

## Media Release

### **Peak Body Rejects Call for ‘Catch All’ Licensing of Labour Hire Sector**

**21<sup>st</sup> March, 2016:** The Recruitment & Consulting Services Association (RCSA) has rejected recommendations from the Labor and Greens-dominated Education and Employment References Committee to impose a licensing regime for all labour-hire companies.

Responding to the Committee’s report *A National Disgrace: The Exploitation of Temporary Visa Holders*, the peak industry body for the employment services sector has labelled the recommendation as ‘out of touch and ill-considered’.

All labour-hire firms are not created equal and, over the past 18 months the peak industry body for the employment services sector has been very clear in its view that unlawful labour contractors and illegal labour-hire contractors need to be eradicated from the labour market.

Members of the Committee, the ACTU and the unions, as well as senior Labor Ministers have received regular briefings and information from RCSA about the proposed Employment Services Industry Code (ESI-Code) that clearly defines the labour market practices that are acceptable to Australian employers and workers alike.

A lack of consultation and repeated attempts to appear before the inquiry, without success, clearly illustrates that the Committee has little interest in understanding the modern workforce and the role of legitimate labour-hire firms in the Australian economy.

Licensing schemes have been in place in various States and Territories of Australia for a number of years and have failed to stop the exploitation of workers, including foreign workers. Exploitation in workplaces across the nation should be eradicated; however, to believe that imposing a license on reputable labour-hire firms, in order to address the practices of a small number of unscrupulous and illegal labour-hire operators, is naïve, the Association says.

The Committee’s recommendations for proposed changes to 457 visas, that require employers to effectively double their workforce in order to access skilled overseas trained workers, will starve employers of much needed skills and experienced workers and deter employers from hiring.

#### **Quotes that may be attributed to Peter Langford FRCSA, RCSA Acting President.**

“Various licensing schemes have been in place for many years, and have failed to address the exploitation of workers. We need a different approach to change the illegal business practices that otherwise mask or legitimise exploitation.”

“Unlawful labour contractors and illegal labour-hire contractors are a scourge on the Australian labour market and need to be eradicated.”



“We require a national approach that addresses the business practices that lead to exploitation in labour markets. RCSA rejects any move that will punish reputable operators and still fail to stamp out illegal labour-hire contractors.”

### **About RCSA**

The Recruitment and Consulting Services Association (RCSA) is the leading industry body for the employment services sector in Australia and New Zealand. With over 3,000 corporate and individual Members, the Association sets professional standards, conducts research, educates and develops members’ skills, monitors industry development and lobbies governments on issues directly affecting members.

#### **Media contact:**

Simon Schweigert, RCSA

Tel: +61 3 9663 0555, 0425 338 487 or [sschweigert@rcsa.com.au](mailto:sschweigert@rcsa.com.au)