

Seizing the moment



A proposal to trial the supported settlement of selected communities of Safe Haven Enterprise Visa holders in rural regions in Tasmania

**THE TASMANIA
OPPORTUNITY:**

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Executive Summary

The Tasmania Opportunity (TTO) is a small community-based not-for-profit organisation that seeks to promote the settlement of asylum seekers in Tasmania for the sake of their wellbeing and the betterment of Tasmania's social and economic structure.

Australian Border Force reports that currently there are nearly 30,000 asylum seekers living in the community in Australia on Bridging Visas and many of these people have applied for Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs) or Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEVs). If successful, TPV holders could stay in Australia for up to three years and SHEV holders could remain for up to five years.

TTO recommends that the Tasmanian government should trial the supported settlement of selected communities of SHEV holders in rural regions in Tasmania with the aim of encouraging similar projects across the State once the trial has been introduced successfully and evaluated.

The purpose of this proposal (which we have entitled *Seizing the Moment*) is to suggest the parameters for such a trial and to argue for its introduction. This proposal is based on the evidence of other Australian regional communities that have already demonstrated the economic benefits of the supported settlement of asylum seekers.

TTO is not seeking any funding for itself. Instead, it recommends a collaborative approach between the State government and self-selected Local Government Areas that have demonstrated an interest in the settlement of asylum seekers. Nine municipalities have registered as Refugee Welcome Zones and they should be considered as candidates for the purposes of this trial.

This proposal supports the Tasmanian Government's population policy that aims to increase Tasmania's population to 650,000 by 2050 through 'overseas migrants, international students, humanitarian entrants, and Tasmanians living elsewhere who can hear home calling'.

TTO believes that Tasmania should focus on the settlement of SHEV holders from rural backgrounds, because their settlement would be of long-term benefit to both Tasmania and asylum seeker communities.

The key elements of this proposal are:

1. Employment – we recommend targeting employment sectors that have traditionally not been filled by the Tasmanian workforce including fruit and vegetable picking, vineyards, dairy and aquaculture. This would provide an economic dividend for the Tasmanian economy.
2. Applicants – we recommend that the Tasmanian government should engage with SHEV applicants and promote the benefits of settlement in Tasmania with respect to employment and education opportunities, social inclusion, and freedom from discrimination.
3. Preparation – we suggest that the success of this proposal would depend upon the degree of government planning and investment in the recruitment, selection, and preparation of both the host communities and the SHEV-holder communities.
4. Experience – this proposal is based on Tasmania's previous successful experience with the temporary protection of Kosovo refugees (in 1999), the ongoing benefits from the settlement of refugees under the Australian Humanitarian Settlement Program, widespread contemporary community support for asylum seekers, and well-established niche business expertise in rural communities. Recent research shows that Tasmanians are more accepting of Muslims than are most Australians and TTO argues that this proposal has the broad support of a growing number of Tasmanian community and business leaders.

Finally, this proposal considers the implications for employment, housing, education, and health and it argues that this trial requires a whole-of-government approach.

Glossary

Asylum Seekers means displaced people seeking asylum from persecution or war outside their own country. Not all asylum seekers will have necessarily been assessed as being refugees by UNHCR.

CALD Communities means Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities.

Humanitarian Victims means people forced to flee from their home country because of extreme suffering (for example, famine) but who do not fit the definition of a refugee.

Internally Displaced People means people who have fled their homes because of persecution or violence, but remain within the boundaries of their country.

LGA means Local Government Area.

Migrants means people who move between countries because of lifestyle, employment, or family connections, etc.

Non-Refoulement is the principle contained in the *UN Convention on the Status of Refugees* 'of not forcing refugees or asylum seekers to return to a country in which they are liable to be subjected to persecution'. (Oxford Dictionary)

People Groups means an ethno-linguistic group with a shared self-identity. Asylum seekers are often minority people who do not identify with their 'nationality' (for example, the Karen & Chin peoples from Myanmar).

Refugee Welcome Zone means a Local Government Area that has made a commitment in spirit to welcoming refugees into the community, upholding the human rights of refugees, demonstrating compassion for refugees and enhancing cultural and religious diversity in the community.

Refugees are asylum seekers assessed by UNHCR as having fled their country because of a reasonable fear of persecution.

Regional Australia is a term used by the Australian Government to promote non-urban areas of the nation, including for immigration.

