



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

About the research

Factors that influence skilled migrants locating in regional areas
Institute for Social Science Research, University of Queensland

Migrant settlement in rural and regional Australia is an important aspect of the overall impact of immigration on Australia. It can yield many benefits as well as present challenges. Policy makers need to understand not only the local effects of immigration, but also the factors influencing regional population flows.

This research investigated the bases of skilled migrants' decisions to settle and stay in regional Australia through interviews with skilled migrants, employers and government officials.

Key messages

- Employment factors were the most important in skilled migrants' decision to move to regional Australia, followed by characteristics of the specific region.
- Overall, they have positive views about regional life.
- Regional employers have strongly positive impressions of skilled migrants and a majority are disposed to use skilled migration programs in the future.
- Intolerance in regional areas is not a significant disincentive for skilled migrant settlement.

The research provides a useful perspective on skilled migrants' decision-making. However, because the survey samples were small and research was undertaken mainly in the Northern Territory and a few other rural locations, some of the findings may not be generalisable. The Department intends to build on this research, testing and augmenting its findings through further work on attraction and retention of migrants in regional Australia.

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Factors that influence skilled migrants locating in regional areas

Final Report



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Acronyms

APAIS	Australian Public Affairs Information Service
CATI	Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
ENS	Employer Nominated Scheme
GSM	General Skilled Migration (used interchangeably with the term Skilled Migration Program)
ISSR	Institute for Social Science Research
MAIS	Multicultural Australia and Immigration Studies
MODL	Migration Occupations in Demand List
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
REBA	Regional Established Business in Australia
RSMS	Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme
SDAS	Skilled Designated Area Sponsored
SIR	Skilled Independent Regional
SM	Skilled Migrant
SMD	Skill Matching Database
SMP	Skilled Migration Program
SOL	Skilled Occupation List
SSBS	Sponsored Business Skills
SSRM	Skill Specific and Regional Migration
STNI	State/Territory Nominated Independent

Executive Summary

This report provides the findings of a study undertaken in 2009 by the Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR) for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) on the factors that impact on skilled migrants' settlement in regional Australia.

Policy context

Skilled migration is a central element of the Australian Government's migration program. The migration to Australia of people with qualifications and relevant work experience enhances the size and skill level of the Australian labour force and helps to address specific skill shortages. Within the broad context of immigration policies designed to address labour market issues, there has been a specific policy emphasis in Australian immigration policies since 1996 on addressing skilled worker shortages in regional Australia. The Australian Government, in consultation with the State and Territory Governments, has developed programs and visa categories to encourage prospective skilled migrants to locate to regional Australia. These programs and visa categories complement the migration to regional areas that occurs through the General Skilled Migration (GSM) program and aim to encourage a more balanced settlement of Australia's skilled migrant intake and to address skills needs in specific regions. These programs now comprise a significant and growing component of Australia's annual immigration program.

Research objectives

While migration to regional areas is a well-established policy objective, there is only limited research available to provide an understanding of the factors and processes associated with immigrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional areas. The central aim of the study is to investigate the perspectives of skilled migrants, employers and government officials on the factors and processes involved in skilled migrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional areas.

The central questions addressed in this report are:

- What information sources are used by immigrants to find out about regional locations?
- What factors influence immigrants' decisions to settle in regional areas?
- Why do migrants choose to remain in regional areas and what influences their decision to stay or leave?

What are the experiences and perceptions of the General Skilled Migration program held by employers and government officials in regional areas?

Methodology

The study methodology comprises a literature review, semi-structured interviews with skilled migrants living in the four regional areas and semi-structured interviews with employers and public officials in these regional areas. The literature review was conducted to identify previous research pertaining to the factors associated with skilled migrants locating in regional areas. Key findings from the literature review as well as discussions with DIAC's project team were used to develop the survey instruments for the three groups to be interviewed. Interviews were conducted in four regional areas representing a diversity of regional contexts: Mt Isa, Darwin, Karratha and Mildura. DIAC provided a sample of skilled migrants from across the four regional areas from which ISSR conducted telephone interviews using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. As well as skilled migrants, employers and government representatives were interviewed.

Findings - Literature review

There is a small body of prior research which has examined the factors associated with immigrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional locations in Australia. This research has focused on three factors:

- Employment and business opportunities
- Family, social and cultural connectedness
- Regional characteristics.

There is widespread agreement in the literature that these three sets of factors are the main determinants of immigrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional locations in Australia. While evidence for many of the following propositions is quite limited, specific findings from the literature include:

Employment and business opportunities

- Availability of employment and business opportunities are fundamental factors in influencing decisions to settle and remain in a particular regional area.
- A high proportion of skilled migrants who have reported settlement difficulty attribute their difficulty to trouble in finding a job.

- Long-term employment opportunities for skilled migrants are crucial to the future of migration to regional areas.
- Impediments to the employment of skilled migrants by employers in regional areas include employers' lack of information, lack of assistance, perceptions of the resourcing and financial costs of the process and the uncertainty involved in recruiting people that employers have not met.
- Skilled migrants are generally highly valued by employers who sponsor or recruit them and by the general community.

Family, social and cultural connectedness

- Location of family members in a regional area is one important factor in determining where migrants choose to settle in Australia.
- Family and cultural ties are important to the retention of skilled migrants in regional areas, particularly for independent migrants who have located in regional areas due to less stringent skilled visa requirements.
- Most migrants have a strong sense of social connectedness to others in the regional area and having young children increased the feeling of socially connectedness.
- The longer migrants had been living in a region, the more likely it is that they will feel socially connected.
- Skilled migrants who reported having supportive and helpful employers upon arrival are more likely to feel socially connected.

Regional characteristics

- Growing prosperity in various regional areas of Australia has enticed migrants to these areas.
- Prior positive experience of a particular region as a visitor is an important factor in determining where migrants choose to settle.
- Some migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) experience significant social disadvantage and exclusion in rural areas.
- Housing and accommodation shortages are disincentives to long-term settlement in some regional areas.

- Successful conditions for a skilled migrant program include employment opportunities linked to skilled labour shortages, a viable and mixed economy, a welcoming community and urban centres large enough to meet the needs of a sophisticated and affluent population.
- Knowledge of regional areas that have good prospects for employment and settlement is low amongst prospective skilled migrants.

General

- The majority of skilled migrants locating in regional Australia have positive settlement experiences.
- Most skilled migrants state their intention to plan to remain in regional areas after being granted permanent residency. However, despite positive experiences, some observers fear that there is likely to be significant leakage out of regional areas, once migrants' designated time in a regional area has elapsed.
- There is a need for more research on factors that are important in retaining migrants in regional Australia. This should include longitudinal research that tracks skilled migrant settlement and mobility decisions over an extended period of time to provide evidence of which migration schemes are most effective in particular areas, in both attracting and retaining skilled migrants.

Study findings: skilled migrants

Immigration process

- Many of the skilled migrants reported that they used their first visa application as a step towards gaining permanent residency in Australia. Thus, many of them reported that the visa they currently held when interviewed was not the visa that they were granted to enter Australia.

Information sources

- Migrants stated that family, friends and work colleagues in their home country and to a lesser extent family and friends in Australia were the main sources of information about both Australia and specific regional areas.
- The internet and other media were also frequently cited sources of information.

- Knowledge acquired while travelling in Australia or through previous visits to Australia was important for some.
- Formal sources such as recruitment agencies, expositions, government agencies and employers were mentioned as sources by only a few.
- A high proportion (88%) reported that they had known ‘nothing’ or only ‘a little bit’ about the regional area in which they settled prior to arrival.

Factors impacting on the decision to settle in regional areas

- Employment factors clearly played a central role in the settlement decision for many skilled migrants. For many the availability of a job, a better job or a more suitable job for themselves or other family members was the main factor.
- Regional characteristics were prominent in the decision to move to a particular regional area. Comments about the quality of the regional environment tended to focus on attractions of a country town or small community lifestyle.
- Overall, factors relating to family, community and social connectedness were mentioned less often than employment and regional characteristics as factors impacting on the decision to settle in a particular regional area.

Expectations

- Most of those interviewed (71%) felt that their (positive) expectations of their chosen regional area had been met, 15% indicated that they had not been met, and 14% commented in a more nuanced way.
- Those whose expectations had not been met mainly expressed disappointment or concerns about climate and about the standard of public and community facilities.

Experiences - Employment

- Skilled workers’ experiences of employment in regional areas were predominantly favourable with 47 (70.1%) of recorded comments classified as positive, nine (13.4%) as neutral and 11 (16.4%) as negative.
- Many positive comments referred to the ready availability of employment in the regional area in which they had come to live, opportunities for stable and well-paid work and opportunities for career advancement and development in regional areas.

- The other major positive theme centred on the positive working environments in the regional area, including the quality of relations with fellow workers and employers.
- Negative comments mainly related to difficulties that some skilled workers had experienced in finding suitable work in regional areas.
- Other negative comments concerned a miscellaneous range of issues including communication difficulties in the workplace, transport problems, working conditions and career opportunities.

Experiences – Community

- Respondents comments on their experiences of living in regional areas were predominantly positive with 44 of 62 comments recorded (80.0%) being positive or strongly positive in their orientation. However, a minority of 12 respondents expressed negative or strongly negative comments (19.4%) and there were 6 (9.7%) neutral or equivocal comments recorded.
- The strongest theme emerging through the positive comments made by skilled migrants concerned the perceived advantages of living in regional rather than metropolitan communities. Regional areas were widely perceived as ‘quiet’, ‘close-knit’, ‘friendly’, ‘laid-back’, ‘not crowded’, ‘casual’, ‘relaxed’, ‘safe’ and ‘easy-going’.
- A further theme was the acceptance that many migrants, including those from non-English speaking backgrounds, experienced in their new community, and their links to family and their cultural group in the regional area.
- However, this predominantly positive experience of regional communities was not universal. A minority of respondents complained of poor public and community facilities including schools, housing, transport, education and communications.
- A small minority reported their experience in regional communities as one of boredom, sense of isolation, lack of friendship or racism.

Experiences – cost of living

- A total of 58 comments were recorded concerning the cost of living in regional areas. Most of these (67%) were comments on the high cost of living in regional areas, and in particular the high cost of housing.

- A number of concerns were also raised concerning the cost of groceries, vegetables, fuel and airfares.
- In contrast, a smaller group of skilled migrants stated that the cost of living was comparable with or cheaper than other places, both within Australia and their home country.

Experiences – climate and environment

- The skilled migrants living in regional areas were asked about their experiences with respect to the climate in the areas in which they had settled, and the impact of climate on the settlement process. There was a wide range of responses. A total of 17 comments (22.1%) were very positive about the climate of the regional area.
- A further 18 (23.4%) comments emphasised the similarity between the climate in the regional area and the country or region that the migrant had left, implying or stating that adaptation to the climate was not a difficulty.
- For other migrants, adaptation to a different climate was part of the settlement process. A total of 24 (31.2%) comments indicating a need to adapt to a different climate were recorded, although most indicated that this had not presented a major difficulty.
- However, there were also 18 (23.4%) responses that were negative about the climate in the settlement area, although only a handful of these indicated that this was a significant problem.

Experiences – racism and discrimination

- The experiences of racism or discrimination amongst the skilled migrants who were interviewed was mixed. A total of 27 responses (55.1% of all responses) were received that indicated that the migrant had experienced racism directly, observed racist behaviour, or know of others who had experienced racist behaviour.
- By contrast, there were 22 (44.9%) responses that stated that no racist behaviour had been experienced, either directly or indirectly.
- Those who reported that they had no experience of racism were generally unambiguous in describing their experiences of acceptance into the community.

Plans for the future

- When asked whether they intended to settle in the regional community in which they were living, a total of 70 (55%) said ‘yes’, 19 (15%) said ‘no’ and 38 (30%) were undecided.
- Those who were undecided gave a number of reasons for their uncertainty. The most common reason was uncertainty regarding their employment situation, and next most common reason was uncertainty related to the housing market and the high cost of housing.
- The main reason that migrants were considering moving away from their current area comprised a mix of push and pull factors. Push factors included lack of employment opportunities (6), poor facilities (2), lack of acceptance (1), high housing and other costs (4), climate (6) and a desire to leave Australia (1). Pull factors inclining the migrant to move elsewhere included family and friends (1), better employment prospects elsewhere (8), desire to live in a larger or coastal community (4), educational plans (7), desire to travel or to have new experiences (5) and other personal reasons (2).
- Those migrants who were thinking of moving were asked where they thought they would go. Of the total of 33 responses, 17 nominated Australian capital cities (51%), 14 (42%) nominated Australian provincial cities or other regional areas and 2 (6%) nominated other countries.
- Migrants who were thinking of moving were also asked what might encourage them to stay in their current regional location. A total of 18 (32% of responses) nominated ‘greater employment opportunities’, 8 (15%) nominated ‘better or more facilities’, 5 (9%) nominated ‘better climate’, 2 (4%) nominated ‘better social ties/networks’ and 1 (2%) nominated ‘better schools’. There were 6 (11%) respondents who nominated ‘nothing would make me stay’. There were 16 (29%) other responses including better paid work, better educational opportunities, cheaper housing and more friends.

Study findings: employers

- Employers’ information concerning the Skilled Migration program came from a number of sources. Word of mouth was an important source of information, including via the

local Chamber of Commerce. Formal sources included the DIAC website, other government information channels, industry bodies and the media.

- With respect to their motivation for employing skilled migrants, most employers said it was because they were unable to attract Australian workers to the region. Several employers commented that migrants were good workers who often had specialized skills that were not readily available in the local workforce.
- On the basis of their current and previous experiences with skilled migrant employees, almost all employers indicated that they would be willing to consider using the Skilled Migration Program in the future. Reasons included the difficulty of obtaining workers in regional areas and positive perceptions of the qualities of skilled migrant workers.
- Strategies used by employers to recruit skilled migrants included word of mouth, Expos, internet and web-site advertising, migration and recruitment agencies and conventional job advertisements. Overall, employers reported positively on the effectiveness of their chosen strategies, although mixed views concerning each strategy were expressed.
- With respect to using recruitment and migration agencies, employers had mixed views. Advantages mentioned included their specialist skills, networks, language skills and knowledge of immigration regulations. Expense and lack of knowledge of suitable agencies were seen as the main disadvantages.
- Most employers thought it was likely that most migrants and their families would stay in the region once their visa had expired, mainly for employment and lifestyle reasons.
- Employers thought the factors most likely to help keep skilled migrants in the area were good working conditions, improved community facilities and community integration initiatives. Some employers, however, felt that current arrangements and incentives were sufficient to keep skilled migrant workers in the regional area.

Study findings: government officials

- Government officials indicated that there were labour shortages and opportunities for skilled migrants in regional areas across a wide range of fields including hospitality, health, tourism, trades, education and engineering.

- Officials generally agreed that encouraging skilled migration was an appropriate means of addressing regional skills shortages alongside other initiatives such as training and apprenticeships for Australians.
- Strategies used to recruit skilled migrants in regional areas included expos, working with community groups, marketing the region on the internet, regional web-sites, working with employers to develop marketing strategies and appointing development officers. All of these strategies were rated as effective to some degree by officials.
- All officials indicated that they worked collaboratively with other levels of government and other government agencies.
- Most officials were of the view that the Skilled Migrant Program has an important role to play in their region in the short-term (next twelve months), although some divergent views were expressed.
- Most officials also viewed the program as having an important long-term role in addressing skilled labour shortages in regional areas.

Introduction

This report provides the findings of a study undertaken in 2009 by the Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR) for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) on the factors that impact on skilled migrants' settlement in regional Australia. Interviews were conducted for this study in four regional areas representing a diversity of regional contexts : Mt Isa, Darwin, Karratha and Mildura. DIAC provided a sample of skilled migrants from each of the four regional areas from which ISSR conducted a series of telephone interviews using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. Selected employers and government representatives in the four localities were also interviewed. The report summarises and adds to existing knowledge concerning the process and factors involved in the decisions by skilled migrants to settle and remain in regional areas.

