



Ref: 94745

NOV 07 2012

The Honourable Jason Kenney, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism
365 Laurier Ave W
Ottawa, ON K1A 1L1

The Honourable Diane Finley, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development
140 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, QC K1A 0J9

Dear Minister Kenny and Minister Finley:

As you are aware, recent media reports relating to the admission of Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) to support bulk sampling at the Murray River coal mine in northeast British Columbia have raised questions about Canadian workers having priority in accessing employment opportunities. I am writing to assure you that we are responding to the concerns, and welcome your support in ensuring a better understanding of the TFW program and the important role TFWs play in supporting the Canadian economy.

Under the *BC Skills and Training Plan*, the Province will continue to prioritize the training and skills development of British Columbians, to prepare them for opportunities of today and tomorrow. Notwithstanding, a flexible and responsive economic immigration system will remain an essential complement to any domestic solution - this includes an effective TFW program. This is especially true as a number of major projects come online across British Columbia's regions, where demographic challenges and skill shortages are especially acute.

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The Honourable Jason Kenney, P.C., M.P.
The Honourable Diane Finley, P.C., M.P.
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I look forward to continuing to collaborate to ensure the TFW program responds to the needs of our labour market in a manner beneficial to all Canadians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pat Bell".

Pat Bell
Minister

Minister
of Citizenship
and Immigration



Ottawa, Canada K1A 1L1

Ministre
de la Citoyenneté
et de l'Immigration

96495

DEC 14 2012

The Honourable Patrick Bell, M.L.A.
Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation
Government of British Columbia
Room 138, Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4

Minister's Office of:			
DEC 20 2012			
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ROUTE TO: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>			

Dear Minister Bell.

I am writing to update you on an issue of mutual interest within federal and provincial/territorial (PT) mandates – ensuring adequate protection for temporary foreign workers from exploitation and abuse while in Canada.

The Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) relies on the standards developed and enforced by PTs around employment, occupational health and safety. Recent changes aim to build on employment-related laws of the PTs by taking action against employers who do not live up to their employment contracts and legislated responsibilities.

Most recently, legislative amendments were introduced to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* through the *Jobs, Growth and Long-Term Prosperity Act* to enhance worker protections and improve program integrity. These amendments will provide legislative authority for Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), and Citizenship and Immigration Canada to:

- impose requirements on employers of foreign nationals;
- verify employers' compliance with requirements imposed in relation to work permits at any time; and,
- impose consequences on employers for non-compliance at any time.

Regulations will be forthcoming in spring 2013, and will enhance the worker protection and program integrity measures introduced in 2011.

I hope these improvements will be looked upon by our PT partners as complimentary levers in upholding worker protections established by each jurisdiction. However, successful implementation and enforcement relies ever more on ongoing and timely sharing of information regarding situations when an employer contravenes a PT employment-related law.

Canada

While officials' efforts to support information sharing are underway in this regard, I would like to signal my commitment to this issue and encourage revitalized efforts towards achieving our common goal.

Yours sincerely,

The Honourable Jason Kenney, PC, MP
Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism

cc: The Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of HRSDC

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.



Ref: 96803

March 28, 2013

The Honourable Jason Kenney, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism
365 Laurier Ave W
Ottawa, ON K1A 1L1

Dear Minister Kenney:

I am writing regarding access to work permits for family members of low-skilled Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) in British Columbia.

In February 2013, Citizenship and Immigration Canada agreed to extend a pilot project under the Canada-British Columbia Immigration Agreement that allows family members of TFWs to secure open work permits. Through the renewal, the department amended the original pilot criteria, limiting eligibility to open work permits to working-aged dependents of high-skilled TFWs (and not spouses/partners and working-aged dependents of low-skilled workers, as originally designed).

British Columbia recognizes that a federal review of the TFW program is underway, and that the modifications will ensure a more level playing field between provinces when anticipated changes to the TFW program are brought into place. To date, British Columbia and Alberta are the only provinces that have offered open work permits for family members of low-skilled TFWs.