Resettlement means the process whereby asylum seekers move from their country of origin through a transit country to a third host nation. About 1% of all asylum seekers are resettled.

SHEV means a Safe Haven Enterprise Visa. SHEV holders commit to live in a regional area. SHEV holders may stay for up to five years.

UNHCR means the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

1. Selecting Regional Communities

Community engagement is critical. Broadbent (2007, p. 60) argues that a key factor in successful relocation of refugees is the active, effective involvement of local government.

Local councils in Tasmania who are registered as a Refugee Welcome Zone will be encouraged to register for participation in the *Seizing the Moment* program.

The criteria required of regional communities when they apply to participate should include:

- The demonstration of available and appropriate employment for SHEV holders (see Appendix 1)
- Strong leadership in the community by local champions/influencers
- The Council should commit to the program, including staffing and budgetary provisions
- The Council should engage a reputable, experienced Australian company to consult in the setting up of the local program
- The Council should commit to employ a part-time *Seizing the Moment* Program Coordinator to carry out all liaison with workplaces, employees and government, administration, training and support
- Community planning should take place before, at commencement, and on an on-going basis during implementation (Broadbent 2007, p. 65)
- The Council should engage in broad consultation and education within its community including on-going community education regarding the culture of the people group
- The community should demonstrate widespread support for the program
- The Council should provide the facilities needed for cultural and community practices (e.g. prayer room, meeting space)
- Community services should be designed for the particular people group
- The community should celebrate cultural diversity
- Based on a set of commitments developed in Warrnambool (Broadbent 2007: 65) Council should provide or facilitate:
 - A welcome and orientation process
 - A package in the form of an agreement including:
 - At least one family member in employment within one month of arrival
 - Two months of rental assistance
 - Amenity connection costs such as electricity, gas, and telephone
 - Assistance with relocation costs
- The Council should commit to work with the state and Australian Governments to provide the necessary resources and services to support this program.

2. Preparing Regional Communities

2.1 Community Readiness

Both the State and Australian Governments are keen to increase the settlement of migrants and refugees in regional Australia. Successful settlement has been achieved in numerous settings, with reports and reviews written. We know the proven ingredients required.

It is recommended that the Tasmanian and Australian Governments fund the development of selected regional communities to support community readiness.

For successful settlement, community readiness requires:

Social Inclusion

- Strong leadership in the host community by local champions/influencers
- Host community prepared for the new settlers
- Support for families (partners, children, elders)

Freedom from discrimination and violence

- The degree and complexity of ‘cultural adjustment’ on both sides considered and managed.

Access to economic resources

- Employment – jobs available for the new settlers
- Initial (short-term) accommodation

Empowered Communities

- Community meeting space
- Community worship space
- Training in community governance and functioning

See Appendix 2 for details.

2.2 Employment

The Tasmanian Government should determine the industries where unfilled jobs are most prevalent and the relevant local council areas. It is proposed that the Tasmanian Government offer information sessions to selected Councils to detail the opportunities and requirements of the *Seizing the Moment* proposal.

It is recommended that each participating Council should appoint their part-time *Seizing the Moment* Coordinator to oversee the program.

All participating SHEV holders should be afforded all the rights of Australian employees.

A reputable Australian company(s) already established in contracting migrant long-term workers in regional Australia should be enlisted to consult each local Council in the setting up of the employment program.

To be accepted into the program, employers must provide award conditions. Each workplace will have specific circumstances and conditions that need to be built into employment understandings.

See Appendix 2 for details.

2.3 Housing

It is recommended that all participating SHEV holders should be able to access housing on a similar basis to that of others in the Australian community. For *Seizing the Moment*, Housing Tasmania (Department of Health and Human Services) should plan to meet the special housing needs of asylum seekers utilising both public and/or private housing stock. As other regional areas are brought into the scheme, further investment by the Tasmanian and the Australian Governments would be necessary.

See Appendix 2 for details.

2.4 Education

It is recommended that all participating SHEV holders should be able to access public education on a similar basis to that of others in the Australian community.

Children of SHEV holders are likely to have special needs these may relate to physical and mental health issues (see the next section for details), language, cultural barriers, and discrimination.

It is recommended that the Department of Education should plan to accommodate the special needs of asylum seeker children and the additional numbers.

See Appendix 2 for details.

