RSE: just the beginning?
Some reflections on a decade of managed seasonal work programmes

Richard and Charlotte Bedford
1st RSE conference in the islands
2015: some milestones

• 1\textsuperscript{st} RSE conference in the Pacific
• 5\textsuperscript{th} year of the Strengthening Pacific Partnership programme
• 10\textsuperscript{th} year of managed seasonal work programmes in the Pacific
Celebrating success
Village reconstruction
The old and the new
Industry and agriculture
New church
Five years of the Strengthening Pacific Partnership (SPP) programme
An informative newsletter

Talofa lava,
Malo e lelei,
Kam na mauri,
Talofa, Ni sa
bula, Gud de
tru olgeta,
Mo yoran,
Kia ora tatou
and Pacific
greetings.

I am delighted to welcome you to the
December edition of RSE: Strengthening
Pacific Partnerships Update. This is a quarterly
e-newsletter about the Recognised Seasonal
Employer (RSE): Strengthening Pacific
Partnerships (SPP) initiative.

This is my first newsletter as the guardian of the
RSE policy and as the newly appointed Manager,
Pacifica Labour and Skills in the Ministry of
Business, Innovation & Employment.

A very warm welcome to you all, as New Zealand
starts to head into its warmer seasons, and a
particularly warm welcome to readers who are
new to RSE, or indeed to the SPP initiative.

This newsletter is a great channel for all of us who are interested in the SPP work to
share experiences or bring up questions for
discussion, and any items of interest. I want
to start off with an old Māori proverb “He aha
 tego māo nui o te aotanga tonga. He tangata. He
tangi. He tangata.” – What is the most important
ingredient for the world? It is the people, it is the people, it
is the people. This is very crucial in our role as it
emphasises the importance of people-to-people
relationships. This is what our work is all about.

Now that we are well into the eighth year of the
RSE: Strengthening Pacific Partnerships (SPP)
programme, it’s a good time to reflect on some
of the past successes and challenges.

It is a privilege for me to lead the New Zealand
Government’s strategic management of the
Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) policy, the
implementation of our Strengthening Pacific
Partnerships (SPP) initiative and the Pacific
Access Category (PAC) and Samoa Quota (SQ)
relationship programmes. Although there is a
lot to learn, I am really enjoying the role so far
and I am blessed to have such a great team to
work with.

This edition gives you information about the
SPP developments and brings you up-to-date
with recent initiatives. You will read about the
recent developments surrounding ministerial
visits and SPP secondments as well as some of
the highlights of the Horticulture New Zealand
RSE employers’ conference in July. We have
included a short summary from our North and
South Island regions including a feature on
one of the RSE employers in Marlborough,
Seasonal Solutions Co-operative Limited, along
with profiles of our RSE SPP staff members.

There is such a lot happening under both
the RSE policy in New Zealand, across the
regions and the RSE: SPP initiative. If there
are questions you would like answered, or a
particular focus you would like to see in the
next newsletter, please let us know.

I look forward to working with you all to
progress the RSE: SPP work.

Now that we are in December the countdown
to Christmas and New Year is well and truly on.

I wish you and all your families a very Merry
Christmas and a Happy New Year.

George Rarere
Manager Pacifica Labour & Skills
george.rarere@pmb.govt.nz
+64 6 975 5578
A very successful programme

Department of Labour
In association with RSE: SPP & Brandheart

Invites

Michael Liu
Seasonal Workers Agency Vanuatu

To attend a:

Conversations for Results Workshop

Conducted by Brandheart

 Trainer: Ken Mitchell
 Date: 14 & 15 February
 Venue: 2013
 Start Time: Grand Hotel
 Finish Time: 08:00 hrs
 RSVP: 16:40 hrs
 29937

analytic matters

Mid-term evaluation of the Strengthening Pacific Partnerships project

Heather Nunns, Mathea Roorda, Charlotte Bedford, with Richard Bedford

May 2013
A decade of seasonal work programmes
Growing an industry

- Fruit - fresh
- Fruit - processed
- Vegetables - fresh
- Vegetables - processed
- Flowers, seeds & plants
- Wine

# Labour demand – peak seasons

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<th>Mar</th>
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<td>750</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>700</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>16,830</td>
<td>27,990</td>
<td>30,510</td>
<td>37,380</td>
<td>29,380</td>
<td>15,810</td>
<td>11,660</td>
<td>8,335</td>
<td>4,075</td>
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*Seasonal workers required*
## Seasonal work programmes 2005/6-2014/15

<table>
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<th>Programme</th>
<th>Total visas</th>
<th>Pacific visas</th>
<th>% Pacific</th>
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<td>569</td>
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<td>RSE</td>
<td>60,050</td>
<td>48,338</td>
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<td>TRSE</td>
<td>4,535</td>
<td>565</td>
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<td>SSE</td>
<td>1,027</td>
<td>109</td>
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<td>RSE VoC</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>86.1</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>74,939</strong></td>
<td><strong>49,842</strong></td>
<td><strong>66.5</strong></td>
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## Seasonal work visas in context
### 2005/6-2014/15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>All temp work visas</th>
<th>All seasonal work visas</th>
<th>% seasonal work</th>
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<td>Samoa</td>
<td>23,200</td>
<td>9,990</td>
<td>43.1</td>
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<td>Tonga</td>
<td>26,000</td>
<td>12,630</td>
<td>48.6</td>
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<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>22,500</td>
<td>21,980</td>
<td>97.7</td>
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<td>Pacific (RSE)</td>
<td>81,600</td>
<td>49,620</td>
<td>60.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Pacific</td>
<td>149,100</td>
<td>49,800</td>
<td>33.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>All countries</td>
<td>1,618,000</td>
<td>74,939</td>
<td>4.6</td>
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</table>
Other Pacific and main Asian suppliers of RSE labour

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<th>Area</th>
<th>All temp wk v.</th>
<th>All seas wk v.</th>
<th>% seas.wk</th>
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<td><strong>Other Pacific</strong></td>
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<td>Solomon Is</td>
<td>4,030</td>
<td>3,140</td>
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<td>Kiribati</td>
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<td>Tuvalu</td>
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<td>PNG</td>
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<td><strong>Main Asia</strong></td>
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<td>Thailand</td>
<td>26,920</td>
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<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>14,900</td>
<td>2,460</td>
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Summary

1. 150,000 work visas for PIs approved July 2005-June 2015
2. Just under 50,000 of these (1/3rd) for seasonal work by PIs
3. 60,000 seasonal work visas approved over decade – 80% to Pacific workers; 20% to Asian workers
4. The RSE scheme accounted for 80% of all seasonal work visas issued over the decade.
Some challenges

1. “Spreading the love” – managing return rates so that there are opportunities for new workers to ensure continuity of trained labour supply and spread of benefits of work in Pacific communities

2. “Helping the small players” – recognising that a third of all RSEs employ less than 20 workers each and account for just 4.5% of all recruits. Their needs for additional workers may seem small but they can be as great as those of the big players
Challenges cont.

3. Maintaining the “best practice” brand – continuing to show leadership in areas of worker welfare, pastoral care, and capacity building

4. Keeping the human dimension of seasonal work to the fore -- temporary workers have family obligations that may mean they need to take a season or two off work to maximise the benefits of participating in the scheme
Providing more opportunities for Pacific women
Continuously working on the relationships between key stakeholders in the RSE system.