



PACIFIC LABOUR FACILITY

The **Pacific Labour Facility** (the Facility) connects Australian employers with Pacific workers and supports the administration of the **Pacific Labour Scheme** (PLS) in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It also provides targeted support for the Department of Jobs and Small Business (DJSB) led **Seasonal Worker Programme** (SWP). The Facility commenced in October 2018 and will:

(a) Increase the quality of training and flow of workers to Australia

The Facility provides support to Pacific island countries (PICs) to increase the quality and preparedness of a ‘work ready pool’ of SWP and PLS workers. Support will include:

- building the capacity of PIC Labour Sending Units, responsible for initial worker selection;
- developing strategies to increase employment opportunities for women and people with disability;
- facilitating placements of workers with approved employers;
- providing visa assistance and support for workers prior to their departure and post-employment, including microloans to cover costs associated with participating in the PLS; and
- working with the Australia Pacific Training Coalition and technical vocational education and training institutions to provide workers to participating industries who have existing Australian industry standard TVET qualifications as well implementing a program of ‘Add on Skills Training’ and ‘Soft Skills Training’ (e.g. English language, first aid) and tailored courses for workers in relevant PLS sectors.

(b) Promote the PLS with Australian employers

The Facility is responsible for promoting the PLS with Australian employers to generate interest in industries with genuine labour market needs. Support will include:


- undertaking regular outreach and advocacy in rural and regional locations and in relevant sectors and industries to identify potential employers;
- facilitating employers’ ‘recruitment missions’ to sending countries; and
- engaging approved employers in the direct recruitment of workers under the PLS.

Appropriate governance and reporting arrangements will be put in place for labour hire companies to ensure monitoring of Pacific worker placements across multiple sites.

(c) Provide support services for Pacific workers in Australia and support their return to local communities and economies

The Facility will provide a range of support services to PLS and SWP workers to improve their transition in to the Australian community. Support will include:

- facilitating access to affordable accommodation and appropriate living arrangements for workers (PLS);

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- facilitating the introduction of workers to their local communities, including their local diaspora communities (PLS);
 - establishing a 24/7 telephone information hotline for employers and workers (PLS and SWP); and
 - providing education on financial literacy, including banking services, remittance transfers, tax returns, and access to superannuation benefits (PLS).

On completion of their placement in Australia, the Facility will assist workers re-integrate on their return home by supporting them use their savings and skills to build new livelihoods.

Support will include:

- delivering re-integration briefings to workers on return to their home; and
- assisting households diversify their income through providing workers with opportunities to develop their skills, establish businesses, or seek employment with existing programs or institutions in the PLS sectors.

(d) Monitor the social and economic impacts of Australia's labour mobility arrangements

The Facility will be responsible for monitoring the social and economic impacts of the PLS and SWP in Australia and the Pacific to promote ongoing learning and improvement.

Support will include:

- monitoring social cohesion and any impacts of long-term family separations;
- identifying risks to social and economic cohesion and recommending solutions;
- evaluating the economic costs and benefits for Australia (in particular, local impacts on wages, employment, business and economies), Pacific workers and home countries (incomes and remittance flows); and
- establishing a labour market information system to identify labour supply and demand across PICs, as well inform Australia's investments in Pacific education and skills.

Design process for the Facility

In October 2017, DFAT engaged an expert team to produce a design for the Facility. The design was finalised in July 2018. The design team has undertaken consultations with PICs and a wide range of government and non-government stakeholders, including multilateral institutions, think tanks, private sector, civil society and other relevant stakeholders. The Pacific Labour Facility commenced in October 2018.

Please direct any queries on the Facility to PacificLabourMobility@dfat.gov.au