2.5 Health

It is recommended that all participating SHEV holders should be able to access public health services, Centrelink, and Medicare benefits on a similar basis to that of others in the Australian community.

For the trial, it is recommended that the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services and Australian Government Department of Health should plan to meet the special needs of asylum seekers as these needs relate to the relevant funding applied.

See Appendix 2 for details.

3. Attracting SHEV Holders to Tasmania

It is recommended that the Tasmanian Government should give priority to attracting selected SHEV holders.

In the past Tasmania has not always been able to retain many asylum seekers due to difficulties in gaining suitable employment. CALD communities report that many jobs are offered to people known through local networks. Recent arrivals therefore have an immediate disadvantage. Many eventually move to Melbourne or other major Australian cities – at a significant loss to the Tasmanian economy.

If Tasmania is to leverage the opportunity for population growth via asylum seeker and refugee intakes, the Tasmanian Government should change this pattern by prioritising selected SHEV holders to fill targeted gaps in rural economies.

Some asylum seekers who had moved away did eventually come back to Tasmania because of family and/or the Tasmanian lifestyle. Tasmania could be a very attractive final destination for SHEV holders if employment can be secured.

The uptake of SHEV applications has been slow across Australia, due in part to the very detailed application form, fear of making errors and the defunding of legal assistance.

Seizing the Moment proposes that the Tasmanian Government should offer information sessions in Melbourne and Sydney targeting preferred peoples' groups (one session for each selected people group with a translator present). The purpose of these sessions would be to promote Tasmania as a destination and assist in filling out the SHEV application. Follow-up information via a help phone line or on-line should also be provided.

4. Selecting SHEV People Groups

It is recommended that SHEV holders should be settled in regional Tasmania according to their people group(s) and wherever possible where their skills and experience can be best utilised.

AMES Research and Policy and Deloitte Access Economics (2015) recommends eight factors that contributed to the success of the Karen resettlement in Nhill, three of which apply to the asylum seeker community (see previous section) and four that apply to the people group. These may need careful re-application in some settings.

SHEV holders should:

- participate in language, cultural and employment training;
- live in the specified rural town or regional city;
- report monthly to a designated Centrelink office or post office; and
- remain in the prescribed employment, study, or training

5. Preparing SHEV Candidates

5.1 General

It is recommended that all adult SHEV holders should have access to 300 hours of English language study and an orientation session to the geography, history, and culture of both Tasmania and the region to which they have been assigned.

5.2 Vocational

It is recommended that all adult SHEV holders should have access to vocational preparation and assistance:

- Initial training to meet the employers' specifications
- Workplace Health & Safety training
- Formation of work parties of five people (including a team leader with functional English), and
- Provision of appropriate equipment and working clothes

6. The *Seizing the Moment* Model

It is recommended that *Seizing the Moment* should be piloted in two localities in Tasmania before being rolled out into other regional areas of Tasmania. The pilot placements should last for 12 months with the expectation that the SHEV holders would continue longer term. Having two pilot locations allows for community-to-community shared learning opportunities and comparative evaluation.

It is recommended that the Australian Government should provide funding for the pilot program so that all procedures and paperwork are developed, tested, evaluated, and adjusted as needed.

A reputable, experienced Australian company should be contracted to set up, manage, and evaluate the pilot. Evaluation measures should be agreed by all parties and consistent across all pilot areas. Such companies should also be contracted by participating Councils to provide support and advice in the implementation of local programs.

6.1 Tasmanian Advantages

Tasmania has unique advantages as a place to settle SHEV holders.

- Tasmania has multiple rural sites within a small geographic area.
- Tasmania has rural areas within easy access of regional centres (services).
- The Tasmanian government has more to gain than any other state by a proposal to inject economic activity in regional areas.
- Tasmania has an excellent proven record of accomplishment in processing and settling asylum seekers, having repeatedly displayed high motivation, capability, and competence. Many Tasmanians and local councils have indicated strong desire for this opportunity to serve our state, nation, and neighbours in this way.
- There is widespread interest by individuals and local councils within Tasmania.
- Although variation between states is negligible, research shows that Tasmanians are, if anything, more accepting of Muslims than are most Australians. No variation in attitude was discerned between residents in capital cities and those not in a capital city. See Hassan, Riaz and Martin (2015, pp. 10-11).

