



Australian Hotels Association
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

38 Parliament Place West Perth WA 6005
P.O. Box 660 West Perth Western Australia 6872
T: 08 9321 7701 F: 08 9321 7730 W: www.ahawa.asn.au

Media Release

21 September 2010

AHA calls for intelligent debate over workforce migration policy

Australian Hotels Association (WA) CEO, Bradley Woods, has used today's CEDA's 'Shaping WA from 2010 to 2050' forum to call for a tailored approach to Australia's migration policy in order to meet Western Australia's short to long-term labour requirements, which includes unskilled foreign workers being permitted short term visas and being paid a minimum of Australian award wages.

Mr Woods said that the Australian Government needs to recognise that in a state as large WA, the current 'one size fits all' approach to Australia's migration policy does not address the requirements of the state's workforce demands and that recruiting unskilled foreign workers on a needs-based basis should be a priority.

"Western Australia needs to ensure sufficient flexibility in Australia's migration and visa arrangements so hospitality, tourism and service sectors can access the labour resources that it needs," Mr Woods said.

"The demand for workers in the mining and resources sector will continue to put pressure on service providers in the hospitality and tourism sectors, cafes, restaurants, hotels and accommodation providers.

"To maintain a standard of living Australians expect, and if we wish to continue to improve then it is imperative to have the right policy framework in place"

Mr Woods said this should extend to removing the current skills assessment process and English language competency requirements on the temporary migration program.

"Service and hospitality industries require a dual labour market that includes skilled full-time career professionals and lower skilled workers who tend to take up part-time, seasonal and casual opportunities," he said.

"WA needs unskilled foreign workers when labour demand in Australia is high. Demographic trends, such as an ageing population and low fertility rates, make it critical that Australia has a responsive overseas and interstate migration program to supplement its workforce."

Mr Woods said that population data reveals WA is on a crash course to a significant labour shortage.

“Based on current population trends, we will face a shortfall of 200,000 workers without an increase in migration,” he said.

“We need to ensure the he right policy framework is in place to grow the State’s population in a sustainable way.”

Ends

For further information please contact Doug White, AHA Manager Media and Public Affairs
0458 301 139 or 9321 7701.