Policy Context

Australia has become one of 'the world's major host nations for immigrants' (Islam & Fausten, 2008, p.S66) with the post-war migration program adding in excess of eight million people to the Australian population (Hugo, 2008b). A central factor underpinning immigration programs in Australia and many other countries has been the demand for labour, and in recent decades in particular the need for skilled workers. Skilled migration is a central element of the Australian Government's migration program, and skilled migrants now represent about two-thirds of those who enter Australia under the migration program. The demand for skilled workers in developed countries has been increasing due to an ageing (Khoo, McDonald, Voigt-Graf, & Hugo, 2007) and increasingly mobile domestic workforce (Hugo, 2008b; Khoo, 2002). Increases in the rates of immigration have been experienced throughout all OECD countries as a response in part to ageing populations and declining fertility (Hugo & Morén-Alegret, 2008). The recruitment of skilled migrants has become increasingly important to the economies of many industrialised countries (Khoo, et al., 2007) with Australian economic performance and development benefitting significantly from the contributions made by immigrants (Islam & Fausten, 2008). The migration to Australia of people with qualifications and relevant work experience enhances the size and skill level of the Australian labour force and helps to address specific skill shortages. Within the broad context of immigration policies designed to address labour market issues, there has been a specific policy emphasis in Australian immigration policies since 1996 on addressing

skilled worker shortages in regional Australia (DIAC, 2006). Migrant settlement patterns have resulted in major Australian cities such as Melbourne and Sydney becoming the main destinations of choice for Australian migrants (Collins, 2007; Hugo, 2008a; Le, 2008). This has contributed to infrastructure pressures in major cities and labour shortages in regional areas (Hugo, 2008a; Missingham, Dibden, & Cocklin, 2006). Many regional areas have experienced shortfalls in skilled workers in particular. For example, while professionals such as doctors and education professionals constitute 20 percent of the workforce in metropolitan areas, they represent only 11 percent of the workforce in regional areas (Collins, 2007). While these shortfalls have a number of causes including youth out-migration from regional areas (Hugo, 2008a), they have resulted over the past two decades in demands for greater focus to be paid in migration policies to the skilled workforce requirements of regional areas (Birrell & Healy, 2008).

In response, the Australian Government in consultation with the State and Territory Governments, has developed programs and visa categories to encourage prospective skilled migrants to locate to regional Australia (Wulff & Dharmalingam, 2008). These programs and visa categories complement the migration to regional areas that occurs through the General Skilled Migration (GSM) program. A range of State-Specific and Regional Migration (SSRM) programs developed since 1996 have sought to encourage a more balanced settlement of Australia's skilled migrant intake and to address skills needs in specific regions (DIAC, 2006). These programs now comprise a significant and growing component of Australia's annual immigration program as shown in Table 1.

The history and elements of SSRM programs are described in the annual DIAC publication *Population Flows: Immigration Aspects* and the various programs and visa categories under which migrants are enabled or encouraged to migrate to regional and rural areas are described on the DIAC website: <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/regional-employment/>. In broad terms, regional migration programs are designed to support regional development and help supply the skill needs of regional employers. They aim to attract young, skilled, experienced, English speaking migrants to areas of Australia where they are most needed. Visa options designed to facilitate skilled migration to regional areas fall into four main categories: employer sponsored, family-member sponsored, State or Territory nominated and independent. In addition the

Australian government actively encourages skilled people to establish businesses in regional or rural areas of Australia.

Table 1: Number of Migrants Entering Australia under the SSRM Program (1997-1998 to 2007-2008)

Year	Number	Non-Humanitarian Intake %	Skill Stream Intake %
1997-1998	1,753	2.3	N/A
1998-1999	2,804	3.3	8.0
1999-2000	3,309	3.6	9.4
2000-2001	3,846	3.6	8.6
2001-2002	4,136	4.6	7.7
2002-2003	7,941	8.5	12.0
2003-2004	12,725	11.4	17.9
2004-2005	18,700	15.6	24.0
2005-2006	27,488	19.2	28.2
2006-2007	25,845	N/A	26.4
2007-2008	26,162	N/A	24.1

(Source: Department of Multicultural Affairs, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008; Hugo, 2008a)

The main employer sponsored scheme for migration to regional areas is the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) which was established in 1995-96. This scheme allows employers in regional or low population growth areas of Australia to sponsor employees who are foreign nationals for a permanent visa to work in Australia. The RSMS is actively promoted by DIAC through such avenues as Regional Outreach Officers, Industry Outreach Officers and DIAC Business Centres. Visa applicants who are currently living and/or working in Australia on a qualifying visa can apply for the onshore RSMS (Subclass 857) visa. The offshore RSMS (Subclass 119) visa is for applicants who are outside Australia. These visas allow the applicant and any dependent family members included in the application to live as permanent residents in Australia.

There are also visa designed to facilitate skilled migration to regional areas involving sponsorship by an eligible family member. The Skilled Regional Sponsored Visa (Subclass 475) is a provisional visa for migrants who are sponsored by an eligible Australian relative living in a designated regional area of Australia, or nominated by a State or Territory government agency for employment in a designated area. After living for two years and working for at least one year

in a designated regional area, applicants can apply for a permanent visa. This visa is part of the General Skilled Migration (GSM) program designed to attract immigrants with skills in particular occupations that are required in Australia. Other visas involving sponsorship are the Skilled Designated Areas Sponsored Overseas Student Visa (Subclass 882), the Skilled Designated Area Sponsored Visa (subclass 139) and the Skilled Designated Area Sponsored (Provisional) Visa (Subclass 496).

State and Territory governments also have a number of options for sponsoring skilled migrants to support regional development and help supply the needs of regional employers. These include the Skilled – Regional Sponsored Visa (Subclasses 475) discussed above, the Skilled – Regional Sponsored (Provisional) Visa (Subclass 487) and the Skilled – Regional (Residence) Visa (Subclass 887). Certain skilled individuals can also migrate to regional Australia without sponsorship on a Skilled – Independent Regional (Provisional) Visa (Subclass 495). In addition to the main Visa Subclasses referred to above, there are others that facilitate regional migration and further details are available on the DIAC website.

Research Aim and Questions

While migration to regional areas is a well-established policy objective, there is only limited research available to provide an understanding of the factors and processes associated with immigrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional areas. The central aim of the study is to investigate the perspectives of skilled migrants, employers and government officials on the factors and processes involved in skilled migrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional areas. This information is required to refine government programs and practices that aim to attract and retain skilled migrants in regional areas, and to assist DIAC to advise regional employers and State and Territory officials about incentives and barriers to the recruitment and retention of skilled migrants in regional areas.

The central questions addressed in this report are:

- What information sources are used by immigrants to find out about regional locations?
- What factors influence immigrants' decisions to settle in regional areas?
- Why do migrants choose to remain in regional areas and what influences their decision to stay or leave?

- What are the experiences and perceptions of the General Skilled Migration program held by employers and government officials in regional areas?

Methodology

The study methodology comprises a literature review, semi-structured interviews with skilled migrants living in the four regional areas and semi-structured interviews with employers and public officials in these regional areas.

Literature review

A review of the literature was conducted to identify previous research pertaining to the factors associated with skilled migrants locating in regional areas. This included previous studies undertaken for DIAC as well as Australian and international academic and public policy literature. The sources identified in the literature review are contained in the list of references at the end of the report. The review included studies published by DIAC on the subject of skilled migrants since the introduction of the State Specific and Regional Migration (SSRM) program in 1997.

Searches of Australian and international academic and public policy literature were conducted on databases including Australian Public Affairs Information Service (APAIS), Family and Society Plus, Multicultural Australia and Immigration Studies (MAIS), Sociological Abstracts and PsychInfo. These database searches used combinations of keywords such as ‘migrant’, ‘immigrant’, ‘skilled’, ‘regional’, ‘rural’ as well as targeted sentences, e.g., ‘where do migrants OR immigrants choose to live OR settle’.

The project brief and key findings from the literature review, as well as discussions with DIAC’s project team, were used to develop the survey instruments for the three groups to be interviewed: skilled migrants located in regional areas, employers and government officials.

Interviews

A data file was supplied by DIAC to ISSR containing the names and contact details of 492 skilled migrant visa holders from across four regional locations: Mt Isa, Karratha, Mildura and Darwin. ISSR undertook initial data cleaning to ensure the reliability of the data file. 103 records were removed from the data file as they were found to relate to individuals identified as being under 18 years of age. A further 100 cases were removed from the data file because no telephone

contact number was listed. The final data file contained 289 skilled migrants available to complete this study. Of these, 265 contacts were recorded, which resulted in 110 completed interviews. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents were male. **Error! Reference source not found.** shows the outcome of all contacts made.

Table 2: Interview Statistics for Skilled Migrants

	Regional Location (and State)				TOTAL
	Darwin (NT) Number	Karratha (WA) Number	Mt Isa (QLD) Number	Mildura (VIC) Number	
Out of scope	8	3	2	8	21
Individual Unknown	29	13	12	8	62
Disconnected Number	13	10	7	4	34
Refused	6	4	0	1	11
Invalid Number	9	4	5	4	22
Language Barrier	3	1	0	1	5
Completed interviews	71	9	18	12	110
Total contacts	139	44	44	38	265
Unused sample					24
Total sample					289

The final sample of skilled migrants living in one of the four regional areas by residency status and/or visa currently held is shown in Table 3. A number of questions were asked relating to their visas and their arrival in Australia. The largest number of skilled migrants arrived in 2006 (33%). The majority reported that they had lived in Australia for five years or less (83%). Ninety-two percent of migrants reported that the visa they currently hold is not the visa that they used when entering Australia. The majority of these indicated that they entered on a Temporary Business (Long Stay) (457) visa (61%), with a further 13 percent reporting arriving on a holiday visa (471). More than half of the respondents (53%) reported that they used their first visa application as a step towards gaining permanent residency in Australia. As shown in Table 3, 41 percent of skilled migrants indicated they currently held permanent residency, with the next

largest group holding Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme - 857 visas (25%). Fourteen percent reported that they had attained Australian citizenship.

Table 3: Residency Status and/or Visas Currently Held by Skilled Migrants

	Number	%
Permanent Residency	45	41
Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme - 857	27	25
Australian Citizen	15	14
Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme - 119	5	4
Skilled-Regional Sponsored - 487	5	4
Other	13	12
Total	110	100

Participants were interviewed using semi-structured questionnaires developed for each group administered through the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. The interviews were conducted by trained interviewers between September 14 and October 23, 2009. The initial interviews were conducted with the skilled migrants, who identified their employers. In a second round of interviews, these employers and selected representatives from the three levels of government (Local, State, and Australian) were also interviewed. Copies of the interview questions are provided at Appendices A (Skilled Migrants), B (Employers), and C (Government).

Interviews took between 14 and 27 minutes to complete covering the issues agreed to by DIAC project staff for each of the groups. The skilled migrants were asked questions about how they found out about employment opportunities in regional areas, their experiences of the regional migration program, their level of satisfaction with life in regional Australia, and their future intentions to remain or leave the regional area in which they were living. Employers were asked about their experiences with the regional migration program and whether they thought it was useful in attracting and retaining skilled workers in their local regional areas. Employers were also asked about their experiences in dealing with the various levels of government in relation to the recruitment of skilled migrant workers. Government officials were also asked about their experiences with the regional migration program, whether or not they thought that the program

was useful in attracting and keeping skilled workers and their views on the future role of the program.

Findings: Literature Review

There is a small body of prior research which has examined the factors associated with immigrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional locations in Australia. This research has focused on three factors:

- Employment and business opportunities
- Family, social and cultural connectedness
- Regional characteristics.

Employment and business opportunities

There is wide agreement that availability of employment and business opportunities are fundamental factors in influencing decisions to settle in a particular regional area (DIAC, 2008). The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (DIAC, 2007) asked immigrants about the main reason that they chose to settle where they did. The highest single category of response from skilled migrants was employer location followed by preferred lifestyle (15%) and family location (12%). A study conducted of Skilled Independent Regional Visa holders found that of those that described a difficult settlement experience, 65 percent attributed their difficulty to trouble in finding a job (DIAC, 2008). Long-term employment opportunities are viewed by Hugo as an issue that is crucial to the future of migration to regional areas (Hugo, 2008a).

Family, social and cultural connectedness

Location of family members in a regional area is one of four key factors identified by DIMA as important in determining where migrants choose to settle in Australia, alongside availability of employment, business opportunities and prior experience in a particular area (DIMA, 2008). It has been further argued that family and cultural ties are important to the retention of skilled migrants in regional areas, particularly for independent migrants who have located in regional areas due to less stringent skilled visa requirements than for metropolitan areas (Birrell, 2003; Hugo, 2008a).

In a survey of migrants to regional Australia, Wulff and Dharmalingam (2008) found that most migrants had a strong sense of social connectedness to others in the regional area and that having

young children increased the feeling of socially connectedness. Further, they found that the longer the individual had been living in the region, the more likely they were to feel socially connected. Burkert, Niebuhr and Wapler, (2008) noted that those individuals who reported having supportive and helpful employers upon arrival were also more likely to feel strongly socially connected. They argued that regions can be made significantly more appealing to skilled migrants through improving their social support networks, developing welcome packages and providing information and relocation services.

Regional characteristics

Various aspects of the regional context have also been identified as factors impacting on the settlement and retention of skilled migrants in rural areas. On the positive side, it has been observed that the growing prosperity in various peripheral regions of Australia has enticed migrants to these areas (Hugo, 2008a). Prior positive experience of a particular locality as a visitor has also been identified as an important factor in determining where migrants choose to settle (DIAC, 2008).

However, other research has focused on negative factors. Missingham et al. (2006) found that migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) experience significant social disadvantage and exclusion in rural areas. They also found that such individuals were disadvantaged in relation to health and welfare services. They argued that NESB migrants, although a minority amongst skilled migrants (Hugo, 2008b), need access to readily-available translation services and social support networks. Other studies have pointed to housing and accommodation shortages as disincentives to long-term settlement in regional areas (DIAC, 2008; Hugo 2008b).

The role of regional factors in the settlement and retention of skilled migrants was the focus of a recent case study (DIAC, 2007) that examined regional settlement in the Riverina district. The Riverina study collected data through surveys, focus groups, interviews with employers and community members, and one-on-one discussions with service providers. The study identified a number of conditions that are essential for a successful skilled migration program including employment opportunities linked to skilled labour shortages, a viable and mixed economy, a welcoming community and urban centres large enough to meet the needs of a sophisticated and affluent population. They identified that many employers who cannot find skilled workers have

not tried to recruit skilled migrants. The impediments to the employment of skilled workers include a lack of information, a lack of assistance, the resourcing and financial costs of the process and the uncertainty involved in recruiting people that employers have not met.

The Riverina study also found that skilled migrants are highly valued by employers who sponsor or recruit them and by the general community and that many of the migrants expressed satisfaction with their life in the region. However, skilled migrants expressed a need for more post-arrival assistance and advice. The study found that knowledge of developing regional areas was low amongst prospective skilled migrants and highlighted the importance of outreach towards prospective migrants, including attendance at Australia Needs Skills expositions.

Summary and discussion

The three sets of factors discussed above are the main determinants identified in the literature of immigrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional locations in Australia. While the evidence is generally sparse, the research suggests that the majority of migrants locating in regional Australia have positive experiences (DIAC 2008). A follow-up study of Skilled Independent Regional visa holders found that 44 percent of those that had lived in their designated regional area for 12-18 months reported having an easy or very easy experience of settlement in Australia (DIAC 2008). The same study found that when asked if they would move after being granted permanent residency once their visa had expired, only nine percent indicated that they planned to do so (DIAC, 2008). It has been argued that the longer an immigrant lives in a particular place, the more likely they are to maintain residence in that place (Wulff & Dharmalingam, 2008).

On the other hand, some observers have expressed the view that despite positive experiences, 'there is likely to be significant leakage out of regional areas', once migrants' designated time in a regional area has elapsed (Hugo, 2008b, p.569). Birrell (2003) has noted that no government has been prepared to issue visas to migrants that restrict where they can live for extended periods. The successes of the last decade in attracting skilled migrants to regional areas clearly does not necessarily mean that the migrants entering these regional areas will choose to remain there once they are granted permanent residency (Wulff & Dharmalingam, 2008).

These uncertainties have resulted in calls for more research to determine factors that are important in retaining migrants in regional Australia (Collins, 2007; Hugo, 2008b). Wulff and Dharmalingam (2008) argue the need for detailed, longitudinal research. Research by Collins,

Hugo and Wulff and Darmalingam suggest the importance of tracking migrant settlement and mobility decisions over an extended period of time to provide evidence of which migration schemes are most effective in particular areas, in both attracting and retaining skilled migrants.

Findings - Interviews

The purpose of the interviews was to obtain a mix of quantitative and qualitative data that would address the key research questions. The results relating to each of the three groups interviewed (skilled migrants living in regional areas, employers in regional areas, and government officials in regional areas) are discussed in turn. Brief demographic data is provided on respondents in order to provide a context for the findings. A small number of tables are presented as summaries in the text and the full tables summarising responses are included in Appendices D to F.

Skilled Migrants

Demographic characteristics

The majority of participants were either married or in a de-facto relationship (79%) while 19 percent reported that they had never married, and a minority (2%) reported no longer being a relationship due to divorce, separation, or death of a partner. Sixty-three percent of respondents reported having children. Of these, 12 percent reported that none of their children were living with them in Australia. The majority of families were small, having only one or two children (64%). Skilled migrants reported coming from 31 countries, however 64 percent of the sample came from just four countries: United Kingdom (21%), Philippines (18%), South Africa (15%) and India (10%). 35% of participants reported living in their current regional location for four years or longer, 44% for 2-3.9 years and 21% for less than two years.