6.2 Benefits

Seizing the Moment offers Tasmania a number of benefits:

1. Economic revitalisation of Regional Tasmania

The Tasmanian Government has set an ambitious population growth target, which it says is essential for Tasmania's long-term prosperity. The successful long-term settlement of asylum seekers is in Tasmania's interest.

Over recent years, immigration to Tasmania has not led to long-term settlement due to a lack of support in finding suitable employment. *Seizing the Moment* provides a model to overcome this barrier to population growth.

The Australian government encourages temporary workers to seek employment in regional Australia. Motivations such as the granting of extra points when applying for a resident visa or renewing working holiday visas are designed to attract temporary workers to rural and regional areas.

However, short-term workers such as 417 visa holders do not typically spend the bulk of their earnings locally and certainly do not join and contribute to the community. Supported relocation of refugees into regional Tasmania would assist the revitalisation of regional Tasmania.

AMES (2015) claims that local governments in Victoria have demonstrated interest in exploring opportunities to apply similar approaches to that experienced in Nhill in order to develop their rural communities.

Seizing the Moment would increase scales of economy in state health, education, infrastructure and development departments, whilst increasing consumer spending and therefore the overall size of regional economies.

Seizing the Moment would strengthen existing government agencies and service organisations, enhancing outcomes for all local residents. There would be a focus on capacity-building investment and empowering small enterprises across multiple sectors, including agriculture, industry, tourism, and the arts.

2. Social revitalisation of Regional Tasmania

AMES (2015) claim that the Karen resettlement in Nhill provided a number of important social impacts in the Nhill area. The newcomers:

- Redressed the population decline for the township of Nhill, providing an almost 10% increase and lowering the average age - the injection of 49 children has had a significant impact
- Triggered revitalised local services and increased government funding. Council had developed a Karen Community Action plan and employed a Multicultural Liaison Officer. Other services provided by Council include interpreter services, taking the initiative to see appropriate service provision and funding for cultural events
- Boosted primary and secondary school numbers and viability - cultural diversity has been seen by schools as having a very positive effect on the school community
- Revitalised the local Neighbourhood House and adult education with many new services added
- Grew health services including maternal child health and healthy diet sessions
- Contributed to increase funding for the Wimmera Development Association in nearby Horsham
- Increased bridging capital – networks of relationships that enable the sharing of information, ideas, and innovation
- Gave increased opportunities for volunteering – giving benefit to the refugees, the wider community and indeed to the volunteers themselves. Some Karen people are now actively volunteering
- Have had a very positive influence on the community by the values and behaviours they model.

Because housing is so much cheaper in Nhill than in the western suburbs of Melbourne, asylum seekers have approximately \$160 more discretionary spending per week. This is enabling home purchasing and a significantly improved standard of living. This had both financial and social flow-on benefits.

John Millington retired CEO of the company responsible for providing employment for the Karen in Nhill) says, “The arrival of the Karen was a win-win situation for us and them.”

3. Eradication of exploitation of foreign workers

Four Corners (ABC TV, 4 May 2015) claims that there is extensive exploitation of tens of thousands of foreign workers across parts regional Australia. Workplaces including chicken processing and fresh vegetable processing are reportedly under-paying short-term workers. One hourly rate quoted was just \$3.95 per hour. Working conditions are in some instances also extremely disturbing.

The Member for Hinkler, the Hon Keith Pitt, MHR (NP), describes the conditions around Bundaberg, Queensland as being a ‘slave trade’. Dr Joanna Howe, Senior Lecturer, University of Adelaide Law School, shares concern for foreign workers who are being ‘routinely abused’.

There are also reports of widespread sexual harassment and sexual assault, verbal and racial abuse, and substandard housing.

Most farmers reportedly do not want to participate in illegal and inhumane practices. However, they need to see their crops picked in good time.

Organised crime is reportedly involved in some places with some labour hire companies operating a black market. Some workers are on 417 visas, others have expired, invalid visas and or fake employment cards. Australia is losing significant tax revenue each year.

Seizing the Moment will bring a regulated ethical approach to fruit and vegetable picking etc. Having employees living locally will also make it harder for unscrupulous operators to remain in the market.

Councils could include in the brief of their *Seizing the Moment* program coordinator (see section 6 above) being a contact person for all employment complaints in the Council area. In these ways, such complaints could be reported in a timely manner to the appropriate authorities.

