

Recognised Seasonal Employer: reflecting on the first two seasons

Making Pacific migration work: Australian and New Zealand
experiences

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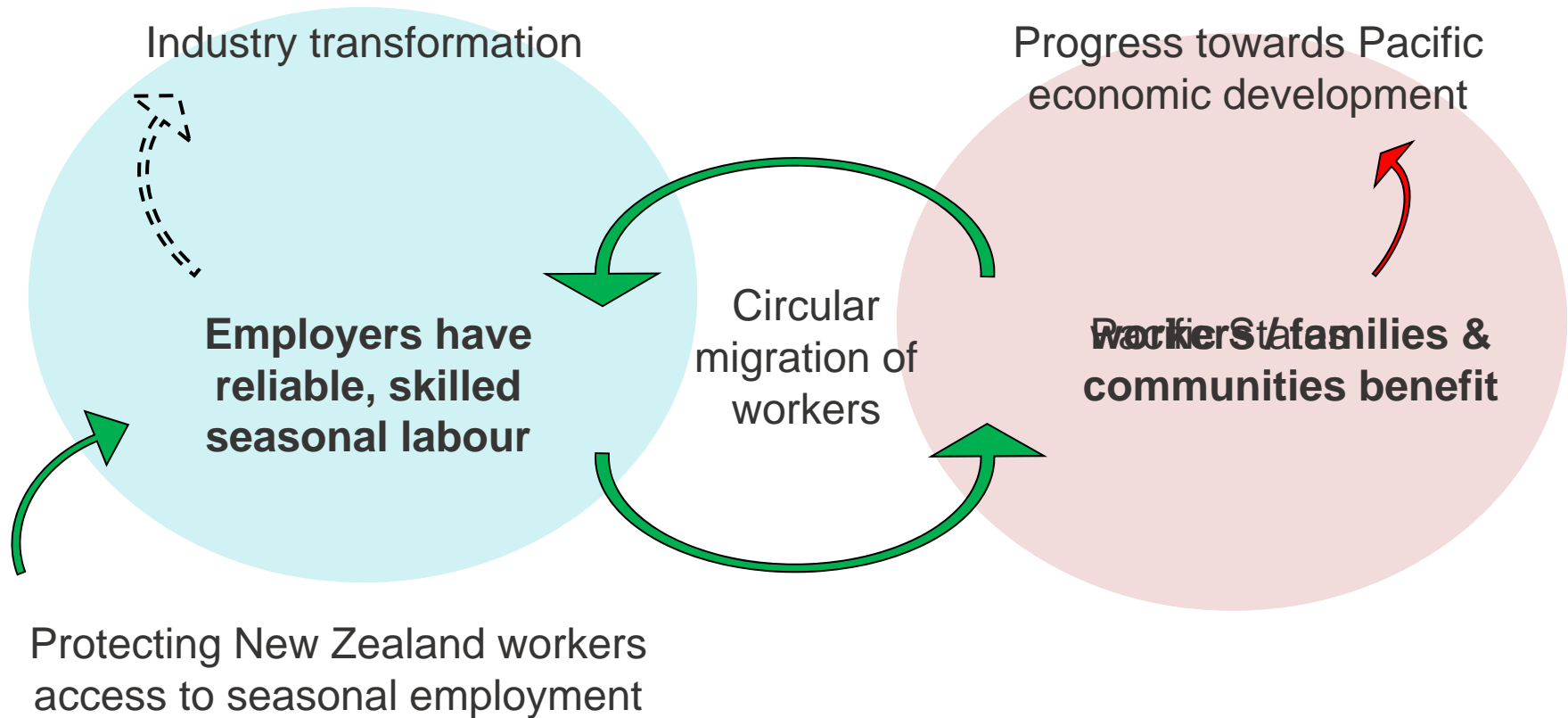
Context for implementing the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) policy

- Labour supply shortfall identified as a risk to development of horticulture and viticulture industries in NZ
- Pressure from Pacific governments to allow Pacific citizens greater access to NZ and Australian labour markets

