

Minutes of the 55th meeting of the migration advisory committee on 24 May 2013

Chair: Professor David Metcalf CBE

Attending: Professor Jonathan Wadsworth
Dr Jennifer Smith
Professor Jackline Wahba
Lesley Giles (UKCES)
MAC Secretariat

Observing: John Vine (Office of the Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration)

Apologies: Dr Martin Ruhs
Glyn Williams (Home Office)

Agenda item 1 - Welcome and introductions

1. Apologies were received from Dr Martin Ruhs and Glyn Williams.

Agenda item 2 – Presentations on low skill projects and Tier 1 project by research contractors

2. Danail Popov of Frontier Economics and Anne Green and Gabriel Atfield gave presentations on the two externally commissioned research projects on migrants in low skill work, completed in spring 2013.
3. Heather Rolfe and Max Nathan gave a presentation on the Tier 1 Investors and Entrepreneurs research project.
4. The Committee briefly discussed the key points of all three presentations. Following this discussion, all research contractors left the meeting.

Agenda item 3 – Presentations on Tier 1: Investor and Entrepreneur routes

5. John Vine gave a presentation on the remit and work of the Office of the Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration. In particular, he spoke about previous inspections carried out by his office and the way in which inspections are carried out.
6. The Chair thanked Mr Vine for his contribution.

Agenda item 4 – Minutes of previous meeting held on 19 April 2013

7. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 April 2013 were agreed without amendment.

Agenda item 5 –MAC secretariat policy items

8. Tim Harrison updated the Committee on behalf of the secretariat. Tim reported that the Chair had met with the Home Secretary and Minister for Immigration to discuss the migrant seasonal workers report and the new commission on migrants in low skill jobs. He also provided an update on other current MAC work. Finally, Tim provided the MAC with an update on the recently published Quarterly Migration Statistics and the Labour Market Statistics.
9. The Chair gave an update on relevant meetings and events he had attended since the previous Committee meeting. He mentioned the meeting with the Home Secretary and the Minister for Immigration who had expressed themselves pleased with the MAC and keen to progress the low-skill work. He said that he had hosted a press conference to announce the publication of the report on seasonal migrant workers and gave follow-up media interviews.

Agenda item 6 – Paper 55.1 Update on the Migration Advisory Committee research programme

10. The secretariat provided an update on the status of the research programme to date. All three research papers commissioned in the year 2012-13 have been completed. The Committee agreed that, subject to protocols around publication, all three research papers should be published in the near future.
11. The Committee considered proposals for future research projects. One research project will cover the willingness of migrants and resident jobseekers to work in low-skill sectors, whilst the other project will provide a sector-specific focus on the determinants of the labour force in low-skill work.
12. Whilst broadly content with proposals, the Committee asked that further work on developing the proposals be undertaken and shared with the Committee before commencing procurement.

Agenda item 7 – Paper 55.2 Update on the low skill commission including project plan

13. The secretariat presented paper 55.2 which updated the Committee on the commission from the Government to look at migrant take-up of low skill work and asked the Committee for feedback on the project plan for completion of this commission, including the analysis that the Committee would like to see taken forward.
14. The Committee discussed various options for taking the analysis forward and agreed to explore some informal contacts in the first instance. It was felt desirable to have a clearer understanding of some important issues before issuing a call for evidence and the secretariat would look at the possibility of hosting a workshop of government analysts during the next few months. The Committee agreed that a review of existing literature on

low-skill work was important. The Chair asked the Committee to forward relevant literature to the secretariat.

Agenda item 8 – Paper 55.3 Defining low skill occupations

15. At the previous meeting, the secretariat was asked to produce a paper exploring different definitions of low-skill occupations. Paper 55.3 addressed this. Following discussion, the Committee agreed that option 1 (use of the ONS SOC skill definition) was their preferred option.

Agenda item 9 – Paper 55.4 Proposals on the format of future Migration Advisory Committee reports

16. Paper 55.4 considered how the Committee presented its findings in the form of reports and whether alternative approaches would attract a greater readership to the Committee's reports.
17. There was a general discussion on this issue. The Committee agreed that there should continue to be a single, stand alone report, but that it may be desirable for larger reports to be supplemented by a shorter, non-technical summary. The Committee asked that the secretariat look at options for publishing findings in relation to the Committee's present and potential future commissions.

Agenda item 10 - Any other business

18. There was no other business.
19. Next Committee meeting 21 June 2013.

**MAC secretariat
May 2013**