4. Australia's international reputation

Australia's reputation has been damaged by the treatment of asylum seekers and its lack of cooperation with neighbouring nations. Foreign trade and tourism are enhanced by a positive international reputation.

Seizing the Moment offers a first step to restore Australia's standing in the region. *Seizing the Moment* treats selected asylum seekers humanely within the current policy framework.

5. Social harmony

Asylum seekers from rural backgrounds are more likely to settle well into regional communities. The experience in Nhill certainly points in this direction. Placing asylum seekers from rural backgrounds in large cities is a recipe for probable social disintegration – probably with a sizeable economic cost.

7. Summary

7.1 Beneficiaries

Seizing the Moment is a mutual, interpersonal, and developmental proposal, not just a charitable, nor just a financial, activity. There are five winners in this proposal.

Asylum Seekers - through implementation of the safe-haven concept, creating a humane and vocationally fulfilling role in which they have the protection of, and the opportunity to contribute to, the hosting community.

Local communities - through the enhanced diversity and social, vocational and economic value that safe-haven recipients bring; the capacity building and community cohesion generated in the process, the opportunity to make a historical and life-changing contribution and to model, especially to youths, how to create a culture of respect and care within society.

The State - through injection of federal funding into the State economy, plus the composite of all the aspects mentioned above.

The Nation - through restoration of our international reputation and its effects upon international trade and relations, benefits to our national culture, identity, and narrative.

The World – the behaviour of one nation has much broader resultant effects on the policies and practices of other nations. We face a growing international crisis, which will not quickly go away. Our small victories here can have vast, far-reaching and globe transforming effects through other nations.

7.2 Recognised Risks

In treating SHEV holders humanely, *Seizing the Moment* risks the arrival of more boats and therefore more deaths at sea.

Australia must balance its use of deterrence with its international obligations to treat refugees humanely. SHEVs are part of the current policy mix that has been designed to deter asylum seekers. *Seizing the Moment* will implement current policy in a way that brings economic advantage to Tasmania.

‘Economic refugees’ may increase in numbers.

SHEVs are part of the current policy mix that has been designed to deter ‘economic refugees’. *Seizing the Moment* will implement that current policy to Tasmania’s advantage. Research confirms that the argument concerning economic refugees is overstated. Approximately 3-6% of all asylum seekers might be so classified (though the term is dubious under international law).

Australia cannot afford to spend more money on asylum seekers.

Seizing the Moment proposes only modest expenditure to revitalise regional Tasmania, whilst also treating asylum seekers humanely.

7.3 Timetable and Costings

The Tasmanian Government would need to determine a satisfactory timetable and costings for the *Seizing the Moment* pilot program.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Pilot Program

That the Australian and Tasmanian Governments should commit to a 12 month pilot of the *Seizing the Moment* program at two localities in Tasmania with a view to rolling out the program in other regional communities across Tasmania.

Key elements of this recommendation include:

- That the Tasmanian and Australian Governments should fund the development of selected regional communities to support community readiness.
- That the Tasmanian Government should give priority to attracting selected SHEV holders rather than Syrian refugees and other humanitarian intakes.
- That the Tasmanian Government offers information sessions in Melbourne and Sydney targeting preferred peoples’ groups (one session for each selected people group with a translator present).
- That the Tasmanian Government offers information sessions to selected Councils to detail the opportunities and requirements of the *Seizing the Moment* proposal.
- That SHEV holders be settled in regional Tasmania according to their people group(s) and wherever possible where their skills and experience can be best utilised.
- That each participating Councils should appoint a part-time *Seizing the Moment* Coordinator to oversee the program.
- That all participating SHEV holders should be able to access housing on a similar basis to that of others in the Australian community.
- That all participating SHEV holders should be able to access public education on a similar basis to that of others in the Australian community.

- That all adult SHEV holders should have access to 300 hours of English language study and an orientation session to the geography, history, and culture of both Tasmania and the region to which they have been assigned.
- That all adult SHEV holders should have access to vocational preparation and assistance.
- That all participating SHEV holders should be able to access public health services, Centrelink, and Medicare benefits on a similar basis to that of others in the Australian community.