Key aspects of RSE policy

- Inter-agency understandings between Pacific governments and NZ Department of Labour
- Employer recognition
- New Zealanders' first principle
- Employer-driven
- Short-term, circular migration
- Pastoral care

RSE policy aims



RSE evaluation – some of the team



Interviews with workers, employers, NZ & Pacific officials, others

Online survey of employers

Analysis of DoL administrative data

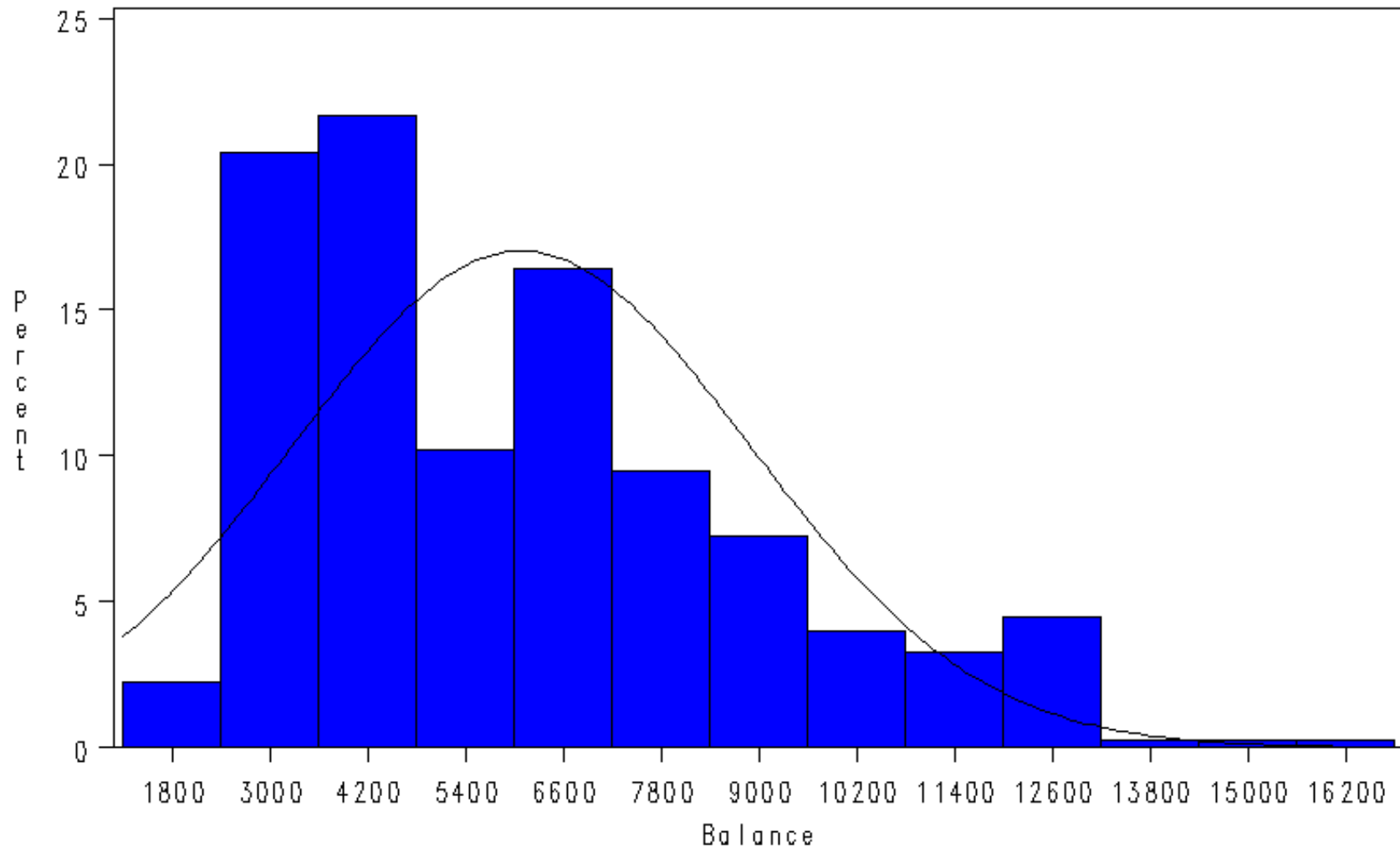
Review of policy documents

Results for employers

For the first time the fruit was picked on time and at the right time across all the industries.... (Industry leader)