Information sources

One of the central research questions concerns the information sources used by immigrants in selecting and preparing to live in regional locations. Participants were asked how they accessed information about Australia and the regional area where they were living. Family, friends and work colleagues in their home country as well as in Australia were the main sources of information. The internet and mass media were other frequently cited sources of information. Knowledge acquired while travelling in Australia or through previous visits to Australia were other ways that some skilled migrants gained information about regional areas, employment prospects and government agencies. For example:

“I came as a student and lived in the area for one year”

“Husband came in 1999 for training”.

Formal sources such as recruitment agencies, expositions, government agencies and employers were mentioned as sources by only a few. When asked about their level of knowledge about the regional area in which they had settled, most (88%) indicated that they had known ‘nothing’ or only ‘a little bit’ about the area. Only 11% indicated that they knew ‘quite a lot’. No respondents claimed that they know ‘a lot’ about their regional area prior to settlement.

Settlement factors

Discussion about the factors that migrants considered important in making their decision to settle in their current location covered over 30 topics. Table 4 shows the top ten factors influencing skilled migrants’ decisions to settle in a regional area.

Previous literature on settlement factors for skilled migrants has referred to three elements: employment, family and social connectedness and regional factors. Employment factors clearly played a central role in the settlement decision for many skilled migrants. For many the availability of a job, a better job or a more suitable job for themselves or other family members was the main factor. Representative comments include:

“A job was waiting for my husband”

“Higher pay than what city offered”

“26 years in mining industry”

“Easier to find jobs in the country than in the city”

“Easy to get visa. Our company was based there”

“In demand jobs here”

“Opportunities for part-time work and studies”

“They advertised for three years and didn’t get anybody”

“Ties in with the type of work I’m working – community development”

“My wife has got a job in Mildura”

“Partner got a job at the mine”.

Table 4: Top 10 Factors Influencing Skilled Migrants' Decision to Settle

	n=	All comments %
Job waiting	50	19
Healthy environment	24	9
Work opportunities	20	8
Good place to raise a family	20	8
Friendly people	18	7
Lifestyle	17	7
Climate	16	6
Cost of living	13	5
Friends or family in Australia	11	4
Australia a safe place	10	4

Alongside employment, regional factors were prominent in the decision to move to a regional area. 'Healthy environment', 'good place to raise a family', 'lifestyle', 'climate' 'cost of living' and 'safety' are appeared in the top ten factors (Table 4). Comments about the quality of the regional environment covered climate and the attractions of a country town or small community lifestyle. Comments included:

"I used to live in the countryside, so I chose to come here because I like the lifestyle and country people.

"Nice climate, liveable city, employment"

"Without stress to go to work, small place"

"Good environment for family, peace of life, prosperity. Employment opportunities"

"More relaxed, fewer shops. Climate is the same as The Philippines".

The third set of factors, family, community and social connectedness, were represented amongst the top ten factors through the categories of 'good place to raise a family' and 'family and friends in Australia'. One respondent stated as a factor:

"Easy to integrate".

Another drew attention to his/her community:

“There is a Thai community here”.

However, overall, employment and regional factors were mentioned more often than connectedness as motivating factors.

Expectations

A key issue identified in the literature is the importance of understanding the factors associated with skilled migrants remaining in regional areas over the medium and long term. This issue was addressed firstly through a general question concerning expectations: ‘is [township] what you expected?’ Most of those interviewed (71%) felt that their expectations had been met, 15% indicated that they had not been met, and 14% commented in a more nuanced way. These comments reflect some of the anxieties of new arrivals:

“We were unsure how we will be welcomed at first but the community was very friendly, and the children settled very well”

“After a while got used to it. First two months to get used to the weather. Pictures didn’t show what the town really looks like’

“I didn’t really have an expectation of what it’s like here”.

The comments of those whose expectations had not been met fall into three main categories: climate, facilities and the unanticipated. Unsurprisingly, climate was a recurring theme:

“It’s ok, but a hot place”

“Not much to do. It’s really hot there”

“Everything is good except the weather”.

Others expressed disappointment with the standard of facilities:

“A little surprised at how much behind the rest of the country – for example, Darwin is classified as a capital city as compared to other capital cities in Australia”

“It’s not as good as Gold Coast, and lots of crocodiles”.

Others were surprised by the unanticipated, for better or worse:

“I thought it is a rural area, but it is a little urbanized with a huge population”

“When I first arrived, it's very different from Melbourne, but I've got used to the lifestyle”.

“Better. Came in 2000 there was nothing, but came in 2006 they have developed many things”

“A lot better than what I was told”

“Thought was a village, but more like a city with malls, university, restaurants”.

While initial impressions and expectations, positive or negative, can shape decisions about whether or not to remain in a locality, more weight is likely to be given to the experience of living in a locality over a period of time. As reported earlier, 35% of participants reported living in their current regional location for four years or longer, 44% for 2 - 3.9 years and 21% for less than two years. Participants were asked a number of questions about their experiences since their arrival in regional communities. They were asked about their employment experiences, their experiences of life in the local community, their experience of the climate and environment, their perceptions of cost of living, and their experience, if any, of discrimination or racism in their daily lives.

Experiences - Employment

A total of 67 comments were recorded relating to employment experiences. Comments were predominantly favourable with 47 (70.1%) classified as positive, nine (13.4%) as neutral (being neither positive nor negative) and 11 (16.4%) as negative. Positive comments fell into a number of categories. A number spoke about the availability of work in the regional area in which they had come to live:

“It's easy to get and change a job from being a chef to retailing”

“Very pleasant. Did manage to secure a job that was similar to my previous. Did get what I was looking for a first job”

“You can get jobs easily in the NT compared to other states. Didn't have to travel far to get to work. The people I work with are really good”.

Others emphasised the opportunities for stable, well paid work:

“Stayed with the same company, noticed a lot of opportunity around as well”

“Working for the same place for 6 years, nothing bad”

“Job security is high”

“Pretty good. Surprised at the pay which is better than the rest of Australia for certain professions.

A recurring theme was the opportunities for career advancement and development in regional areas:

“Got a chance for promotion”

“Very good - because it was a career move for me and that’s where the industry was (book making)”

“I worked for the regional airline. Interesting experience encountering with aboriginal communities, which is something I wouldn't experience in the UK”

“Positive. Came to teach and learn about school system”

“Very positive. Excellent. Incentives (bonus, professionally, training and development)”

“I first worked in a recruitment company; I now work in provider of water and power supply. Good experience with career prospects”

“I have gained new knowledge and experience from many people”

“Good. I've learned many things. I need to adopt the attitude and work ethics”.

Many respondents reported positive working environment, including positive relations with fellow workers and employers:

“It’s been really good and where I work, it has a good working environment. The people here are nice to work with”

“Very good, met a lot of Australian friends”

“Working environment is good, people are friendly”

“The job was good - what I expected. The employers were very good. The company gave information on Australian rules and regulations”

“It's good, so much respect from students and police. Treated equally as other co-workers”

“Good and supportive colleagues, not much competition as the other states”

“Multicultural group in the company. Learn about where they live and their country”

“Brilliant, work environment is very good. There are tough situations. Professional people. Big mining culture”

“Very different, people are more receptive to newcomers”

“Working for a manufacturing construction business, excellent working environment”

“It's a laid-back place; people are not too busy and have time to chat. Colleagues are friendly”

“It's easy to find job, and people are busy to work with, and nice working environment, and more relaxed than the UK”

“Pretty good - good people and good area. The students are better here than in Brisbane”.

Negative comments mainly related to difficulties that some skilled workers had experienced in finding suitable work in regional areas:

“Hard to get a job, got jobs in fruit farms”

“Unemployed even though got Cert 3. Hard to find jobs”

“Very hard to get work”

“Couldn't find job related to my previous masters study. Had to go back to uni for further study”.

Other negative comments concerned a miscellaneous range of issues including communication difficulties in the workplace, transport problems, working conditions and career opportunities:

“Hard to work, hard to communicate with people sometimes”

“Nothing really new in terms of my job career”

“Transportation is not good, and I have to get a taxi for going to work”

“My main role as pilot, the territory is a tough environment - high temperature high humidity. Its highly fatiguing”

“Lags behind in issues like Occupational Health and Safety”.

In summary, most of those interviewed reported positive employment experiences and in particular easy availability of work, opportunities for stable and well paid work, opportunities for career advancement and development and positive relations with fellow workers and employers. Negative comments came in the main from those who had experienced difficulties in finding suitable employment.

Experiences – Community

Respondents comments on their experiences of living in regional areas were predominantly positive with 44 of 62 comments recorded (80.0%) being positive or strongly positive in their orientation. However, a minority of 12 respondents expressed negative or strongly negative comments (19.4%) and there were 6 (9.7%) neutral or equivocal comments recorded.

The strongest theme emerging through the positive comments made by skilled migrants concerned the perceived advantages of living in regional rather than metropolitan communities. A series of linked words and phrases were used repeatedly to refer to these advantages including ‘quiet’, ‘close-knit’, ‘friendly’, ‘laid-back’, ‘not crowded’, ‘casual’, ‘relaxed’, ‘safe’ and ‘easy-going’. This perception of the advantages of living outside of large cities was held widely and strongly by many respondents as illustrated by the following quotations:

“A nice quiet place. It is considered a capital city but without many facilities”

“At this stage we are happy. Schools can improve. I prefer it nice and quiet. 5 min to any shops instead of half an hour”

“Close-knit community”

“Cozy and laid-back style, I can integrate into the community completely”

“Everybody is friendly and it's a very laid-back and relaxed lifestyle”

“Everything is close and near”

“Friendly and easy to talk to and helpful”

“Good, but a bit hot, quiet, a bit of freedom, and very safe”

“It's all good. Good community, mining town people stick together”

“Like the community here. People are friendlier”

“One of the best communities in the country. I've been to many places in Australia and I really like Mt Isa. The people are generally good here. It's how you behave and conduct yourself in any place. Country people are more relaxed than those living in the cities”.

A further theme, linked to the above comments, was the acceptance that many migrants experienced in their new community, including links to family and cultural group:

“People are friendly. They are kind to us even though we are new there. They are approachable”

“Enjoying it because it's multicultural with laid-back lifestyle”

“Friendly people. The community is a multi-cultural society with many South Africans as well as people from other countries”

“Good and friendly people, meeting a lot of Aussie friends”

“I'm able to give advice to my fellow countrymen. Very good to go along. No harshness. Smiles and greeting are usual. Friendly environment”

“I can meet people from different cultures”

“It's multicultural, friendly people, easygoing”

“Opened me up. Learned a bit more because it's multicultural”

“Really positive, multicultural community, get along with people very well”

“... it's easy to make friends with different nationalities”

“The Aboriginal people are very accepting and welcoming. Other people are generally helpful ...”

“I have a sister here, having a great time here”

“There's a large Indian community here and there's also an Indian association here around 150 Indian families (areas where I came from in India) and another 250 other families”.

However, this predominantly positive experience of regional communities was not universal. A minority of respondents complained of poor public and community facilities including schools, housing, transport, education and communications:

“Finding a residential place is very difficult, very few places available”

“... People are without family. They are looking for friends. Seem to be in a constant state of stir. Overworked, unhappy, medical anxiety. Schooling very volatile. Teachers come and go. Some good teachers and not so good. Students’ behaviour dreadful”

“People very friendly, but the education system (at school) in terms of teachers not being permanent, has some effect on my children”

“Public transport is not good enough, as I can't go to some places depending on buses (and I have to take taxi instead)”

“Quite isolated. Shortage of amenities like hospitals”

“... getting food, mail etc is always a struggle, due to isolation, lack of facility, poor communication - phone system and the time for mail and items to arrive”

“Transport is not very convenient; town at night is not very safe as the drunken locals swore at us when shopping. We had to avoid going out at night”.

Others had experienced boredom, feelings of isolation, unfriendliness and racism:

“Not really like it, too isolated, very boring”

“I don't have much interaction with the people”

“Less crowded, but it's very difficult to talk to neighbours (they never talk to us)”

“Not going out much, not really engaged in the community”

“People are quite friendly, although some of them are racists”

“Work, work and more work”.

One respondent expressed difficulty in relating to Indigenous people:

“It's a bit of challenge in understanding indigenous people's culture”.

In summary, most skilled migrants reported that they enjoyed living in regional communities which they perceived as quiet, friendly, relaxed, safe, easy-going and accepting. For some, links to family and members of their ethnic community living in the region gave a sense of social connectedness. However, a minority expressed concern over poor public and community facilities, and for some their reported experience was one of boredom, lack of friendship and sense of isolation.

Experiences - Cost of Living

A total of 58 comments were recorded concerning the cost of living in regional areas. Most of these (67%) were comments on the high cost of living in regional areas, and in particular the high cost of housing. Representative comments included:

“Rentals are high and so are properties, but this is a mining town, and I suppose that's the way mining towns are”

“Initially good, but housing price has been increased dramatically”

“... There is shortage in housing but, its overpriced whether car service or supermarkets. Whoever comes has to pay premium for accommodation. People in Perth are shocked. \$500 per wk to rent at caravan park. People can't afford to come here”

“The rental was the only expensive factor. Finding accommodations were also difficult”

“They are off the record, totally ridiculous, \$1500 rent a week”

“It's quite high, especially with accommodation”

“Too expensive, namely rent way too much for nothing”

“Very expensive /rent is very high/the price to buy a house is ridiculous”.

A number of concerns were also raised concerning the cost of groceries, vegetables, fuel and airfares. In contrast, a smaller group of skilled migrants stated that the cost of living was comparable with or cheaper than other places, both within Australia and their home country:

“Cheaper than Melbourne”

“Similar to Ipswich”

“In general it's cheaper than the UK”

“Just the same if comparing to Philippines”

“Coming from the UK, it was considerable less”.

Experiences - Climate and Environment

The skilled migrants living in regional areas were asked about their experiences with respect to the climate in the areas in which they had settled, and the impact of climate on the settlement process. There was a wide range of responses. A total of 17 comments (22.1%) were very positive about the climate of the regional area:

“The opposite of Ireland. Had to deal with the heat. Enjoy it, heat suits me”

“A bit hotter, cyclone occasionally, but I love the hot weather and the sun”

“Good and healthy environment”

“Less pollution, fresher air”.

A further 18 (23.4%) comments emphasised the similarity between the climate in the regional area and the country or region that the migrant had left, implying or stating that adaptation to the climate was not a difficulty:

“Almost similar to India, especially the humidity and the temperature. So there's not much difference for me. I'm used to this climate”

“Same as in Philippines”

“Hot season is similar to Pakistan, but there is no winter here”

“I lived in the Mediterranean before I came to Darwin so was quite acclimatised”

“Not very different because I lived in the Middle East before”

“Very much the same as where I came from. I love the temps. It's more of a dryer climate”

“Same kind of tropical climate as the Philippines”

“Not much difference. There are two seasons also back home”

“Similar to South Africa. It's hot and humid”.

For other migrants, adaptation to a different climate was part of the settlement process. A total of 24 (31.2%) comments indicating a need to adapt to a different climate were recorded, although most indicated that this had not presented a major difficulty:

“Tropical climate to get used to, opposite to England”

“Baking hot, unbearable, but getting used to it”

“Dramatic difference. Left UK snowing and arrived here 47 degrees. Took a bit to get used to”

“Experienced some cyclones in Karratha. We were informed and therefore were prepared for them”

“Yes, it takes time to adapt to the tropical weather comparing to England”

“Little rain here, very hot as well compared to Ireland where summer never gets over 20 degrees”

“A little bit more humid during rainy seasons. Temps are 3 degrees higher. We adjusted nicely. We don't like winter much. For us the climate is not a big issue”

“Extremely hot in summer, main problem encountered. You can't have everything everywhere at all times, got to be flexible”

“Climate here is very humid in summer. This is the main factor to get used to. No much rain. Winter is similar to South Africa”

“There is only one season here--wet and dry, very different from Argentina. I have got used to this tropical climate and I reckon this is a good climate to raise a family (not too cold and not too hot)”

“Massive difference from Ireland/I've lived in the south of France so I'm used to the heat”

“It took 6-12 months to get acclimatized. Had to reduce my workload, my work pace, allow more to rest and have to protect my sleep patterns (especially in the wet season). All these are due to the harsh, dusty and dry environment”.

However, there were also 18 (23.4%) responses that were negative about the climate in the settlement area, although only a handful of these indicated that this was a significant problem:

“Very hot, issues with flies. They don't allow you to work, flying around your face (for a few months a year)”

“It's hot and humid, making me uncomfortable sometimes”

“It's really hot. Too hot. Winter is alright. Summer's not good with the flies”.

Experiences - Discrimination

The experiences of racism or discrimination amongst the skilled migrants who were interviewed was mixed. A total of 27 responses (55.1% of all responses) were received that indicated that the migrant had experienced racism directly, observed racist behaviour, or know of others who had experienced racist behaviour. By contrast, there were 22 (44.9%) responses that stated that no racist behaviour had been experienced, either directly or indirectly.