8.2 Timetable, Budget, and Operationalization

That the Australian and Tasmanian Governments should develop a detailed project that determines and describes the timetable, budget, and operational parameters to enable the introduction of the *Seizing the Moment* Tasmanian pilot program.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Selected Rural Industries by Local Government Areas

Five primary industries have been selected as most likely to be able to provide employment for SHEV holders:

- Aquaculture
- Dairy
- Fruit & berry growing
- Vegetable growing
- Wine production

It is recognised that when a SHEV community is placed in a selected community, other suitable employment may also emerge.

The distribution of the five primary industries in Local Government Areas is shown below:

Break O’ Day *	Dairy and Wine production
Brighton	-
Burnie	Dairy
Central Coast	Dairy and Vegetable growing
Central Highlands	-
Circular Head	Aquaculture, Dairy (the best dairy area in state)
Clarence *	Aquaculture (Seven Mile Beach), Fruit growing, Vegetable growing and Wine production
Derwent Valley *	Dairy and Vegetable growing
Devonport	Dairy, Fruit growing, Vegetable growing and Wine production
Dorset	Dairy and Vegetable growing
Flinders	-
George Town	Dairy and Wine production
Glamorgan/Spring Bay	Aquaculture (Spring Bay, Triabunna) and Wine production
Glenorchy	Wine production
Hobart *	-
Huon Valley	Aquaculture (Huon), Fruit growing and Wine production
Kentish	Dairy and Vegetable growing
Kingborough *	Aquaculture (Margate) and Fruit growing
King Island	Dairy
Latrobe *	Dairy and Fruit growing
Launceston *	Aquaculture (Myrtle Park), Dairy, Fruit growing and Wine production
Meander Valley	Aquaculture (Deloraine) and Dairy
Northern Midlands *	Aquaculture (Cressy), Dairy, Fruit growing, Vegetable growing
Sorell	Fruit growing and Wine production
Southern Midlands	Vegetable growing
Tasman	Wine growing
Waratah-Wynyard	Dairy and Vegetable growing
West Coast	Aquaculture (Strahan, Macquarie Harbour)
West Tamar *	Aquaculture (Deviot, Beauty Point), Dairy, Fruit growing and Wine production

* Nine municipalities are registered with RCOA as Refugee Welcome Zones

Appendix 2 - Preparation of Regional Communities

It is recommended that the Australian Government fund the development of selected regional communities in Tasmania to provide:

Community readiness

AMES (2015) offer a number of success factors that contributed to the success of the Karen resettlement in Nhill, six of which apply to the receiving community. These may need careful re-application in some settings:

1. Employment – jobs available for the new settlers,
2. Strong leadership in the host community by local champions/influencers,
3. Host community prepared for the new settlers,
4. Initial (short term) accommodation,
5. Support for families (partners, children, elders), and
6. Degree and complexity of ‘cultural adjustment’ on both sides considered and managed.

Broadbent (2007) suggests three other ‘Factors in a Positive Settlement Experience’:

- Social inclusion
- Freedom from discrimination and violence
- Access to economic resources.

Employment

The Department of Immigration & Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs noted in 2003 that successive governments set policies to increase the re-settlement of migrants and refugees in regional Australia. While successful traction seems to continually elude capture at a local level, employment is consistently a key factor identified in settling refugees in regional Australia (see also Multicultural Council of Tasmania, 2015).

Landline (ABC TV, 3 May 2015) reported on the successful employment in rural Victoria of short-term seasonal labour from Vanuatu.

AMES (2015) detail the very positive experience of approximately 160 Karen refugees settling in Nhill in western Victoria to work at Luv-a-Duck chicken processing plant. Although Nhill has some distinctive features (declining population and low unemployment) it is clear that the AMES/Deloitte case study “can both create the case for, and can inform planning of, resettlement in other Australian communities”.

Fifty-four Karen people are directly employed by Luv-a-Duck, enabling other jobs to grow in the area. Deloitte Access Economics model the economic impact of this increased labour supply across the Hindmarsh as being \$41.5 million in net value terms in 2015.

It is a critical tenet of *Seizing the Moment* that participating SHEV holders should be afforded all the rights of Australian employees.

It is recommended that reputable Australian companies, already working in the area of contracting migrant long-term workers in regional Australia, should be enlisted to support each local Council in the setting up of the employment program. This helps avoid the possibility of unexperienced, unskilled, or possibly unscrupulous employment agents or agencies affecting successful outcomes for parties and stakeholders of the pilot program.