- Better quality produce
- 85% of RSE employers said they had better and more productive workers during the 2nd season

Results for workers



Mean	6079.063	Maximum	16413.23	Minimum	1703.548
Number of Obs	402	Lower Quartile	3707.16	Median	5624.871
Upper Quartile	7778.899	—	Normal		



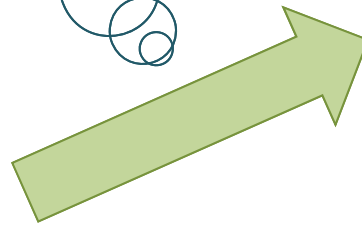
New skills

including time management, improved work ethic and increased competency in English language

What are the mechanisms of change?

Results

Activities /
processes



Mechanisms to minimise workers overstaying

<i>Regulatory</i>	Limited purpose visa of 7 months in any 11 month period so workers retain links to their home country.
<i>Re-employment incentive</i>	Workers able to return if they meet certain criteria. Guaranteed 240 hours work
<i>Financial incentive</i>	Travel costs shared with employer
<i>Facilitative approach</i>	Immigration officers aim to address problems through early intervention
<i>Punitive mechanism</i>	ATR requires employers to pay the repatriation costs if workers become illegal and are deported

Management of workers (pastoral care)

Emergent social control mechanisms

Workers recruited from the same community

Workers accommodated onsite

Pastoral care provided by NZ Pacific-based church / Pacific pastoral care workers

Workers encouraged to uphold their home country's reputation as a reliable source of seasonal workers

'No drinking' policy enforced

Summary

- Overall, RSE achieved what it set out to do – employers in the horticulture and viticulture sectors got access to a reliable and stable seasonal workforce

'Complicated' policy features		Implications for the evaluation
Policy objectives		Multiple and potentially conflicting policy objectives.
Multiple participants	Two industries	Differences between industries in respect of age, histories, relationship to labour, timing of labour demand, industry cohesion. Difference in regionality – location, temporal demands for labour, community composition and reactions, historical experiences. Numerous sectors within the horticulture industry.
	Different types of RSE employers	Growers and contractors (different sizes, varying levels of experience with managing seasonal labour) plus one grower-cooperative.
	Multiple Pacific countries	Each Pacific government had its own priorities and objectives for participating in RSE, plus varying cultural and political contexts. NZ Govt has separate relationships with each Pacific country, articulated in an inter-agency understanding (IAU) document. Workers from each country have distinctive cultures.
	Cut across NZ govt agencies	The policy cut across a number of agencies' areas of responsibility. These included separate departments responsible for immigration and employment; NZ labour market; foreign policy and development assistance.

'Complicated' policy features	Implications
<p>Implemented across different regions & communities in New Zealand</p>	<p>Differences in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ predominant industry in region (horticulture or viticulture) ▪ community response to newcomers ▪ existing NZ Pacific communities in region ▪ availability of short term accommodation for workers ▪ availability of NZ labour
<p>Focus on immediate results, in addition to long term change</p>	<p>Immediate demand for workers for the 2007/08 season to address labour shortages. Policy was implemented in a short time frame.</p> <p>The policy aims to support the Horticulture and Viticulture Seasonal Labour Strategy's long-term objective to transform the industries' business model from low cost to one based on quality, productivity and high value.</p> <p>Also a need for short term results (i.e. trained return labour to meet immediate labour needs). The desired long term change will not happen if the short term results are not achieved.</p>