Fighting for Territory jobs and businesses in 457 visa battle

7 August 2017

Minister for Primary Industry and Resources, Ken Vowles, will fly to Canberra today lobbying against changes proposed by the federal government to the skilled work visa Subclass 457 and skilled migration program.

“The Territory Labor Government came to government on a promise to create jobs, which includes helping businesses find the resources they need to be successful, such as labour,” Minister Vowles said.

Proposed changes to the 457 visa, announced on 18 April 2017, include the removal of certain occupations, which does not reflect NT labour market conditions. They also include the removal of permanent residency pathways, which reduces the pool of workers looking for sponsorship.

“The 457 visa changes will impact our economy, community and employers. This is why I am going to Canberra to fight for Territorians,” Minister Vowles said.

“We have consulted extensively and have been approached by employers, both large and small, for profit and not-for-profit, who are concerned about changes to the migration/visa occupation lists and their ability to meet the workforce needs of their organisations.

“Overseas skilled migration has played an important role in addressing Northern Territory skill shortages in recent years, and we are concerned this Federal reform did not consider the impact on us.”

The Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition have agreed to take a bipartisan approach to this issue, to take a unified Territory voice to Canberra.

“We will meet with Australian Government Ministers, shadow ministers, government representatives and opposition in Canberra to highlight the unique labour market and workforce needs of NT businesses,” Minister Vowles said.

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