Comments concerning direct experience of racism included the following:

“I have experienced racism, but I don't want to talk about it”

“I've experienced a little bit of racism, like verbal abuses”

“I am working in a salon. Some of my clients are racists, but 99% of them are friendly”

“Some isolated cases e.g. making fun of accent”

“Verbal abuse against Italian people sometimes, but they are only the minority”

“Quite a lot, but I just ignore them. There are racists wherever you go, and it's inevitable”

“In finding accommodation, they turn you down on the phone because of your accent”

“A little bit when my family and me arrived, but not much nowadays”

“In the workplace, I can see there is a problem. I need to make an effort to build rapport with patients”.

Comments concerning racist behaviour that had been observed or heard about included the following:

“Not personally, but other friends had some. Serious problem”

“It exists, not in my life, but it exists in society”

“It’s everywhere in the world”

“Never experienced personally, but heard other south Asian workers’ children have that problem at school”

“Not for us. However, for my younger daughter, experienced some form of discrimination at school. I’m not sure because I came from a different culture”

“People are generally negative to immigrants”

“Very racist, not towards me, because I am white. It’s hard to believe that since Australia is such a melting pot”

Those who reported that they had no experience of racism were generally unambiguous in describing their experiences of acceptance into the community:

“Never had experience, have equal opportunity as everyone else”

“Haven’t experienced any. I feel welcome as people don’t judge you based on your race/colour”

“I don’t suffer any sort of racial discrimination”

“Nothing at all, friendly people, talking the same language”

“Different races in harmony, no problem at all”

It’s not easy for Asian people, but I haven’t experienced anything so far”

Not at all. Surprised that people smiled at me when I walked outside. People help me even when I didn’t ask. Don’t feel in any way I was an ethnic group from another country”.

Some migrants made observations on the treatment of Indigenous people in Australian society:

“Similar to the situation in SA. Some Australians think South Africans can be sneered at. The history of Aborigines is just as miserable or worse than blacks in SA”

None towards me. Higher than expected racism towards the Aborigines. What white people say is a bit more racist than expected”

Yes but not towards myself. I see in the way white Australians treated the Aboriginals. It is more in a frustrated way with local people serving aboriginal people”.

Plans for the Future

Skilled migrants were asked a series of questions in relation to the length of stay in their current location and their future plans. As reported earlier, the majority of skilled migrants had been in their current location for less than five years. When asked whether they intended to settle in the regional community in which they were living, a total of 70 (55%) said ‘yes’, 19 (15%) said ‘no’ and 38 (30%) were undecided. Those who were undecided gave a number of reasons for their uncertainty. For many the main factor was their employment situation:

“It all depends on the job. If there is no job here, then I won't stay. I will see what happens”

As long as I am employed in this company

“Depending on job and the mining industry”

“If husband gets a better job, that will happen [leave]. We are happy here at the moment”

“The company might ask me to work in Perth”.

For a small number their uncertainty related to the housing market and the high cost of housing:

“Depending on the rental price”

“One main factor is whether housing is affordable”

“It depends on property prices”.

Some others indicated a time frame in which they would consider their position:

“I will stay for another 2 years, and then I will decide whether I will move or not”

“I will move after finishing my studies”.

Skilled migrants who indicated they were likely to leave their regional area were asked when they thought this might be. A total of 10 (35.7%) were undecided, 3 (10.7%) said it depended on finding another job and 2 (7.1%) said it depended on family commitments. Others were more

definite with 3 (10.7%) saying less than one year, 6 (21.4%) saying 1-2 years and 4 (14.3%) saying longer than 2 years.

The main reason that migrants were considering moving away from their current area comprised a mix of push and pull factors. Push factors included lack of employment opportunities (6), poor facilities (2), lack of acceptance (1), high housing and other costs (4), climate (6) and a desire to leave Australia (1). Pull factors inclining the migrant to move elsewhere included family and friends (1), better employment prospects elsewhere (8), desire to live in a larger or coastal community (4), educational plans (7), desire to travel or to have new experiences (5) and other personal reasons (2). Representative comments include:

“Better employment opportunities elsewhere (a job was waiting for me)”

“Experience something different, and my daughter is going to school somewhere else”

“Lacking of choice of facilities. Cultural diversity is much more in Melbourne. Getting out of the heat and the raining season, and the extreme humidity”

“My fiancée has another job in NSW”

“Somewhere with climate similar to PNG. When the mining boom ends, I don't think there will be anything for me to live here”

“To look for more challenges and experience something different”

“Wanted a bigger regional community, want more opportunities for son in terms of schools, jobs, careers”

“Studies, Uni. There are no unis there. I like bigger places with more things to see and do”

“... kids growing up, need to go to unis”.

“... to experience something different, and to look for a wife”

“I split up with my boyfriend”.

Those migrants who were thinking of moving were asked where they thought they would go. Of the total of 33 responses, 17 nominated Australian capital cities (51%), 14 (42%) nominated Australian provincial cities or other regional areas and 2 (6%) nominated other countries.

Migrants who were thinking of moving were also asked what might encourage them to stay in their current regional location. A total of 18 (32% of responses) nominated 'greater employment opportunities', 8 (15%) nominated 'better or more facilities', 5 (9%) nominated 'better climate', 2 (4%) nominated 'better social ties/networks' and 1 (2%) nominated 'better schools'. There were 6 (11%) respondents who nominated 'nothing would make me stay'. There were 16 (29%) other responses including better paid work, better educational opportunities, cheaper housing and more friends.

Employers

Location

As part of their survey, skilled migrants were asked to nominate their current employer. This question was asked to allow ISSR to develop a database of employers who could be contacted and interviewed regarding their experiences with the Skilled Migration program.

In total, skilled migrants provided the contact details for 72 employers. Forty-six were located in Darwin, five in Mildura, 12 in Mt Isa, and nine in the Karratha region. Employers were contacted only once, regardless of the number of skilled migrants they (or their company) employed. A total of 26 employers agreed to be interviewed.

Table 5: Employers Interviewed by Location

	n=	%
Darwin (NT)	21	81
Mildura (Vic)	1	4
Mt Isa (Qld)	3	12
Karratha (WA)	1	4
Total	26	100

Of these businesses, 25 were currently employing skilled migrants, with one other business having employed skilled migrants in the past.

Knowledge of skilled regional migration programs

Employers were asked about where they had heard of the Skilled Migration program. Several stated they had learned about the program from more than one source. Word of mouth was an important source of information, including via the local Chamber of Commerce. Formal sources included the DIAC website, other government information channels, industry bodies and the

media. Two employers had recruited skilled migrants and yet had no knowledge of skilled regional migration programs.

Perceptions of skilled migrant workers

When asked about their motivation for employing skilled migrants, most employers reported the need to employ migrants because they were unable to attract Australian workers to the region. Several employers commented that migrants were hard workers and that the work they were employed to do required specialized skills that were not readily available in the local workforce. In response to a request to rate skilled migrants compared with local workers, most employers responded that they were 'very good' or 'good' workers. Some reported a neutral attitude toward skilled migrant workers and only one employer gave a negative rating. Reasons given for positive ratings included:

"They really get the job done, put some Australian staff to shame"

"They are very hard working, loyal and punctual"

"They make the most of the opportunities and treasure the job they are offered"

"Come with good skills -little training come to work on time good work ethic. Past adversity makes them work hard in Australia"

"Work hard, listens, very helpful, but accent is a small problem however".

Comments of those giving neutral or negative ratings included:

"Migrants are usually no better or worse than Australian workers"

"In the middle - as they have pros and cons -training still required, not as physically big and strong, don't immediately understand OZ culture"

"Great worker but not with same skills as an Australian"

"Their qualifications and their skills do not match".

Future involvement

On the basis of their current and previous experiences with skilled migrant employees, almost all employers indicated that they would be willing to consider using the Skilled Migration Program in the future, while only one reported that the company he represented would not use this program again. Reasons given for continuing to use the scheme included the difficulty of

obtaining workers in regional areas and positive perceptions of the qualities of skilled migrant workers:

“Because it has worked in the past and we still have a skill shortage; we just can't get local and experienced people for the jobs”.

“Mining industry causes shortages of skilled labour in the regional area (i.e. fitters)”

”industry experiences acute shortages of skilled labour”

“... in order to meet skill shortages in mining”

“Because cannot get skills in regional areas - competition from oil and mining”

“Because of the work ethic of people overseas. We don't have work problems with them. Providing they can speak and understand English”

“Cannot easily get Australian mechanics or office workers in regional areas of Australia”

“Those migrant workers have set up a good example of how to work properly to the local people”

“Provides reliable hard working people”.

Recruitment Strategies

Employers were asked about their strategies for recruiting skilled migrants and the help that they had sought in this process. Some had relied exclusively on word of mouth, but some others had recruited via Expos, internet and web-site advertising, migration and recruitment agencies and conventional job advertisements. Some employers stated that they did not have specific strategies or that they did not specifically target migrants in their recruitment strategies. Employers were asked to rate strategies on their effectiveness. Overall, employers reported positively on the effectiveness of their chosen strategies.

A number of comments were provided on specific strategies that employers had used. With respect to Expositions comments included:

“Direct contact achieved with employees but hard to convert this to a migrant moving to your area, however employees often have appropriate skills”

“Targeted the wrong people - backpackers - not skilled Also this is easier to do offshore”.

Regarding advertising on the internet, employers' views were mixed. Some had experienced success, but some reservations were expressed:

“A lot depends on the motives of individuals who apply for the job - hard to screen applicants”

“Very hard to interview over the internet - I prefer face to face”.

“A lot of people just don't look into the Internet. You need to know the company's website to get the information”.

There were also mixed views concerning the effectiveness of word of mouth:

“Only targets a small and biased proportion of the labour market - it can work but you must be lucky”

“We succeeded in getting the company the appropriately skilled people required”

“Employees not always as good as we expected”

“Essentially more trust worthy/ reliable than web sites or media”.

A number of employers had used recruitment and migration agencies and once again they had mixed views about this as a strategy. Advantages mentioned included their specialist skills, networks, language skills and knowledge of immigration regulations. Expense and lack of knowledge of suitable agencies were seen as the main disadvantages. Comments included:

“Assist employers in selection and recruitment - help with advertising - they have local knowledge”

“The one we used treated workers poorly, (took much of their money) plus poor flow of information to us the clients”

“Some are very good - top quality - Other agencies are terrible and send unsolicited recruits”

“Because they save us a lot of time. They can find the right person for the positions”

“No time to do it ourselves - they are professional”

“We desperately need staff which we couldn't find within Australia, and the only way to do is getting them from overseas, especially Philippines”

“Language barriers, we don't speak Spanish”

“I am too frightened to bring somebody that is not suitable”.

Two employers had sought assistance from their local council and one from a regional council. In all cases this was perceived as helpful.

Perceptions of Migrants Future Intentions

The last group of questions explored employers' perceptions regarding migrant's future intentions. When asked if they thought migrants and their families would stay in the region once their visa had expired, most employers thought that this was likely. Employment and lifestyle were the main reasons suggested:

“50% or so stay - they like their new country”

“Darwin is such a lovely place, loyal workers”

“Financial incentives is the only reason that they choose to stay”

“First objective is for making money and sending back to their families, and the second objective is for getting permanent residency”

“Probably the relaxed lifestyle of regional areas”

“Some have brought their families out here, more opportunities (e.g. education), less violent society”

“Stay because enjoy job and like the company – security”

“They are often well prepared to cope with a rural area and remoteness”

“They establish themselves in the location with a sense of pride in the business”

“We have good working conditions, we offer a lot to them”.

Employers were unable to provide any thoughts on what motivated skilled migrants to leave the area once their visa had expired.

The final question explored initiatives to help keep skilled migrants in the area. The central themes in the employers' responses were good working conditions, improved community facilities and community integration initiatives. Specific comments included:

“Better housing is critical”

“By offering benefits, health insurance. More translation in public services including clinics, banks, taxes”

“Can't think of any extra. When we get someone good, the mines steal them. Small firms can't compete with bigger companies. For example, we hired a new accountant graduate for \$45000, but some big mining company offered her \$75000 and a house”

Community education programs. Locals must assimilate new migrants and have less discrimination. More community services for migrants; info on health, churches, etc.”

“Community facilities - medical, educational especially”

“Ensure that migrants fit in culturally - support groups - get migrants from climatically similar areas so they can cope with NT climate”

“Help migrants integrate into wider community, better help from public servants, good employers”

“If they are happy with their jobs, it comes naturally that they will be loyal to the companies they work and the area they live”

“Meet migrants needs and do not leave them 'on their own in the community' - include in wider social activities”.

Some employers, however, felt that current arrangements and incentives were sufficient to keep skilled migrant workers in the regional area.

Government officials

Fifteen government officials were interviewed, including four from Local Government, six from State Government and five from Australian Government agencies.

Table 6: Government representatives interviewed by location

	n=	%
Darwin (NT)	3	20

Mildura (Vic)	3	20
Mt Isa (Qld)	6	40
Karratha (WA)	3	20
Total	15	100

Perceptions of local employment market

Government employers were asked to briefly comment on regional labour market conditions, especially skilled labour shortages. Government officials indicated that there were labour shortages and opportunities for skilled migrants in regional areas across a wide range of fields including hospitality, health, tourism, trades, education and engineering.

Perceptions of skilled regional migration program

Officials generally agreed that encouraging skilled migration was an appropriate means of addressing regional skills shortages alongside other initiatives such as training and apprenticeships for Australians. Most agreed that the Skilled Migration Program was an important means of addressing regional skills shortages. Comments included:

“Yes it is effective. It can be otherwise difficult to recruit people to the central Australian bush”

“It is one of the strategies used, but only one of several that are required”

“Yes - when migrants have the skills, qualifications and language required of them”

“Mixed feelings - apprenticeships/training for Australian workers would be a better option”

“Yes, however, have only done this a little and have had only limited success”

“To ensure employers get people who are unavailable in Australia. Migrants should not be seen as cheap labour”

“Important to sustain viable local communities and the country as a whole, as resource rich areas provide wealth for the whole country and need many skilled workers”

“A lot of industries would not be able to operate without overseas labour”

“Important - but needs a lot of resources and time to be successful”.

Recruitment strategies

Officials were asked about the types of activities their organisation had participated in to recruit skilled migrants. These included expos, working with community groups, marketing the region on the internet, regional web-sites, working with employers to develop marketing strategies and appointing development officers. All of these strategies were rated as effective to some degree and officials provided comments on specific strategies. Comments on expos included:

“Useful for larger employers seeking large numbers of employees, not so useful for small firms with limited budgets and smaller staff requirements”

“Only niche groups go to these Expos - they are not readily accessible to regional people and small firms”

“If run by DIAC with pre screened migrants from specific occupational areas they will provide suitable applicants ready to migrate”

“They have advantages if well represented - i.e. networking”.

There were mixed views concerning marketing the region and advertising jobs on the internet, and using regional websites:

“Gets message/labour requirements across to more people”

“The most popular medium of communication today”

“Applicants were not always of the quality we required”.

‘Need to have brand recognition - regional web sites are small and need promotion for success’

‘Not as good as a face to face interaction in determining if a worker is suitable’.

A number of positive comments were made concerning working through local community groups:

“Work at local level gives lead to better settlement outcomes and promotes more realistic expectations”

“They provide a local presence that people know they can come to for help and liaison, They provide a more personal service”

“Multi-cultural community makes people/ migrants feel more at home”

“Help to develop and maintain good relationships - local knowledge is very good - Brisbane is very distant, understanding of local culture helps get good staff”.

Comments concerning working with employers to develop marketing strategies were mixed:

“Various employers supporting each other gives a better outcome for the area as a whole”

Feedback helps greatly. Large numbers of employers can turn up and gain valuable information”

“Employers selfish - tend to look after themselves and their own requirements”.

All officials indicated that they worked collaboratively with other levels of government and other government agencies.

Future roles

Most officials were of the view that the Skilled Migrant Program has an important role to play in their region in the short-term, although some divergent views were expressed. Representative comments included:

“Critical role can't be done without them”

“Continue to fill in the skills and qualification void in the area - fills gaps”

An important role as the skill shortage is not going away - especially in health”

It will continue to be critical in areas of specific skills shortage - i.e. health, trades and gas exploration”

They will definitely play a part, but hopefully employers will see that employing Australian workers is a better option”

Big projects - i.e. in mining industry are about to commence in the area - thus very important to provide a skilled workforce for these projects”

Not of great importance at the moment due to econ downturn”

Will always contribute to the community's skill needs - helps further enrich the multicultural community”

Most officials also viewed the program as having an important long-term role, although once again there was a range of views. Most officials saw a long term role for the Skilled Migration Program in addressing skilled labour shortages in regional areas, and some saw shortages these being exacerbated by the ageing of the population. Others linked the future relevance of the Program to long-term economic developments. A representative range of comments is provided below.

“Skill shortage will not go away, so it will still be important in the future”

“Important - especially if skilled migrants can be convinced to stay in Australia permanently and don't just come for short term economic gains”

“Ongoing and continuing need to acquire skilled migrants will help support aging population”

“Ongoing importance - but it would be better to skill up indigenous and other Australian workers”

“May become more of a priority - in 5 years after economic recovery”

“Will still help fill the skills shortage as many people are reluctant to leave the coastal regions”

“The program is very important because it is always necessary to supplement the skill shortages for the country”

“Not important unless there is a major economic change”.

Conclusions

Programs to encourage skilled migration to regional areas have been a central part of the Australian Government's migration program since the mid-1990s. These programs aim to encourage a more balanced settlement of Australia's skilled migrant intake and to address skills needs in specific regions. However, while migration to regional areas is a well-established policy objective, there has been only limited research available to provide an understanding of the factors and processes associated with immigrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional areas. The central aim of this study was to investigate the factors and processes involved in skilled migrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional areas.

Previous research identified three sets of factors that are the main determinants of immigrants' decisions to settle and remain in regional locations in Australia: employment and business opportunities, family, social and cultural connectedness and regional characteristics. This research project has provided further evidence of the salience of these three sets of factors. However, the evidence provided through this report is best summarised under two broad headings: employment factors and community factors.

Employment factors clearly played a central role in the settlement decision for many skilled migrants. For many the availability of a job, a better job or a more suitable job for themselves or other family members was the main factor resulting in them settling in a regional area.

Employment factors also appear to have play a central role in skilled migrants remaining in regional areas. Their experiences of employment in regional areas were predominantly (although not universally) favorable including the ready availability of employment, opportunities for stable and well-paid work, opportunities for career advancement and development and positive working environments.

Community factors also played an important role in the decision to settle in regional communities. Many skilled migrants who were interviewed stated that they were attracted to a country town or small community lifestyle. Their experiences of living in regional areas were predominantly (although again not universally) positive and were expressed in terms of the perceived advantages of living in regional rather than metropolitan communities. Regional areas were widely perceived as 'quiet', 'close-knit', 'friendly', 'laid-back', 'not crowded', 'casual', 'relaxed', 'safe' and 'easy-going'. Many migrants, including those from non-English speaking backgrounds, reported that they felt accepted in their new community, and this was enhanced when they had links to family and their cultural group in the regional area.

However, significant numbers of migrants also reported experiences of poor public and community facilities including schools, housing, transport, education and communications. A small minority reported their experience in regional communities as one of boredom, isolation, lack of friendship or racism. A majority of those interviewed commented on the high cost of living in regional areas, in particular the high cost of housing. A small minority indicated that the climate of the regional area in which they had settled was a significant problem for them, although most indicated either that they had readily adapted to the local climate, or that they

enjoyed the climate. The skilled migrants interviewed were divided in their experience of racism and discrimination. Of those who commented, more than half indicated that they had experienced racism directly, observed racist behaviour, or know of others who had experienced racist behaviour. But an equal number were unambiguous in describing their experiences of acceptance by community members.

As in previous studies, a high proportion of the skilled migrants interviewed stated an intention to settle in the regional community in which they were living. Those who expected to leave were motivated by both push and pull factors. Push factors included lack of employment opportunities, poor facilities, lack of acceptance, high housing and other costs, climate and a desire to leave Australia. Pull factors inclining the migrant to move elsewhere included family and friends, better employment prospects elsewhere, desire to live in a larger or coastal community, educational plans, desire to travel or to have new experiences and personal reasons.

Interviews with employers and government officials confirmed the ongoing importance and relevance of programs designed to attract and retain skilled migrants in regional areas. Employers indicated that they expected to continue to rely on skilled migrants because they were unable to attract Australian workers to the region. Their general perception was that migrants were good workers who often had specialized skills that were not readily available in the local workforce. They expressed the views that the factors most likely to help keep skilled migrants in the area were good working conditions, improved community facilities and community integration initiatives. Government officials interviewed concurred that there were labour shortages and opportunities for skilled migrants in regional areas across a wide range of fields including hospitality, health, tourism, trades, education and engineering. They generally agreed that encouraging skilled migration was an appropriate means of addressing regional skills shortages alongside other initiatives focused on Australian employees. Officials generally agreed that regional skilled migration programs had an important role to play in their region in the short-term and longer term.

In summary, this study has confirmed the findings in the previous literature concerning the importance of employment and community factors in attracting and retaining skilled migrants in regional areas. As has been previously suggested, further understanding of these issues is likely to require large-scale, longitudinal research tracking skilled migrant settlement and mobility

decisions over time. Evaluation studies of particular migration schemes and case studies of skilled migration to particular regions are also recommended.

Appendix A: Questionnaire – Skilled Migrants

General Introduction: Hello, my name is I'm calling from The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research in Brisbane. We are conducting a survey on behalf of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship looking at skilled migrants living and working in regional areas.

To person answering phone: Could I please speak with?

To contact: All the information you provide will be anonymous and confidential. Your participation is voluntary and you answering this survey will have no effect on any current or future dealing you have with DIAC. The survey will take about 10 minutes. Would you be able to do this now?

SECTION 1 - PERSONAL INFORMATION

Q 1 Gender (asked if could not be inferred from voice)

Are you? Male Female

Q 2 What is your marital status?

Never married	<input type="checkbox"/>
Widowed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Separated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engaged	<input type="checkbox"/>
Married	<input type="checkbox"/>
In a de facto relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 3 Do you have any children?

Yes No

Go to Q4

Go to Q5

Q 4 How many of your children are living with you in Australia?

Q 5 Before coming to Australia, what was your home country?

	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Bangladesh	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nepal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brazil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Norway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brunei	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Canada	<input type="checkbox"/>	Papua New Guinea	<input type="checkbox"/>
China	<input type="checkbox"/>	Philippines	<input type="checkbox"/>
Czech Republic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Singapore	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fiji	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slovak Republic	<input type="checkbox"/>
France	<input type="checkbox"/>	South Africa	<input type="checkbox"/>
Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sri Lanka	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hong Kong	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sweden	<input type="checkbox"/>
India	<input type="checkbox"/>	Switzerland	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indonesia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taiwan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Italy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thailand	<input type="checkbox"/>
Japan	<input type="checkbox"/>	United Kingdom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kenya	<input type="checkbox"/>	USA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Korea (South)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vietnam	<input type="checkbox"/>
Malaysia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 6 What year did you arrive in Australia?

Q 7 What visa do you currently hold?

Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (119)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skilled - State/Territory Nominated Independent (137)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skilled - Designated Area Sponsored (139)	<input type="checkbox"/>
State/Territory Sponsored Business Owner (163)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skilled - Sponsored (176)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skilled - Regional Sponsored (487)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skilled Independent Regional (Provisional) (495)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (857)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skilled - Designated Area Sponsored-Overseas Student (882)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skilled Sponsored (886)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skilled - Graduate (Temporary) (485)	<input type="checkbox"/>
State/Territory Sponsored Business Owner (892)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 7A Did you enter Australia on this visa?

Yes

No

Go to Q9

Go to Q8

Q 8 What visa did you enter Australia on?

1. Same visa as I have now	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (119)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Skilled - State/Territory Nominated Independent (137)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Skilled - Designated Area Sponsored (139)	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. State/Territory Sponsored Business Owner (163)	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Skilled - Sponsored (176)	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Skilled - Regional Sponsored (487)	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Skilled Independent Regional (Provisional) (495)	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (857)	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Skilled - Designated Area Sponsored-Overseas Student (882)	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Skilled Sponsored (886)	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Skilled - Graduate (Temporary) (485)	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. State/Territory Sponsored Business Owner (892)	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 9 Did you apply for your first visa as a step towards gaining permanent residency in Australia?

Yes

No

Additional comments?

SECTION 2 - INFORMATION ACCESS/ DECISION MAKING

Q 10 Where did you find out about Australia? And Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

Expos	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Know people in the area	<input type="checkbox"/>
Australian Embassy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends and family (in home country)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 11 How much did you know about Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha before you arrived in Australia?

Nothing	<input type="checkbox"/>
A little bit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quite a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>
A lot	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other comments?

Q 12 What factors did you consider important in deciding to settle in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

A job was waiting for me	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy to get to my home country	<input type="checkbox"/>
English speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>
No jobs in my home country	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of living	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have friends or family in Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Australia is considered a safe place	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many people from your home country live and work in Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friendly people	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good place to raise a family	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made up of many cultures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visited Australia before and wanted to come back	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modern and technologically advanced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will help you to migrate permanently to Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many things to see and do	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability/ease of getting a visa	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural/ethnic tolerance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Healthy environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relatively close to your home country	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 13 Is Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha what you expected?

Yes No Additional comments?

Go to Q15A

Go to Q14

Q 14 How did Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha not meet your expectations?

Q 15A What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha been in relation to your job?

Q 15B What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha been in relation to living in this community?

Q 15C What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha been in relation to the cost of living?

Q 15D What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha been in relation to the environment (climate - especially difference to home country)?

Q 15E What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha been in relation to racism?

Q 16 How long have you been in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha now?

Q 17. Do you think you will stay in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha once your current visa expires?

Yes

No

Additional comments?

Go to Q22

Go to Q18

Q 18 If you intend to move, when do you think this will happen?

Q 19 If you were to move away from Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha, why are you thinking of moving? (*Multiple response*)

Not what I expected	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities are not good	<input type="checkbox"/>
No employment opportunities for myself or family	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family/friends live in other areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't like the area	<input type="checkbox"/>
My family is unhappy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't feel comfortable in this town (feel like an outsider)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't feel accepted by the locals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 20 Where do you think you would go? (*Multiple response*)

Name of town or centre (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Regional centre (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Another regional town (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Capital city (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Back to my home country	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Another country (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Somewhere else	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have not decided	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Q 21 What would make you stay in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha? (*Multiple response*)

Better facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
More facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greater employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better social ties/networks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easier international travel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better climate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nothing would make me stay	<input type="checkbox"/>

I would now like to ask you some questions about your employer. Another part of this survey is to contact employers of skilled migrants to ask them some general questions about their experience of the Skilled Migration Program. We will be randomly selecting a small number of companies to contact. I can assure you that your employer will not know that you have given us their number.

Q 22 Would you mind telling me the name of the company you work for

Q 22A What is their phone number?

Q 22B Who would be the best person to talk to?

That is the end of the Survey. Once again, I am from The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research. Can I stress that your response will remain confidential and anonymous. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Dr Judith Griffiths or if you want to check the authenticity of this survey please contact DIAC.

Appendix B: Questionnaire – Employers

General Introduction: Hello, my name is I'm calling from The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research in Brisbane. We are conducting a survey on behalf of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship looking at skilled migrants living and working in regional areas.

To person answering phone: Could I please speak with?

To contact: Your participation is voluntary and all the information you provide will be anonymous and confidential. The survey will take about 10 minutes. Would you be able to do this now?

I just need to clarify that you have not been involved in employing skilled migrants through the Immigration Skilled Migration Program?

Have in the past used skilled migrants	<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue
No never used skilled migrants	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discontinue
No refused	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discontinue

Before we start with some questions I would like to get some information about your business. This will help the researchers to categorise your company. Let's begin...

Q 1 What type of business do you operate?

Q 2 Is your business, small, medium, or large?

Small (Less than 20 employees)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medium (20 to 200 employees)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Large (more than 200 people)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 3 Of your total current employees, how many of these are skilled migrants?

Number of skilled migrants employed (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to Q4	
No skilled migrants employed at the moment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to Q4	
Never employed skilled migrants	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discontinue	
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discontinue	

Q 4 Have you employed Skilled Migrant workers in the past?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Q 5 Why did you employ skilled migrants? (*Multiple response*)

Unable to attract Australian workers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Migrants are hard workers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easier to attract migrants to regional areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better skills than local workers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialised work	<input type="checkbox"/>
To get family & friends into Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Benefits (e.g. tax breaks)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other reasons (<i>as specified</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know/Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 6 Compared with local workers on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is 'Very bad' and 5 is 'Very good', how would you rate skilled migrants as workers?

Very bad	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 6a Why is that?

Q 6b On the basis of your experiences with skilled migrants and with the Skilled Migration Program, would you consider using it again in the future?

Yes No Refused

Q 6c Why is that?

Q 7 How did you first hear about the Skilled Migration Program?

Word of Mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>
DIAC website	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development Board Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>as specified</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 8 What sort of strategies have you used to attract skilled migrants as employees?

Expos (e.g., Australia Needs Skills)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advertising on the internet (job sites)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Web sites	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessed the Skill Matching Database	<input type="checkbox"/>
Word of mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other strategies (<i>as specified</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 9 On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'Very bad' and 5 is 'Excellent', rate the effectiveness of each of these strategies? How would you rate [Use responses at Q8]"

Very bad	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 9a Why have you given [Responses at Q8 and Q9] this rating?

Q 10 Have you ever approached outside agencies to help you attract overseas skilled migrants?

Yes No Refused

Q 10a Why is that?

If no at Q10, go to Q12

Q 11 What agencies have you approached?

Local city or shire council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Development boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Regional councils	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other agencies (<i>as specified</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Q 11a How would you rate [agencies approached at Q11]?

1. No help at all	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Very helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q11b Do you have any other comments about these agencies and their help?

Q 12 In your experience do skilled migrants stay in the area once their visa has expired?

Yes No Refused **Go to Q13****Go to Q14**

Q 12a Why do you think they stay?

Go to Q14

Q 13 Why do you think they leave? (*Multiple response*)

Not what they expected	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities are not good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of employment opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family/friends live in other areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
They don't like the area	<input type="checkbox"/>
Their family are unhappy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't fit into this town	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't feel accepted by the locals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can't speak the language	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 14 What do you think can be done to attract and then keep skilled migrants in the local area?

That is the end of the Survey. Once again, I am from The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research. Can I stress that your response will remain confidential and anonymous. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Dr Judith Griffiths or if you want to check the authenticity of this survey please contact DIAC.

[If requested, interviewer provides phone numbers: Dr Judith Griffiths 07 3346 7801; DIAC Anthony Ellis 02 6264 2980]

Appendix C: Questionnaire – Government

General Introduction: Hello, my name is I'm calling from The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research in Brisbane. We are conducting a survey on behalf of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship looking at skilled migrants living and working in regional areas.

To person answering phone: Could I please speak with?

To contact: All the information you provide will be anonymous and confidential. The survey will take about 10 minutes. Would you be able to do this now?

Q 1 What level of government do you represent? (*Multiple response*)

Local government	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Government	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal Government	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 2A Can you briefly describe the labour market conditions in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha in relation to gaps or unmet needs in the local workforce?

Q 2B Has there been any difficulty in filling skilled positions in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha?

Q 2C What difficulties have you experienced?

Q 3 Does your department consider importing skilled migrants as an effective strategy for addressing the skill shortages in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha?

Q 4 How important does your department consider the Skilled Migration Program as a way of addressing skill shortages in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha?

Not at all important	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not very important	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither important nor unimportant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quite important	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 4a Any comment on its importance?"

Q 5 What kinds of activities has your organization participated in to recruit skilled migrants to Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha?

Expos (e.g., Australia Needs Skills)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advertising the region as well as jobs on the internet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional Web sites	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appointed staff (development officers)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work with local community groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked with employers to develop marketing strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>as specified</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 5a On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'Very bad' and 5 is 'Excellent', rate the effectiveness of each of these recruitment strategies? How would you rate [Using Responses from Q5]

Very bad	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refused	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 5b Why have you given [Using Responses from Q5/Q5a] this rating?

Q 5c Do you work with other levels of government in attracting skilled migrants to Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha? (*Multiple response*)

Local	<input type="checkbox"/>
State	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal	<input type="checkbox"/>
We work independently	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 6a What role do you see the Skilled Migration Program playing in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha in the short term (next 12 months)?

Q 6b What role do you see the Skilled Migration Program playing in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha in the longer term (beyond 12 months)

That is the end of the Survey. Once again, I am from The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research.. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Dr Judith Griffiths or if you want to check the authenticity of this survey please contact DIAC.

[If requested, interviewer provides phone numbers: Dr Judith Griffiths 07 3346 7801; DIAC Anthony Ellis 02 6264 2980]

Appendix D: Skilled Migrants - Frequency Tables

Location

Location	n	%
Northern Territory	71	65
Mt Isa	18	16
Mildura	12	11
Karratha	9	8
Total	110	100

Q1. Are you? (asked if could not be inferred from voice)

Gender	n	%
Male	74	67
Female	36	33
Total	110	100

Q2. What is your marital status?

Marital status	n	%
Married	79	72
Never married	21	19
In a de facto relationship	8	7
Widowed	1	1
Divorced	1	1
Total	110	100

Q3. Do you have any children?

	n	%
Yes	69	63
No	41	37
Total	110	100

Q4. How many of your children are living with you in Australia?

Number of children	n	%
1	13	19
2	32	46
3	12	17
4	4	6
No children living in Australia	8	12
Total	69	100

Q5. Before coming to Australia, what was your home country?

Home Country	n	%
United Kingdom	24	21
Philippines	20	18
South Africa	17	15
India	11	10
China	4	3
Zimbabwe	4	3
Papua New Guinea	3	3
Italy	2	2
Mauritius	2	2
Sri Lanka	2	2
Argentina	1	1
Bangladesh	1	1
Bolivia	1	1
Burma	1	1
Canada	1	1
Chile	1	1
Egypt	1	1
France	1	1
Germany	1	1
Ghana	1	1
Hong Kong	1	1
Indonesia	1	1
Korea (South)	1	1
New Zealand	1	1
Nigeria	1	1
Pakistan	1	1
Tanzania	1	1
Thailand	1	1
Trinidad and Tobago	1	1
Ukraine	1	1
Vietnam	1	1
Total	110	100

Q6. What year did you arrive in Australia?

Year of Arrival	n	%
1998	2	2
1999	2	2
2001	2	2
2002	5	4
2003	8	7
2004	14	13
2005	12	11
2006	36	33
2007	18	16
2008	10	9
2009	1	1
Total	110	100

Q7. What Visa do you currently hold?

Visa currently held	n	%
Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (857)	27	25
Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (119)	5	5
Skilled-Regional Sponsored (487)	5	5
Skilled-State/Territory Nominated Independent (137)	2	2
Skilled-Sponsored (176)	2	2
Skilled-Designated Area Sponsored (139)	1	1
Skilled Independent Regional (Provisional) (495)	1	1
Other	67	61
Total	110	100

Q7 - Other

	n	%
Permanent Residency	45	67
Citizen	15	22
Sponsored Migration Visa (475)	2	3
Bridging Visa (495)	1	1
Bridging Visa (887)	1	1
Regional Sponsored (type unspecified)	1	1
Skilled Regional Visa (887)	1	1
Student Visa	1	1
Total	67	100

Q7A. Did you enter Australia on this visa?

	n	%
Yes	9	8
No	101	92
Total	110	100

Q8. What visa did you enter Australia on?

Visa type	n	%
Temporary Business (Long stay) (457)	62	61
Working Holiday Visa (unspecified)	8	8
Student Visa	5	5
Working Holiday Visa (417)	5	5
International Student Visa	3	3
Skilled-Regional Sponsored (487)	2	2
Permanent Residency	2	2
Spouse Visa	2	2
Tourist Visa (676)	2	2
Skilled-Sponsored (176)	1	1
Skilled Independent Regional (Provisional)	1	1
Business (Short Stay) (456)	1	1
Higher Education Sector (Temporary) Visa	1	1
Postgraduate Research Temporary Visa (57)	1	1
Skilled - Independent Regional (Provisional)	1	1
Skilled Sponsored Migrant (176)	1	1
Sponsorship Visa	1	1
Temporary Visa	1	1
Visitors Visa - 3 months	1	1
Total	101	100

Q9. Did you apply for your first visa as a step towards gaining permanent residency?

	n	%
Yes	60	53
No	47	41
Additional comment made	7	6

Q10. Where did you find out about Australia? And Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
Friends/family at home	49	34
Internet	31	22
Workplace	14	10
People in the area	7	5
Friends and family in Australia	7	5
Recruitment agency	7	5
Travelling (inc working holiday)	5	3
Other media	4	3
Expos	3	2
Student	3	2
School	3	2
University recruitment	2	1
Other media (overseas)	2	1
Australian government agency	1	1
Interstate relocation	1	1
Pakistani Higher Education Commission	1	1
Previous employer	1	1
Previous travel to Australia	1	1
Sports	1	1
Australian embassy	0	0

Q11. How much did you know about Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
Nothing	46	42
A little bit	51	46
Quite a lot	12	11
A lot	0	0
Other comments	3	3

Q12. What factors did you consider in deciding to settle in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
A job was waiting for me	50	21
Healthy environment	24	10
Good place to raise a family	20	8
Friendly people	18	7
Cost of living	13	5
Have friends or family in Australia	11	5
Australia is considered a safe place	10	4
Made up of many cultures	6	2
Cultural/ethnic tolerance	6	2
Availability/ease of getting a visa	4	2
Visited Australia before and wanted to come back	3	1
No jobs in my home country	2	1
Modern and technologically advanced	2	1
Will help you to migrate permanently to Australia	2	1
Relatively close to your home country	2	1
Many people from your home country live and work in Australia	1	0
Many things to see and do	1	0
Easy to get to my home country	0	0
English speaking	0	0
Other	68	2

Q12 – Other

- 26 years in mining industry
- A country town
- A good place, nice climate
- A job was waiting for my Husband
- Career opportunity
- Climate
- Easy to get visa. Our company was based there
- Education, lotteries, in demand jobs here
- Everything is close and convenient
- Good environment for family, peace of life, prosperity. Employment opportunities
- Graduated in Brisbane, then got a job in Mildura. The college even paid an air ticket for me to check out the place. Higher pay than what city offered, wanted a private Christian school
- I had to stay in Darwin for 2.5 years under the sponsorship program, that's part of the visa regulation.
- I use to live in the country side. So I chose to come here because I like the lifestyle and country People. It is also very easy to find jobs in the country than in the city
- I was a student studying in Darwin
- Infrastructure, good for family
- It's always been a dream to live in Australia. When I got the opportunity, spoke to manager, checked on Internet.
- Job opportunities
- Laid back lifestyle
- More relaxed; fewer shops. Climate is the same as the Philippines
- My wife has got a job in Mildura
- Nice climate, liveable city, employment, easy to integrate
- Nice country town, very quiet and comfortable
- Not crowded; friends liked it.
- Opportunities for part-time work & studies
- Outdoor lifestyle
- Partner got a job at the mine
- Politics and religion
- Small place, got everything there
- Small town; natural varieties & wildlife.

-
- Sponsorship from travel agency
 - There is a Thai community here
 - They advertised for three years and didn't get anybody
 - Ties with the type of work I'm working - community development
 - Weather
-

Q13. Is Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha what you expected?

	n	%
Yes	88	71
No	18	15
Additional comment	17	14

Q13 – Additional comments

-
- best countryside area
 - have done research
 - no idea
 - There was no expectations
 - More than what I expected
 - I didn't really have an expectation of what it's like here
 - We were unsure how we will be welcomed at first but the community was very friendly, and the children settled very well
 - They live in Brunswick.
 - I expected higher quality of life
 - Better than expected
 - Pretty much
 - It's ok, but hot place
 - No expectation
 - After a while, got used to it. First 2 months to get used to weather. Pictures didn't show what the town really looks like.
 - Told by niece what to expect
 - Better. Came in 2000 there was nothing, but came in 2006 they have developed many things
 - I didn't have much expectations cause I didn't know much about Darwin
-

Q14. How did Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha not meet your expectations?

-
- A little surprised at how much behind the rest of the country – e.g. Darwin classified as a capital city as compared to other capital cities in Australia
 - A lot better than what I was told.
 - Can't compare cause Northern Territory is the only place I've been to in Australia
 - Different but pleasant
 - Everything is good except the weather
 - I didn't have much expectations cause I didn't know much about Darwin
 - I have no idea about Northern Territory, so it's out of question whether it has met my expectations or not.
 - I thought it is a rural area, but it is a little urbanized with a huge population.
 - It's better
 - It's not as good as Gold Coast, and lots of crocodiles
 - It's too hot
 - No idea
 - Not much to do. It's really hot there.
 - Poor facilities, especially hospital
 - Thought was a village, but more like a city with malls, university, restaurants
 - We thought the town was bigger before we came here
 - Weather is hot, advanced economy
 - When I first arrived, it's very different from Melbourne, but I've got used to the lifestyle
-

Q15a. What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha been in relation to your job?

- Hard to get a job, got jobs in fruit farms
- Really positive
- Hard to work, hard to communicate with people sometimes
- Satisfied with workplace
- Happy. Although its same job, different from what I did back home
- Normal job
- It's been really good and where I work, it has a good working environment. The people here are nice to work with
- Pretty good, main reason why moved there
- Nothing really new in terms of my job career
- Almost the same, same industry
- Extremely good
- Transportation is not good, and I have to get a taxi for going to work.
- Very useful, I can apply my Italian teaching skills here.
- Very good experience
- Very good, met a lot of Australian friends
- Good job, not a huge change for me.
- Working environment is good, people are friendly
- Got a chance for promotion
- Management is very young and inexperienced. Fantastic company with huge achievement. Don't understand how the company succeeds
- The job was good - what I expected. The employers were very good. The company gave information on Australian rules and regulations.
- Unemployed even though got Cert 3. Hard to find jobs.
- Job opportunities are good
- Just work
- Stayed with the same company, noticed a lot of opportunity around as well
- Very good. But I didn't have a good experience dealing with the Immigration department
- Very good - because it was a career move for me and that's where the industry was (book making).
- I have gained new knowledge and experience from many people.
- Working for the same place for 6 years, nothing bad
- Working in hospitality industry is a good experience
- I worked for the regional airline. Interesting experience encountering with aboriginal communities, which is something I wouldn't experience in
- I'm not working
- I work in the hospital and have met many old aged people
- The boss treats me good.
- Very good place stay, not plans of moving
- Positive. came to teach and learn about school system
- It's good, so much respect from students and police. Treated equally as other co-workers.
- Very positive. Excellent. Incentives (bonus, professionally, training and development)
- The job 's fine
- Good and supportive colleagues, not much competition as the other states
- Only good experiences.
- I first worked in a recruitment company; I now work in provider of water and power supply. Good experience with career prospects.
- Multicultural group in the company. Learn about where they live and their country.
- Brilliant, work environment is very good. There are tough situations. Professional people. Big mining culture
- Very hard to get work
- Very pleasant. Did manage to secure a job that was similar to my previous. Did get what I was looking for a first job.
- Never worked in retail. Work closely with customers; have got more experience for that.
- I work in a hotel. Accounting job the same as what I did back home.
- Good. I've learned many things. I need to adopt the attitude and work ethics.
- Very different, people are more receptive to newcomers
- Job security is high
- It's easy to get and change a job from being a chef to retailing.
- Working in a Korean Church as a pastor
- Good work ethics
- Working for a manufacturing construction business, excellent working environment
- Jobs are the same as in England

-
- It's a laid-back place; people are not too busy and have time to chat. Colleagues are friendly
 - I am working at hotel restaurant. Pretty good experience.
 - It's easy to find job, and people are busy to work with, and nice working environment, and more relaxed than the UK
 - Positive for the first 5 years, but not anymore
 - I work as a chef, and it's no different from other kitchens
 - You can get jobs easily in the NT compared to other states. Didn't have to travel far to get to work. The people I work with are really good
 - My main role as pilot, the territory is a tough environment - high temperature high humidity. Its highly fatiguing
 - I love my job, and the working experience has been very positive
 - Pretty good/surprised at the pay which is better than the rest of Australia for certain professions. Lags behind in issues like Occupational Health
 - Pretty good - good people and good area. The students are better here than in Brisbane
 - Couldn't find job related to my previous masters study. Had to go back to uni for further study
 - Really good job. Nice managers at McDonalds
-

Q15b. What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha been in relation to living in this community?

- A lot of cultural people
 - A nice quiet place. It is considered a capital city but without many facilities
 - Any officer at local council provides helpful info on immigration
 - At this stage we are happy. Schools can improve. I prefer it nice and quiet. 5 min to any shops instead of half an hour.
 - Close-knit community
 - Cosy and laid-back style, I can integrate into the community completely
 - Enjoying it because it's multicultural with laid-back lifestyle
 - Everybody is friendly and it's a very laid-back and relaxed lifestyle
 - Everything is close and near
 - Expensive but good community
 - Finding a residential place is very difficult, very few places available
 - Fine; pretty quiet; relaxed.
 - Friendly and casual people
 - Friendly and easy to talk to and helpful
 - Friendly and helpful people
 - Friendly people. The community is a multi-cultural society with many South Africans as well as people from other countries
 - Good
 - Good and friendly people, meeting a lot of Aussie friends
 - Good town. quite transient, hard to know friends well , lots community activities, positive place to live
 - Good, but a bit hot, quiet, a bit of freedom, and very safe
 - Good, my wife and kids are enjoying the life
 - Have joined some social clubs
 - Have no problem. I'm adjustable
 - I can meet people from different cultures
 - I chose not to be involved because it was short term
 - I don't have much interactions with the people
 - I have a sister here, having a great time here
 - I'm able to give advice to my fellow countrymen. Very good to go along. No harshness. Smiles and greeting are usual. Friendly environment.
 - It's a bit of challenge in understanding indigenous people's culture
 - It's all good. good community, mining town people stick together
 - It's multicultural, friendly people, easygoing
 - I've done a lot of fishing
 - Laid-back lifestyle, no pollution.
 - Less crowded, but it's very difficult to talk to neighbours (they never talk to us)
 - Like the community here. People are friendlier
 - Love it
 - Nice people, good infrastructure
 - Not going out much, not really engaged in the community
 - Not much different, it's easy to make friends with different nationalities
 - Not really like it, too isolated, very boring
-

-
- Nothing special
 - One of the best communities in the country. I've been to many places in Australia and I really like Mt Isa. The people are generally good here. It's how you behave and conduct yourself in any place. Country people are more relaxed than those living in the cities
 - Open society. People are without family. They are looking for friends. Seem to be in a constant state of stir. Overworked, unhappy, medical anxiety. Schooling very volatile. Teachers come and go. Some good teachers and not so good. Students' behaviour dreadful
 - Opened me up. Learned a bit more because it's multicultural
 - People are friendly. They are kind to us even though we are new there. They are approachable
 - People are quite friendly, although some of them are racists.
 - People live here are quite friendly. Don't have problems with our neighbours.
 - People very friendly, but the education system (at school) in terms of teachers not being permanent, has some effect on my children.
 - Positive- it was an easy going life sty, easy to get around and people were very friendly.
 - Public transport is not good enough, as I can't go to some places depending on buses (and I have to take taxi instead).
 - Quite isolated. Shortage of amenities like hospitals
 - Really positive, multicultural community, get along with people very well.
 - Settled well into community.
 - The aboriginal people are very accepting and welcoming. Other people are generally helpful, but getting food, mail etc is always a struggle, due to isolation, lack of facility, poor communication - phone system and the time for mail and items to arrive.
 - The company supervisor helped me in some areas, but I met a lot of locals in markets, shopping centres. The people were friendly
 - There's a large Indian community here and there's also an Indian association here around 150 Indian families (areas where I came from in India) and another 250 other families.
 - Transport is not very convenient; town at night is not very safe as the drunken locals swore at us when shopping. We had to avoid going out at night
 - Very organised and peaceful provincial city.
 - Very positive experience
 - Very positive, people are friendly and the city is very safe
 - Work, work and more work.
-

Q15c. What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha been in relation to the cost of living?

- Similar to Ipswich
 - More expensive
 - A bit dear
 - A bit less compared to the cities.
 - Rents are expensive. General shopping doesn't have deals
 - It's alright
 - Rentals are high and so are properties, but this is a mining town, and I suppose that's the way mining towns are.
 - Pretty high especially for groceries and vegetables, fuel and housing prices/rentals. Many people are moving away from Darwin to other smaller towns
 - Extremely high
 - Very expensive, especially the accommodation.
 - Standard and reasonable
 - Rent is high
 - Initially good, but housing price has been increased dramatically
 - Rent is expensive
 - Quite an expensive place to live, wages are high so they charge what they want
 - Very high. 1. Compared to SA pension devalued. 2 get paid well. There is shortage in housing but, its overpriced whether car service or supermarkets. Whoever comes has to pay premium for accommodation. People in Perth are shocked. \$500 per wk to rent at caravan park. People can't afford to come here.
 - The rental was the only expensive factor. Finding accommodation were also difficult. Compared to where I am now (Gladstone) the cost of living in NT was more expensive.
 - It's OK.
 - Very expensive in all aspects
 - It's reasonably cheap in housing and food
-

-
- Much more expensive than the coast from food to flights
 - Getting more expensive
 - It's OK, housing isn't too pricey
 - Housing, fuel and food prices are expensive
 - Everything is expensive
 - too expensive to live
 - Coming from the UK, it was considerable less.
 - quite expensive, cost of living has been increased in the past few years
 - very good
 - quite expensive, rent or grocery in particular
 - A little bit costlier than Perth. Food cost more here.
 - Cheaper than Melbourne
 - Just the same if comparing to Philippines
 - It's better than the city. A bit expensive in the beginning, but still cheaper than the city.
 - Good
 - More expensive than I am used to
 - It's cheap here. Only 5mins to drive to school and shops. Cheap food and accommodation.
 - Compared to back home, it's more expensive. Higher wages, mines pay high. Big difference.
 - It's difficult to answer because not the same as what we were used to.
 - Definitely very high here, but it's alright because things are comfortable.
 - They are off the record, totally ridiculous, \$1500 rent a week.
 - Far too expensive
 - It's quite high, especially with accommodation. Expensive flights to Townsville, Cairns etc.
 - It's expensive. Especially the houses. Day-to-day necessities are not too bad. If can't get something, you can buy them. Flights for getting out of Mt Isa are expensive.
 - It's OK. Not a bother for me. The price of my house is not too high and not too low. Not difficult to settle in terms of prices.
 - It's more expensive than other towns like Townsville. especially the rent
 - Too expensive, namely rent way too much for nothing
 - Here it's fine because we are earning more and saving more. The cost of living was higher back in the Philippines.
 - Not expensive, have saved a lot of money
 - Very expensive
 - Housing had been expensive, but it's going down. It's getting easier to own a unit
 - In general it's cheaper than the UK, but the renting is more expensive
 - Very high comparing to other states
 - The main expenses are fuel and food- we are paying high premium for transport and the cost of getting in and out of where we are living. Only air travel is available because we are living on an island.
 - Very expensive, and everything has to be imported from Darwin to the town
 - A bit high, but it is still reasonable
 - Very expensive /rent is very high/the price to buy a house is ridiculous
 - Rents are high as in most mining town.
 - A bit high and prices are getting higher.
 - A bit more expensive. Twice the price in South Africa.
-

Q15d. What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha been in relation to the environment (climate – especially difference to home country)?

-
- Extreme weather, dry
 - The climate is similar.
 - Very good. I like it when it's very hot and cold
 - Really hot in the summer. got up to 49 degrees
 - Tropical climate to get used to, opposite to England
 - A bit hot, other things are pretty good
 - Almost similar to India, especially the humidity and the temperature. So there's not much difference for me. I'm used to this climate
 - A bit warm, but almost similar
 - Very hot, but can adjust to the climate
 - Rain season is bit long. Don't have winter here.
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- Baking hot, unbearable, but getting used to it
 - Extreme weather
 - A bit hotter, little rainfall
 - I like hot weather
 - Good climate
 - Warm and can do outdoor activities
 - It takes time to adapt to the weather
 - Very different climate
 - Dramatic difference. Left UK snowing and arrived here 47 degrees. Took a bit to get used to
 - similar to the home country
 - very different
 - Winter is fantastic. Summer is a misery in terms of heat and humidity. Can't live without air-conditioning
 - A bit humid more than in India
 - Pretty cold for me
 - Hot season is similar to Pakistan, but there is no winter here
 - Very hot and humid
 - It's fine, marked improvement
 - The climate is very different from India
 - Similar
 - Very different from my home country, very warm.
 - Climate is better than where I came from. No sandstorm. Water is clean
 - The opposite of Ireland. Had to deal with the heat. Enjoy it, heat suits me
 - same as in Philippines'
 - I lived in the Mediterranean before I came to Darwin so was quite acclimatised
 - Not very different because I lived in the Middle East before
 - I've got used to the hot weather
 - Enjoying the weather
 - A lot hotter, and I enjoy the hot weather
 - Experienced some cyclones in Karratha. We were informed and therefore were prepared for them
 - Extreme weather, ranging from 0C to 45C
 - Yes, very different, especially when the temp drops below 9C in the winter.
 - Almost the same
 - A bit hotter, cyclone occasionally, but I love the hot weather and the sun
 - Very much the same as where I came from. I love the temps. It's more of a dryer climate
 - Excellent. Very cold which I don't like, but overall good.
 - Very dry, no rain, very hot. big problem is no rain, heat no big issue
 - A bit cold in winter, very hot in summer 44degrees one day, beautiful during day. Air-conditioned in workplace.
 - Yes, it takes time to adapt to the tropical weather comparing to England
 - The climate is hot and very warm
 - Little rain here, very hot as well compared to Ireland where summer never gets over 20 degrees.
 - Same kind of tropical climate as the Philippines
 - No seasons here, just wet or dry
 - Oh, boy. It's very hot.
 - Very hot, issues with flies. They don't allow you to work, flying around your face (for a few months a year)
 - Climate is the same as where I lived before.
 - Very hot and lots of flies
 - First few day thought was a problem. Months later got used to it. Like it here
 - A little bit more humid during rainy seasons. Temps are 3 degrees higher. We adjusted nicely. We don't like winter much. For us the climate is not a big issue
 - Extremely hot in summer, main problem encountered. You can't have everything everywhere at all times, got to be flexible
 - Climate here is very humid in summer. This is the main factor to get used to. No much rain. Winter is similar to South Africa
 - Dry place. I knew already.
 - Not much difference. There are two seasons also back home.
 - The climate is the same as back home.
 - There is only one season here--wet and dry, very different from Argentina. I have got used to this tropical climate and I reckon this is a good climate to raise a family (not too cold and not too hot)
 - There is only 1 season here, tropical.
-

-
- It's hot and humid, making me uncomfortable sometimes
 - I've got used to the climate because I worked in New Caledonia before
 - Good and healthy environment
 - Very different, hotter and very humid
 - My first time to experience tropical cyclones in NT
 - It took 6-12 months to get acclimatised. Had to reduce my workload, my work pace, allow more to rest and have to protect my sleep patterns (especially in the wet season). All these are due to the harsh, dusty and dry environment.
 - Similar to South Africa. It's hot and humid
 - Less pollution, fresher air
 - Not very different, but humidity here is terrible
 - Massive difference from Ireland/I've lived in the south of France so I'm used to the heat.
 - Fairly similar to India. So there's not much difference
 - It's hot, getting hotter every year.
 - It's really hot. Too hot. Winter is alright. Summer's not good with the flies.
-

Q15e. What have your experiences in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha been in relation to racism?

- I couldn't sense much racism
 - Not as much as in SA
 - There is hidden racism
 - Never had experience, have equal opportunity as everyone else
 - Never had any
 - Not really, not more than anywhere else in the world
 - Nothing at all, friendly people, talking the same language
 - Some isolated cases (e.g. making fun of accents), in general the situation is 'in average'.
 - Racism happens everywhere in the world. But I'm fine with that, with no experience at all.
 - Different races in harmony, no problem at all.
 - Verbal abuse against Italian people sometimes, but they are only the minority.
 - Never experienced personally, but heard other south Asian workers children have that problem at school
 - Quite a lot, but I just ignore them. There are racists wherever you go, and it's inevitable.
 - Having some issues relating to racist comments
 - Similar to the situation in SA. Some Australians think south Africans can be sneered at. The history of aborigines is just as miserable or worse than that blacks in SA.
 - Lots of different races - Asians mainly and therefore very little racism
 - Thought it wasn't there, but recently discovered racism in the area.
 - It's not easy for Asian people, but I haven't experienced anything so far
 - I can feel it but it doesn't bother me much
 - Not personally, but other friends had some. Serious problem
 - In finding accommodation, they turn you down on the phone because of your accent
 - I rent the house for \$250 a week, and the rent is increased \$50 more. It will make the family more difficult to buy a house in the long term.
 - I think racism in the NT is higher here than in Melbourne, although I don't experienced racism towards myself.
 - Not for us. However, for my younger daughter, experienced some form of discrimination at school. I'm not sure because I came from a different culture.
 - A little bit at work
 - A little bit when my family and me arrived, but not much nowadays.
 - I work with different cultures, and I don't have problems with that.
 - Have not seen anything. More racism in Brisbane.
 - People are generally negative to immigrants
 - A little bit, not against myself. I have seen racism against other people.
 - Very racist, not towards me, because I am white. It's hard to believe that since Australia is such a melting pot.
 - I haven't experienced any sort of racial discrimination
 - None whatsoever
 - We don't have that over here.
 - Sometimes, but it's everywhere in the world.
 - None towards me. higher than expected racism towards the Aboriginals. What white people say is a bit more racist than expected
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- Can be quite racist
 - Didn't find much of a problem here. People are helpful and good. No issue.
 - Don't have any issue. I think majority of the culture is aboriginal. They keep to themselves.
 - Not at all. Surprised that people smiled at me when I walked outside. People help me even when I didn't ask. Don't feel in any way I was an ethnic group from another country
 - It wasn't too bad. Multicultural. Nobody cares because people come and go.
 - Haven't experienced it yet.
 - There's nothing. It depends on your attitude.
 - I have experienced racial discrimination, but I don't want to talk about this.
 - Yes but not towards myself. I see in the way white Australians treated the aboriginals. It is more in a frustrated way with local people serving aboriginal people.
 - They tend to treat you inferior, as they've got a sense of superiority
 - In the workplace, I can see there is a problem. I need to make an effort to build rapport with patients.
 - Not a lot of racism there. Heard that it exists, but have not personally experienced it.
-

Q16. How long have you been in Time in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha now?

Time in current location (years)	n	%
3	25	23
4	16	15
2	13	12
6	9	8
1.5	8	7
1	5	5
2.5	3	3
3.5	3	3
4.5	3	3
5	3	3
7	3	3
1.3	2	2
3.3	2	2
11	2	2
0.4	1	1
0.7	1	1
0.7	1	1
1.1	1	1
1.2	1	1
1.7	1	1
1.8	1	1
2.3	1	1
2.6	1	1
2.8	1	1
3.2	1	1
3.7	1	1
10	1	1
Total	110	100

Q17. Do you think you will stay in the Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
Yes	70	55
No	19	15
Additional comments	38	30

Total	127	100
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Q17 - Additional Comments

- As long as I am employed in this company
- Depends on citizenship
- Depending on job and the mining industry
- Depending on job opportunities
- Depending on the rental price
- Depends on my mood
- Doesn't matter if visa expires or not, still move away
- Haven't decided yet
- Planning the move now.
- I will stay for another 2 years, and then I will decide whether I will move or not
- One main factor is whether housing is affordable
- If husband gets a better job, that will happen. We are happy here at the moment
- The company might ask me to work in Perth
- It depends on property prices
- Already moved
- I will move after finishing my studies
- People develop a liking for Karratha. But culturally we miss a lot (dancing and orchestra)
- It all depends on the job. If there is no job here, then I won't stay. I will see what happens.
- Not in the long term
- Not sure

Q18. If you intend to move, when do you think this will happen?

	n	%
Undecided	10	34
2 years	5	17
Depends on finding another job	3	10
Less than a year	3	10
Depends on family commitments	2	7
3-4 yrs	2	7
1 year	1	3
2-3 yrs	1	3
4-5 yrs	1	3
Not in short term	1	3

Q19. If you were to move away from Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha, why are you thinking of moving?

	n	%
No employment opportunities for myself or family	6	13
Facilities are not good	2	4
Not what I expected	1	2

Family/friends live in other areas	1	2
Don't feel comfortable in this town (feel like an outsider)	1	2
I don't like the area	-	0
My family is unhappy	-	0
Don't feel accepted by the locals	-	0
Other	37	77
Total	48	100

Q19 - Other

- Because of the weather
- Better employment opportunities elsewhere (a job was waiting for me)
- Climate
- Company transferred to another branch
- Deakin University in Geelong, want to experience city life
- Education (uni), more extreme weather but not now
- Education opportunities
- Expensive accommodation
- Experience something different, and my daughter is going to school somewhere else.
- Got another employment
- Housing/ cost of living
- I feel more respected in my own country
- I split up with my boyfriend
- It would be job related
- It's more expensive than any other city
- I've got a job offer in NSW
- Just for studying purpose, will move back to Darwin one day
- Kids growing up, need to go to universities
- Lacking of choice of facilities. Cultural diversity is much more in Melbourne. Getting out of the heat and the raining season, and the extreme humidity
- My fiancée has another job in NSW
- New job opportunity
- Not at the moment
- Prefer living in a coastal area, and job opportunities
- Prefer living in the coastal area
- School or university for kids
- Schooling is a concern (home schooling mostly), children like options
- Skyrocketing housing prices
- Somewhere with climate similar to PNG. When the mining boom ends, I don't think there will be anything for me to live here.
- Studies, University. There are no universities there. I like bigger places with more things to see and do.
- The season is too wet
- The weather is too hot
- To experience something different about Australia
- To experience something different and look around Australia
- To experience something different, and to look for a wife
- To get out of Australia
- To look for more challenges and experience something different
- Wanted a bigger regional community, want more opportunities for son in terms of schools, jobs, careers.

Q20. Where do you think you would go?

Category	Location name	n	%
Town or Centre	Cairns	3	9
	Townsville	2	6
	Warrnambool	1	3
Regional centre	Central Coast	1	3
	East Coast	2	6
	Gladstone	1	3
	Ipswich	1	3
	Sunshine Coast	1	3
	Townsville	1	3
	Victoria	1	3
Capital city	Adelaide	2	6
	Brisbane	1	3
	Darwin	1	3
	Melbourne	6	18
	Perth	4	12
	Sydney	3	9
	Hong Kong	1	3
Another country	USA	1	3

Q21. What would make you stay in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt. Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
Greater employment opportunities	18	32
Better facilities	6	11
Better climate	5	9
More facilities	2	4
Better social ties/networks	2	4
Better schools	1	2
Easier international travel	0	0
Other	16	29
Nothing would make me stay	6	11

Q21 - Other

- A University. If later I'm into mining, I might go back.
- Better pay
- Bigger universities. Don't want to move to another city to study the full course
- Cheaper housing
- Cheaper rent and cost of living
- Circle of friends
- Company transferred
- Entertainment
- Environment for bringing up kids
- Higher pay
- If I can't find other job. The only thing keeps me here is the job.
- It depends on my family
- More savings
- More single women, as I am looking for a wife
- More universities/education, more rain
- Not If things don't change
- Relaxed

Appendix E: Employers - Frequency Tables

Location

	n	%
Northern Territory	21	81
Mt Isa	3	11
Karratha	1	4
Mildura	1	4
Total	26	100

Q1. What type of business do you operate?

Type of business	n
Accounting firm	1
Aluminium, glass manufacturing, on-site installation.	1
Automotive	1
Aviation	1
Casino and a hotel	1
Cafe	1
Car rental	1
Church group	1
Copper mining	1
Copy and Sales business	1
Electrical contractor	1
Hair dressers	1
Hospitality restaurant	1
Hotel	1
It	1
Jewellery	1
Mechanical maintenance workshop	1
Migration	1
Mining machine sales and services	1
Pearling	1
Pub and restaurant	1
School	2
Structural steel detailing	1
Training and Trades	1
Utilities	1
Total	26

Q2. Is your business small, medium, or large?

	n	%
Small (Less than 20 employees)	11	42
Medium (20 to 200 employees)	10	38
Large (more than 200 people)	5	19
Total	26	100

Q3. Of your total current employees, how many are skilled migrants?

	n	%
Number of skilled migrants employed	25	96
No skilled migrants employed at the moment	1	4
Total	26	100

Q4. Have you employed skilled migrants in the past?

	n	%
Yes	20	77
No	6	23
Total	26	100

Q5. Why did you employ skilled migrants?

	n	%
Unable to attract Australian workers	16	42
Specialised work	5	13
Migrants are hard workers	5	13
Better skills than local workers	4	11
Easier to attract migrants to regional areas	3	8
To get family and friends into Australia	..	0
Benefits(e.g. tax breaks)	..	0
Other	3	8
Don't know	2	5
Total	38	100

Q5. Other

- The lack of skilled labours available in Australia at that particular time frame from 2006 to 2007
- We have Asian restaurants, mainly our chefs
- Had good skills

Q6. Compared with local workers on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is “very bad” and 5 is “very good”, how would you rate skilled migrants as workers?

	n	%
Very bad	1	4
Neutral	5	19
Good	7	27
Very good	12	46
Other	1	4
Total	26	100

Q6a. Why is that (rating of experience with skilled migrant)?

Rating	Comment
Very bad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their qualifications and their skills do not match
Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the middle - as they have pros and cons -training still required, not as physically big and strong, don't immediately understand OZ culture • Great worker but not with same skills as an Australian • Not as skilled as first assumed • No better or worse than Australians • Migrants are usually no better or worse than Australian workers
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are hardworking and do the job • Don't take sickies more productive • work hard for good lifestyle in Australia

Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are very hard working, loyal and punctual • Because they know what they are doing, why they are here. • Professional and dependable • Work ethic is excellent, less sick days, but have different work culture, don't think for themselves as much as Australians • they make the most of the opportunities and treasure the job they are offered • they are polite, helpful and willing to learn • Because they have more to prove than natives • Works harder than locals very friendly • They come to work every day nothing is too much trouble, great work ethic • She had a proper work ethic, instead of young kids today who want to start at the top, and do nothing. She was a good worker • well trained, good incentive to work, good work ethic • Come with good skills -little training come to work on time good work ethic. Passed adversity makes them work hard in Australia • Very high skills but look for Australians first • Work hard, listens, very helpful, but accent is a small problem however. • They really get the job done , put some Australian staff to shame • Very reliable and want to work
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Q6b. On the basis of your experiences with skilled migrants and with the Skilled Migration Program, would you consider using it again?

	n	%
Yes	22	85
No	1	4
Don't know	3	12
Total	26	100

Q6c. Why is that (future use of skilled migrants)?

Response	Comments
Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are willing workers, hard to get Aussies • Because cannot get skills in regional areas - competition from oil and mining • Because the business is expanding,, needs more workers. If we can't get workers locally, then that's why. • Because of the work ethic of people overseas. We don't have work problems with them. Providing they can speak and understand English • Need business stability. Allows business to expand, help with training of workers • In order to meet skill shortages in mining • Industry experiencing acute shortages of skilled labour • Cannot get Australians • Hard to find locals with qualifications • Depends on immigration laws in the future • It's not easy to attract qualified workers in Australia • Cannot easily get Australian mechanics or office workers in regional areas of Australia • Those migrant workers have set up a good example of how to work properly to the local people • We just can't get local and experienced people for the jobs • Provides reliable hard working people • To attract the right sort of people/workers to the local area • Widens the pool of applicants • They provide the skills we need • Maybe • If need be - cannot always get Australian workers • Might need to hire people • Mining industry causes shortages of skilled labour in the regional area (i.e. fitters)

- Because it has worked in the past and we still have a skill shortage
 - It works well
- No
- Their credentials don't match their abilities

Q7. How did you first hear about the Skilled Migration Program?

	n	%
Word of mouth	8	27
DIAC website	3	10
Development Board Officer	..	0
Government information	7	23
Other	12	40

Q7 - Other

- Migration agents
- Business development board
- Chamber of commerce
- Applicant informed us of DIAC scheme
- Through the industry
- Newspaper
- Government

Q8. What sort of strategies have you used to attract skilled migrants as employees?

Strategies	n	%
Expos (e.g. Australia Needs Skills)	4	11
Advertising on the internet	5	14
Web sites	3	9
Accessed the skill matching database	0	0
Word of mouth	8	23
Other	14	40
Refused	1	3

Q8 - Other

- We went through agencies to get skilled migrants as employees
- Advertising in Singapore through agents
- Basically they approached me directly
- Advertising through international divisions
- No specific strategies
- No specific strategy just job adds
- Overseas migration agency
- Migration agencies
- Immigration agents
- Recruitment agencies overseas
- Hire recruitment agents
- Have not specifically targeted migrants
- Migration agent
- Have not directly targeted migrants

Q9. On a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 is “very bad: and 5 is “excellent”, rate the effectiveness of each of these strategies (in Question 8)

Agency	n	M	% Very bad	% Not good	% Neutral	% Good	% Excellent	% Refused
Expos	4	2.50	0 (0.0%)	2 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Advertising on the internet	5	3.00	0 (0.0%)	2 (40.0%)	1 (20.0%)	2 (40.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Web sites	3	3.67	0 (0.0%)	1 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Word of mouth	8	3.38	0 (0.0%)	1 (12.5%)	4 (50.0%)	2 (25.0%)	1 (12.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Other strategies	14	4.36	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)	3 (21.4%)	3 (21.4%)	3 (21.4%)	4 (28.6%)

Q9a. Reasons for rating each of the strategies (in Question 8)

Strategies	Reasons
Expos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular medium • Direct contact achieved with employees but hard to convert this to a migrant moving to your area, however employees often have appropriate skills
Advertising on the internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted the wrong people - backpackers - not skilled Also this is easier to do offshore • Internet reaches a lot of people • We found who we were looking for • A lot depends on the motives of individuals who apply for the job - hard screen applicants • Very hard to interview over the internet - I prefer face to face •
Web sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular medium • It's convenient • A lot of people just don't look into the Internet. You need to know the company's website to get the information.
Word of mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She doesn't know a lot about this area • Introductions may get good (moral) people but they might not have appropriate skills • Only targets a small and biased proportion of the labour market - it can work but you must be lucky • Fairly reliable mechanism of communication • We succeeded in getting the company the appropriately skilled people required • Employees not always as good as we expected • Essentially more trust worthy/ reliable than web sites or media
Other strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We had success in finding the people we needed • Better able to assess job suitability • Got the people we want • Got the people we want • They have experience in the area • Assist employers in selection and recruitment - help with advertising - they have local knowledge • The one we used treated workers poorly, (took much of their money) plus poor flow of information to us the clients • Some are very good - top quality - Other agencies are terrible and send unsolicited recruits • You get both good and bad quality agents • Because they save us a lot of time. They can find the right person for the positions

Q10. Have you ever approached outside agencies to help you attract overseas skilled migrants?

	n	%
Yes	11	42
No	14	54
Other	1	4
Total	26	100

Q10a. Why is that? (approached government agency)

	Comment
Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are unable to attract people in Australia • Good agencies can target the right people for the job • No time to do it ourselves - they are professional • Have not been able to find suitable workers • Wider networks than our own • We desperately need staff which we couldn't find within Australia, and the only way to do is getting them from overseas, especially Philippines • Needed workers - heard of migration agents from another company • Trouble attracting Australian workers • More knowledgeable of immigration legislation
No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language barriers, we don't speak Spanish; copied other initiatives at recruitment • I'm not involved in the process • I am too frightened to bring somebody that is not suitable • Have not targeted migrants specifically, so no need • Have not specifically targeted • Didn't know it was available in Mt Isa • No real need in the past • Because it's expensive. 16000-17000 dollars. • They charge big money • Have not got around to it as yet but has been suggested

Q11. What agencies have you approached?

	n	%
Local city or shire council	2	18
Development boards	0	0
Regional councils	1	9
Other agencies	8	73
Total	11	100

Q11- Other

	n	%
Migration agents	6	75
Regional certifying body (Dept of business and employment) and DIAC	1	13
Marcus Market Enterprise	1	13
Total	8	100

Q11a. How would you rate their help?

Agency	n	M	% No help at all	% Average	% Very helpful	% Refused
Local shire or city council	2	3.00	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Regional councils	1	3.00	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Other agencies	8	2.63	1 (12.5%)	1 (12.5%)	6 (75%)	0 (0.0%)

Q12. Do migrants stay in the area once their visa expires?

	n	%
Yes	21	81
No	1	4
Don't know	4	15
Total	26	100

Q12a. Why do you think they stay?

- Yes
- 50% or so stay - they like their new country
 - Because they often go for permanent residency in Australia and are settled in their local area
 - Climate is similar to home - Darwin NT very nice
 - Comfortable in the new local area
 - Darwin is such a lovely place, loyal workers
 - Familiarity with new home environment
 - Financial incentives is the only reason that they choose to stay
 - First objective is for making money and sending back to their families, and the second objective is for getting permanent residency
 - I guess it has something to do with our location, as Darwin is closer to Asia
 - Many become fond of the local area (Darwin)
 - Prefer their new life in regional areas- some leave however
 - Probably the relaxed lifestyle of regional areas
 - Put down new roots in the local area
 - Some have brought their families out here, more opportunities (e.g. education), less violent society
 - Stay because enjoy job and like the company - security
 - They are often well prepared to cope with a rural area and remoteness
 - They become attached to their new community
 - They establish themselves in the location with a sense of pride in the business
 - They settle down a lot, and tend to be more stable
 - They think the working environment is better than other areas.
 - We have good working conditions, we offer a lot to them

Q13. Why do you think they leave?

No	I don't know
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Q14. What do you think can be done to attract and then keep migrants in the local area?

- Advertising would help a lot
 - Better housing is critical
 - By offering benefits, health insurance. More translation in public services including clinics, banks, taxes.
 - Can't think of any extra. When we get someone good, the mines steal them. Small firms can't compete with bigger companies. For example, we hired a new accountant graduate for \$45000, but some big mining company offered her \$75000 and a house.
 - Community education programs. Locals must assimilate new migrants and have less discrimination. More community services for migrants; info on health, churches, etc
 - Community facilities - medical, educational especially.
 - Current programs are fine
 - Do not know
 - Ensure that migrants fit in culturally - support groups - get migrants from climatically similar areas so they can cope with NT climate
 - Fair work conditions and benefits keep good relations
 - Given that their credentials do not match their abilities, I won't encourage people to attract skilled migrants at all.
 - Giving them good employment can attract and keep them.
 - Help migrants integrate into wider community, better help from public servants, good employers
 - I look after my staff for international holidays. I brought my staff to Las Vegas 3 weeks ago for holidays because they are all good staffs.
 - If they are happy with their jobs, it comes naturally that they will be loyal to the companies they work and the area they live.
 - Make the recruitment process easier
 - Meet migrants needs and do not leave them 'on their own in the community' - include in wider social activities
 - No problem in keeping them in the area
 - Not an issue - they already want to come here
 - Not sure
 - Treat migrants as equals to Australians
-

Appendix F: Government Officials - Frequency Tables

Location

Location	n	%
Northern Territory	3	20
Mildura	3	20
Queensland/Mt Isa	6	40
Western Australia/Karratha	3	20
Total	15	100

Q1. What level of government do you represent?

Level of government	n	%
Local	4	27
State	6	40
Federal	5	33
Total	15	100

Q2A. Can you briefly describe the labour market conditions in Northern Territory/Mildura/Tisa/Karratha?

- People moving interstate to NT as better prospects in NT. No downturn
- Good opportunities in the area for refugees or those with humanitarian visas, especially good if they have skills and a drivers licence, hospitality,
- Slow but improving, the skill shortage is not as great as it was a year or so ago
- Skill shortages especially in trades, health, and education
- It varies from location to location. In some places they are very short of any sort of worker even unskilled. Big gaps exist in many skilled areas a
- 12.5% unemployment in Cairns, however, trades and medical skills still required, other regional towns such as Townsville, however, fair better
- The current economic climate has changed, reducing need for labour, however, - health medical and engineering skills still short in some places
- Area has not yet recovered from econ downturn, companies have retained locals, but paid off many outside workers, skill shortage has developed
- Mixed - little downturn in the north of WA - still a large demand for skilled labour
- Shortages in a wide range of fields - especially communities - i.e. shops, childcare (poor pay) often due to housing costs
- This is an Aboriginal community with a large pool of local people but with low employment opportunities
- Significant gaps caused by remoteness and lack of infrastructure, cost of accommodation
- Challenged for employment opportunities in Mildura - much under employment much part time work etc
- Shortage of child safety officers but lately the situation has improved

Q2B. Has there been any difficulty in filling skilled positions in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
Yes	12	55
No	2	9
Changes to 457 visa requirement	1	5
Difficult in finding skills	1	5
Don't know	1	5
Regulations make it difficult	1	5
Specific areas e.g. mechanical trades, health , hospitality	1	5
Specific trades	1	5
Target backpackers with incentives	1	5
Worse in remote areas	1	5

Q2C. What difficulties have you experienced?

	n	%
Difficulties due to regulations	1	7
Finding appropriate skilled workers	6	40
Finding sponsors	1	7
Recruitment - semi-skilled workers	1	7
Recruitment and retention	5	33
Retention - lose to mines	1	7

Q3. Does your department consider skilled migrants as an effective strategy for addressing the skill shortages in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

- Yes but there are other initiatives as well. Migration an option when there are no other options
- Yes it is effective. It can be otherwise difficult to recruit people to the central Australian bush
- It is one of the strategies used, but only one of several that are required
- Yes - when migrants have the skills, qualifications and language required of them
- Yes it can be effective
- Yes, however, have only done this a little and have had only limited success
- Mixed feelings - apprenticeships/training for Australian workers would be a better option
- Yes, we actually help to do this
- In the short term, availability from temporary workers is in good supply. But in the long term, it's hard to monitor the situation
- Yes, can't always get locals

Q4. How important does your department consider the Skilled Migration Program as a way of addressing skill shortages in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
Very important	9	60
Quite important	4	20
Neither important nor unimportant	1	13

Q4a. Any comment on its importance?

- Probably more important in QLD, as QLD is decentralised, and has flow on from natural resource boom
- To ensure employers get people who are unavailable in Australia. Migrants should not be seen as cheap labour
- Business and Commerce will suffer without migrant labour
- Important to sustain viable local communities and the country as a whole, as resource rich areas provide wealth for the whole country and need many skilled workers
- A lot of industries would not be able to operate without overseas labour
- The department is doing a job trying to achieve the balance between the international and local labours
- Was quite important until recent economic downturn, now workers more available (from mines etc.)
- Must have skilled labour in the regions
- Important - but needs a lot of resources and time to be successful

Q5. What kinds of activities has your organization participated in to recruit migrants to Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
Expos (e.g., Australia needs skills)	10	20
Advertising the region as well as jobs on the internet	7	14
Regional web sites	6	12
Appointed staff	5	10
Work with local community groups	10	20
Worked with employers to develop marketing strategies	9	18
Other	4	8

Q5 – Other

- All of the above in partnership with local council
- Worked with DIAC
- None of the above

Q5a. On a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 is “very bad and 5 is “excellent”, rate the effectiveness of each of these strategies

Strategies	n	M	% Very bad	% Not good	% Neutral	% Good	% Excellent	% Refused
Expos	10	3.40	0 (0.0%)	1 (10.0%)	6 (60.0%)	2 (20.0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10.0%)
Advertising the region & jobs on the internet	7	3.57	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (42.9%)	4 (57.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Regional Web sites	6	3.67	0 (0.0%)	1 (16.7%)	3 (50%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)
Appointed staff (development officers)	5	4.80	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (60.0%)	1 (20.0%)
Work with local community groups	10	3.90	0 (0.0%)	1 (10.0%)	3 (30.0%)	2 (20.0%)	4 (40.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Working with employers to develop marketing strategies	9	4.11	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (33.3%)	3 (33.3%)	2 (20.0%)	1 (10.0%)

Q5b. Why have you given this rating?

Strategies	Reasons
Expos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for larger employers seeking large numbers of employees, not so useful for small firms with limited budgets and smaller staff requirements Only niche groups go to these Expos - they are not readily accessible to regional people and small firms If run by DIAC with pre screened migrants from specific occupational areas they will provide suitable applicants ready to migrate They have advantages if well represented - i.e. networking Good but lack of affordable housing makes movement to the area difficult I don't know how effective it is. Appeals to the young
Advertising the region & jobs on the internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gets message/labour requirements across to more people Important but lack of housing is a major issue in obtaining recruits The most popular medium of communication today Applicants were not always of the quality we required
Regional Web sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to have brand recognition - regional web sites are small and need promotion for success Not as good as a face to face interaction in determining if a worker is suitable Important, but needs to be alongside affordable housing
Appointed staff (development officers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important if the housing requirements of migrants can be met They find the right skill sets
Work with local community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work at local level gives lead to better settlement outcomes and promotes more realistic expectations They provide a local presence that people know they can come to for help and liaison, They provide a more personal service Good results if they are competent Works well but lack of affordable housing is a discouragement to recruitment Multi cultural community makes people/ migrants feel more at home - language culture Help to develop and maintain good relationships - local knowledge is very good - Brisbane is very distant, understanding of local culture helps get good staff
Working with employers to develop marketing strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various employers supporting each other gives a better outcome for the area as a whole Feedback helps greatly. Large numbers of employers can turn up and gain valuable information Employers selfish - tend to look after themselves and their own requirements All good if housing available for the new migrants that are recruited by such strategies
Other strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow process, things can change in structure of Dept - this is confusing

Q5c. Do you work with other levels of government in attracting skilled migrants to Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha?

	n	%
Local	12	32
State	12	32
Federal	13	35
We work independently	..	0

Q6a. What role do you see the Skilled Migration Program playing in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha in the short-term (next 12 months)?

- Critical role can't be done without them
- Continue to fill in the skills and qualification void in the area - fills gaps
- A mid-level role
- An important role as the skill shortage is not going away - especially in health
- It will continue to be critical in areas of specific skills shortage - i.e. health, trades and gas exploration
- They will definitely play a part, but hopefully employers will see that employing Australian workers is a better option
- Policy changes make migration very important
- Important role as there will always be some kind of skill shortage
- Big projects - i.e. in mining industry are about to commence in the area - thus very important to provide a skilled workforce for these projects
- An important role as we need more people - the east coast does not provide enough workers
- It's very important as we have to attract the needed talents quickly to the country
- Not of great importance at the moment due to econ downturn
- Vital role meeting WA labour requirements
- Will always contribute to the communities skill needs - helps further enrich the multicultural community
- Not very important at the moment - we are more confident of getting Australian workers now

Q6a. Importance of short-term role - categorised

	n	%
Very important	5	33
Important	7	47
Not important	2	13
Probably important	1	7
Total	15	100

Q6b. What role do you see the Skilled Migration Program playing in Northern Territory/Mildura/Mt Isa/Karratha in the longer-term (beyond 12 months)?

- Ongoing - of great importance in the future
- Will still help fill the skills shortage as many people are reluctant to leave the coastal regions
- Probably a bigger role in the future
- Skill shortage will not go away, so it will still be important in the future.
- Ongoing and continuing need to acquire skilled migrants will help support aging population
- Still important - we will always need some skilled migrants
- Hard to say but probably still important in the future
- Important - especially if skilled migrants can be convinced to stay in Australia permanently and don't just come for short term economic gains
- Ongoing importance - but it would be better to skill up indigenous and other Australian workers
- Everything will speed up in the future so very important
- The program is very important because it is always necessary to supplement the skill shortages for the country
- Not important unless there is a major economic change
- Still vital to WA
- Will always be important
- May become more of a priority - in 5 years after economic recovery

Q6b. Importance of long-term role - categorised

	n	%
Very important	3	20
Important	9	60
Not important	1	7
Probably important	2	13
Total	15	100

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