To be accepted into the program, employers must provide:

- Full workplace health and safety induction

- Access to clean running water and toilet facilities
- Shaded areas for lunch and other permitted breaks
- On-site skills training sufficient so that each worker understands the specific requirements of the particular workplace
- Access for the part-time local *Seizing the Moment* Program Coordinator to assist with additional training or to resolve any difficulties.

It is recommended that each Council should employ a part-time Seizing the Moment Program Coordinator to oversee the program, including:

- Enlisting employers and negotiating contracts including:
 - Number of workers required,
 - Start and finish dates,
 - Brighter Pathways Wage Support Program for eligible employers,
 - Employee pay rates (employees should receive 100% of their salary and superannuation, according to the appropriate Australian Award, e.g. Horticultural Award 2010),
 - Agreement to pay 10% of base rate to the program for oversight, training and support,
 - Training requirements (prior to commencement and on-job training),
 - Performance appraisal and, where needed, worker replacement process,
 - Supervision processes, and
 - Trouble shooting process;
- Finalising Workplace Health & Safety assessment of workplaces
- Providing work clothes and any necessary equipment
- Organisation of transport and team logistics on site
- Ensuring employers have in place suitable payroll system including timesheets, payroll and superannuation and provision for workers compensation, public liability, and professional indemnity insurance.

Flexibility of systems will need to be able to respond to the circumstances and situation with respect to each workplace and these will need to be built into employment arrangements.

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia has created a series of fact sheets aimed at encouraging greater awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity in Australian workplaces.

Housing

It is recommended that all participating SHEV holders should be able to access housing on a similar basis to others in the Tasmanian community. For the pilot program, Housing Tasmania (Department of Health and Human Services) should plan to meet the special housing needs of asylum seekers. As other regional areas are brought into the scheme, further investment by state and federal governments would be necessary.

Education

It is recommended that all participating SHEV holders should be able to access public education on a similar basis to that of others in the Tasmanian community.

Children of SHEV holders are likely to have special educational needs. These relate to physical and mental health issues (see the next section for details), language, cultural barriers, and racism.

The Department of Education should plan to accommodate the special needs of asylum seeker children and the additional numbers.

Health

It is recommended that all participating SHEV holders are able to access public health services on a similar basis to that of others in the Tasmanian community. All participating SHEV holders should be able to access Centrelink and Medicare benefits on a similar basis to that of others in the Tasmanian community. SHEV holders are likely to exhibit higher levels due to trauma experienced both in their homeland, in transit and in detention centres. Psychologists refer to well documented psychological damaged caused by such lengthy detention (Murray, Davidson, Schweizer, 2008). Wherever SHEV holders are settled, Australia is obliged to provide medical and psychological assistance. Moreover, not to do so will inevitably result in economic, social, and reputational costs for Australia. For the trial, the Tasmanian Department of Health should plan to meet the special needs of asylum seekers. As other regional areas are brought into the scheme, investment in other places will be necessary.

Appendix 3 – Factors for a Positive Settlement Experience

Excerpt from Broadbent (2007)

Indicators to emerge in facilitating a positive settlement experience, noted by the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship, DIMA (2003), include induction programs that ensure that migrants and refugees receive support in basic settlement needs. Based on DIMA's review of settlement services for migrants and humanitarian entrants (2003) and the work carried out by the Refugee Council of Victoria (2001) a summary is provided below of characteristics that assist in positive refugee relocation programs. They have been grouped into the three key determinants of mental health that align the VicHealth 'Mental Health Promotion Framework' (2005). They are as follows:

Social Inclusion

Health Care (Counselling Services — mental health, medical care).

Education processes, which involve parents and guardians.

Adult English tuition- Supportive educational needs for refugees.

Supporting Religious/Spiritual needs whereby refugees have a place to worship and knowledge of burial procedures.

Providing access to support groups, peer networks, community refugee settlement schemes, and Migrant Resource Centres.

Responding to kinship needs that are culturally based and essential to wellbeing.

Recognising community groups assists in the fostering of social connectedness where a sense of identity and belonging is nourished.

Promoting, initiating, and supporting networks of civic engagement and sporting or social clubs.

Ensuring there are effective transport systems that are reliable and accessible to places of work, worship and community settings.

Involving both the host community and refugees in a range of social activities that celebrate and show case ethnic diversity and its richness to rural areas.

Valuing the social position of newcomers and adopting an inclusive approach to individuals assists in the creation of strong links between all stakeholders.