British Columbia asks that the risk of not extending open work permit privileges to low-skilled TFWs be taken into account by the federal government as part of its review of the TFW program. Providing streamlined access to work permits for family members of low-skilled TFWs will help deter them from working illegally in Canada, and at the same time, provide additional social and economic supports to the low-skilled TFW by way of family unification and access to additional household income.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Pat Bell
Minister

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The Honourable Jason Kenney, P.C., M.P.
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pc: Ms. Shannon Baskerville
Assistant Deputy Minister
Labour Market and Immigration Division

Minister
of Human Resources and
Skills Development



Ottawa, Canada K1A 0J9

Ministre
des Ressources humaines et du
Développement des compétences
Minister's Office of:

The Honourable Pat Bell, M.L.A.
Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
Government of British Columbia
PO Box 9071, Station Provincial Government
Victoria BC V8W 9E2



Dear Minister:

Thank you for your correspondence concerning the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP). I apologize for this delayed reply.

Budget 2012 announced the Government of Canada's intention to better align the TFWP with labour market demands, and to ensure that businesses look to the domestic labour force before accessing the program. To this end, officials within Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada are currently collaborating on a review of the program.

The TFWP plays an important role in Canada's economy and labour market when employers cannot find skilled Canadians to do the jobs required. However, Canadians must always have the first chance for employment opportunities in Canada, and we need to ensure that the TFWP helps to achieve that goal.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the TFWP and the *BC Skills and Training Plan*. I look forward to our continued engagement on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

The Hon. Diane Finley, P.C., M.P.

c.c. The Honourable Jason Kenney, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism

Minister
of Citizenship
and Immigration



Ministre
de la Citoyenneté
et de l'Immigration

Ottawa, Canada K1A 1L1

Minister's Office of:

MAY 21 2013

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Sig. ☐ Sig. ☐ File ☐ Reply ☐

ROUTE TO:

The Honourable Pat Bell, M.L.A.
Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
and Minister Responsible for Labour
Government of British Columbia
PO Box 9071, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

MAY 14 2013

Dear Minister Bell:

I am writing in response to your letter of March 28, 2013, regarding access to work permits for family members of certain Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) in British Columbia.

As you note, the Government of Canada is taking action to reform the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) to ensure that it is used as intended and Canadians are given the first chance at available jobs. The results of these changes will strengthen and improve the TFWP to support our economic recovery and growth, and ensure that more employers hire Canadians. These reforms will ensure that the TFWP is used to fill acute skills shortages on a temporary basis.

The Government announced its intention in *Economic Action Plan 2012* to better align the TFWP with labour market demands and to ensure that businesses look to the domestic labour force first, while also improving efficiency and responsiveness to labour market demands.

In light of the changes, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Government of British Columbia agreed to end most aspects of the pilot project as planned on February 15, 2013.

The provision allowing spouses, common-law partners and working-age dependent children of TFWs in British Columbia in occupations requiring lower levels of formal training to apply for open work permits, expired on February 15, 2013, as planned. The decision was aligned with the Government's review of the TFWP.

Canada

However, working-age dependent children (aged 18 to 22) of high-skilled (National Occupation Classification, or NOC, levels 0, A or B) TFWs working in B.C. will continue to be eligible to apply for an open work permit until February 14, 2014.

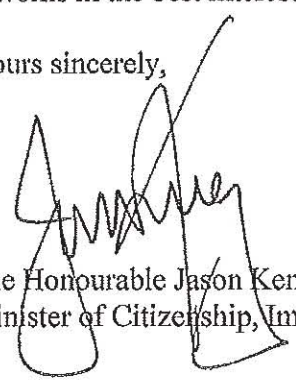
The NOC is a list of all the occupations in the Canadian labour market. It describes each job according to skill type and skill level. The NOC is used to collect and organize job statistics and to provide labour market information. It is also used as a basis for certain immigration requirements.

It should be noted that spouses and common-law partners of skilled TFWs (NOC 0, A or B), regardless of province or territory of work, are able to apply for an open work permit under a separate provision of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations*.

Further information on the recently announced changes to the TFWP can be found at: <http://www.actionplan.gc.ca/en/news/harper-government-announces-reforms-temporary>.

We will continue to seek input from Canadians on further changes to the program so that it works in the best interests of Canadian workers and businesses.

Yours sincerely,



The Honourable Jason Kenney, PC, MP
Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism