistant for the Development Policy Centre at the Crawford School of Economics and Government, ANU, where she co-authored a report on the Pacific Seasonal Workers Pilot Scheme. Danielle has a Master degree in International and Development Economics from the Australian National University.

Stephen Howes

Stephen is the Director of the Development Policy Centre at the Crawford School of Economics and Government, ANU, and Director of the International Development Economics teaching program, Crawford School. He serves as a Board Member for the Pacific Institute of Public Policy, and sits on the Advisory Board of the Asian Development Bank Institute. Prior to joining the Crawford School, Stephen was Chief Economist at the Australian Agency for International Development and he worked at the World Bank, in Washington and Delhi, where he was Lead Economist for India.

Graeme Hugo

Graeme is an ARC Australian Professorial Fellow, Professor of Geography and Director, Australian Population and Migration Research Centre, University of Adelaide. He is the author of over three hundred books, articles and chapters, as well as a large number of conference papers and reports. He is currently Chair of the Advisory Committee on Demography and Liveability of the Commonwealth Department of Sustainable Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

Lionel Kalaut

Lionel is Labour Commissioner for Vanuatu's Department of Labour and Employment Services, Ministry of Internal Affairs. Lionel specialised in industrial relations from 1981 until he took up the post of Labour Commissioner in 2005. He was instrumental in the inception of the RSE scheme and has continued to lead it to its current success in obtaining a fair share of the New Zealand RSE market. Lionel is optimistic about extending this success into the PSWPS.

Tom Kompas

Tom is the Director of the Crawford School of Economics and Government and Professor of Economics at The Australian National University. He is also the Foundation Director of the Australian Centre for Biosecurity and Environmental Economics, and has dedicated much of his recent time to public policy in Australia. Until recently, he was a part-time Senior Economist at the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, a Commonwealth Environment Research Facilities project leader on biosecurity and Editor-in-Chief of the Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics.

Kirstie Petrou

Kirstie is a PhD candidate at the University of Sydney. Her thesis is on rural-urban migration in Vanuatu, with particular reference to Paama. This is a longitudinal study, and will provide insights into how internal mobility has changed in Vanuatu since independence in 1980. She has previously undertaken research on access to primary health care in Vanuatu and the rise of medical tourism.

Sankar Ramasamy

Sankar is Manager, Migration Research, Labour and Immigration Research Centre, Department of Labour, New Zealand. He is involved in a range of immigration and settlement research and evaluation including labour market, economic and social impacts of migration. Sankar has been an evaluation practitioner for the past decade and managed the Department's evaluation of the RSE policy. He previously managed research and evaluation in employment assistance and welfare at the Ministry of Social Development.

Mark Roddam

Mark is Branch Manager for Migration, CoAG and Evidence Branch, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Mark has worked in the Department for over a decade. His role includes responsibility for migration policy as it relates to the labour market; the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme and its successor, the Seasonal Worker Program; and the Department's research and CoAG agendas.

Mathea Roorda

Mathea works for Evalve Research, an evaluation consultancy based in Wellington. She led a two year evaluation of the first two seasons of New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) policy (2007 – 2009). The evaluation examined how the policy was implemented, identified short-term outcomes and assessed how potential risks were managed. Fieldwork was conducted in New Zealand and five Pacific states. The evaluation was awarded the Australasian Evaluation Society's 'Best Evaluation Study' in 2010.