

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS
FIRST NATIONS LABOUR MARKET STRATEGY
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION
ISSUE PAPER 16 – Temporary Foreign Worker Program

DESCRIPTION:

The Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFW) meets a wide range of needs including admitting foreign workers, skilled or unskilled, on temporary visas when employers have tried and been unable to hire Canadians. Many visas are approved in areas near agreement holders who struggle to place clients in employment.

Issues are:

- The “Canadians First” policy is not applied effectively as First Nations individuals could do some of these jobs
- TFW is a temporary solution to skills and labour shortages but appears to be perennial for many employers

OPTIONS:

ESDC/SC officials responsible for issuing Labour Market Opinions, a key step in the admission of TFWs, could be instructed to consult with FNLMAS

Perennial users of the program could receive approvals conditional on developing a plan to train Canadians and privileging FNLMA as partners

RATIONALE:

Admitting TFWs when First Nations individuals could do the job or be trained to do the job is against the concept of the program and undermines Canadian democracy (TFW is a concession to economic necessity and an exception to normal democracy since TFWs do not have the rights of other workers)

Developing a Canadian source of workers would be a win-win-win situation (employer – stable local workforce, FNLMA - placements for clientele, Government - increased employment for Canadians and First Nations)

CONSIDERATIONS:

While the program has been strengthened in recent years, processing and approvals have been at an administrative level based on determining eligibility. Mechanisms would need to be developed to create the loop for consultation with FNLMA and for enforcing/facilitating the development of training and recruitment plans

RECOMMENDED OPTION:

DECISION:

DATE AND VERSION:

Draft 1, November 23, 2016