

# Business Leader calls for the establishment of

Sustainable population, sustainable workforce: we need a national plan, not just a debate: business executive calls for the establishment of

• Sustainability Australia •

For

immediate release:

<http://www.sansgov.com/mediasustainabilityaustralia.html/> www.sansgov.com Matthew Tukaki, CEO of SansGov and former Head of the nations oldest employment company, Drake Australia has today called for the establishment of a national body, one that can co-ordinate and develop a strategic approach to the problems associated with skills, population and migration.

My view is, increasingly, that we need a collaborative national approach lets centralise the policy development, include business and industry and if we have to lets put a name to it and call it Sustainability Australia it can be a national, cross party, consensus based approach that focuses on the make-up of our population, our workforce and our economy. Such an organisation can provide business with certainty, the community with clarity around the issues of population and policy makers with a co-ordinated approach in terms of funding, I am more than happy to go out there and advocate business pitch in, if Government does as well. Mr Tukaki said

At the moment I fear that the discussion around a sustainable population, and all the things we need to underpin it, is being eroded by the continued focus purely on immigration. This is the same angst that is playing out in the United States and across Europe but it is not a debate about ensuring we have a sustainable population based on a sustainable skills base it is one of immigration. In the United States in the last few weeks we have had the case in Arizona where police can now stop and verify the identity of a person who may look as if they are illegal right down to one US Law Maker wanting to stop babies of foreign parents born on American soil from gaining citizenship (which requires a significant constitutional amendment). While I do not disagree that portions of our society are concerned with immigration, and in some cases rightly so, or that immigration does play a role, when politicians and policy makers talk about a sustainable population we need to have perspective and facts, not emotional attachments to other debates that are far more complex and highly charged. Mr Tukaki said

Mr Tukaki, who will be presenting a keynote speech on the issue of sustainable population post the global financial crisis at the Australian recruitment and employment industries annual conference in two weeks time, has said the debate needs to shift several gears:

We are faced with an increasingly aging population, a population we know is migrating to coastal and retirement centres such as Queensland and the Central Coast of NSW. The question is, once these

people arrive in those locations, and they are arriving in their hundreds and thousands, do we have the infrastructure required to support them? Do we have a local workforce that one day would have been made up of tourism and hospitality professionals, but the next needs to be made up of healthcare and aged care professionals? Our suburbs in our major metropolitan centres such as Western Sydney are already bursting at the seams in fact, I was driving through Hoxton Park recently, certainly not a new suburb of Liverpool, and the remedial infrastructure work going on there appears to have been going on for years by the time you finish one part, its out of date and not enough. Mr Tukaki said

We need to combine our efforts with a sustainable population sitting at the centre and around that, infrastructure and services. From a business perspective, I fear that if we do not have a strategic approach to population we will be faced by significant pressure on our skills base which at the moment is unique in the western world unique in the sense that in places such as the United States and Europe a large percentage of the unemployment rate is made up of skilled workers as those economies recover, the unemployed skilled population will transition back into the workforce for the Australian economy our problem is much greater in so far as our skilled unemployment rate is certainly nowhere near that of other nations. In that sense, we need to re-skill, up-skill and re-tool our current unemployed unskilled work-base at the same time as ensuring we have skilled workers entering the economy so we dont end up with a skills crisis that could hit us at any time in the next 12 months. Mr Tukaki said

The ABS labour force statistics are due out this Thursday and Mr Tukaki anticipates that the rate will show further stabilisation. Mr Tukaki also said that the fall in online job advertisements was not a negative thing as the final arbiter will always be the number of jobs actually created and people in work as opposed to the number of jobs advertised:

We need a serious, national discussion on what our future skills base will look like, where and how our economy is diversifying, what key geographical locations will grow versus those that will be in decline and then where and how our population will be constructed over the next ten, twenty and fifty years.

The last thing anyone wants is another skills crisis that just leads to hopscotch in skilled migration and immigration policies. Mr Tukaki said

Mr Tukaki will be delivering his keynote speech on A Sustainable Australia Post the GFC at the annual RCSA conference being held in Hobart, Tasmania, between the 25th 27th of August

About SansGov: SansGov is a multi-disciplined consulting and services business focusing on providing Government, business and industry with a comprehensive set of solutions for both simple and complex problems. Established a decade ago, SansGov works closely with clients in the fields of business transformation and change management, sustainability and supply chain reviews, policy development when it comes to positioning for the greening of the economy and education briefing programs to both teach and collaborate around key issues of the day - issues such as preparing and transforming business post the global financial crisis, identification of opportunities when it comes to sustainability and working within both simple and complex regulatory environments domestically and globally.

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