Cultivating the establishment of strong partnership ties that have at its centre the goal of procuring a sustainable and productive relocation program.

Establishing a review of current processes and programs for settlement procedures that assist in improving current practice and addressing short and long-term goals.

Working with and informing refugees of the necessary procedures needed to sponsor family members into Australia.

Freedom from Discrimination and Violence

Informing refugees of their legal rights and its impact on everyday life.

Providing adequate prayer sites to assist with diversity in spiritual practices, and recognising the need for alternative burial practices.

Ensuring that newly arrived refugees are provided with adequate resources in which to voice their opinions on matters that affect their wellbeing.

Ensuring that adequate and professional services are provided to refugees who require assistance in dealing with the trauma associated with their journey.

Providing a place for ethnic representatives to work with local governments, NGOs and other organisations where there is an establishment of partnerships across sectors. These partnerships can also help to dispel myths that are aligned with ethnocentrism and racist attitudes.

Access to Economic Resources

Employment assistance that can support refugees in attaining not only financial security, but also job satisfaction.

Access to government benefits (Medicare, income support, rent assistance, Youth Allowance, Austudy, Sickness allowance, sponsorship of family members into Australia).

Informing and assisting refugees on how to access banks and how to effectively budget and manage financial resources.

Providing adequate housing needs that are stable and affordable.

Housing also needs to be located in areas where there is easy access to social support networks and employment.

Recognition of prior qualifications of refugees or the creation of pathways that can assist with retraining in professions previously held.

Supporting ongoing training where employers display initiative in increasing the skill base of new employees. Employers should also consider providing employees with English language classes on site.

Appendix 4 – The Tasmania Opportunity

The Tasmania Opportunity Association (TTO) was formed in mid-2014. The basic objects and purposes of the Association are to:

- build positive working relationships with organisations and networks committed to the welfare of refugees and asylum seekers
- research and present information on issues relating to the needs and circumstances of refugees and asylum seekers
- increase public awareness and media sensitivity towards refugees and asylum seekers in Tasmania
- promote the development of just, humane, lawful and constructive policies towards refugees and asylum seekers by governments and communities, with a particular focus on Tasmania
- promote the empowerment of refugee communities and individuals in Tasmania
- support the capacity building of Tasmania’s refugee sector
- assist the Tasmanian government and inter-governmental organisations to formulate policy and improve support and services for refugees and asylum seekers in Tasmania, and
- assist the Tasmanian government to develop social cohesion and economic activity in urban and regional communities.

The work of TTO was originally directed toward the development of a plan for an urgent transition towards a better framework for receiving, screening and where appropriate, settling asylum seekers in Tasmania and in so doing provide the Australian Government with an alternative to offshore processing.

In late 2014, the Australian Government introduced a number of new measures that support Operation Sovereign Borders policy and regulations:

- 18 November 2014: Immigration Minister Scott Morrison announced that Australia would no longer resettle refugees who attempt to come here via Indonesia.
- 5 December 2014: Parliament approved the *Migration and Maritime Powers Legislation Amendment (Resolving the Asylum Legacy Caseload) Act 2014* Cwth (the **Asylum Legacy Act**). This legislation reintroduced Temporary Protection Visas (TPV) with a three-year time limit. It also introduced Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV) with a five-year time limit.
- 21 December 2014: The Minister announced that the Governments of Papua New Guinea and Nauru would assess the refugees remaining on Manus Island and Nauru respectively ‘in accordance with agreements signed with both countries’.

These actions have made it extremely difficult for TTO to progress our original proposed goal to move off-shore processing to Tasmania and therefore the Association has re-assessed its options with the clear remit of continuing to meet the tenet of our ‘objects and purpose’.

In 2014, TTO developed the *New Deal for Asylum Seekers* proposal that was built on the work already undertaken by TTO and our members and supporters. It reflected the current view of other mainstream Australian NGOs that a ‘small steps’ approach that works from within the policy framework to influence and change Australia’s current position with regard to asylum seekers and refugees will result in incremental improvements to the lives and well-being of all refugees.

Seizing the Moment is based heavily on the earlier *New Deal for Asylum Seekers* proposal.

These two proposals do not alter the mid to long term goals of TTO to see an end to Australia’s current inhumane approach to managing this issue and the establishment of a better holistic national and international system to respond to this growing global catastrophe.

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