



Jon Stanhope MLA

CHIEF MINISTER

TREASURER MINISTER FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, WATER AND CLIMATE CHANGE
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS
MEMBER FOR GINNINDERRA

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CANBERRA TO TARGET SOUTH AFRICA TO TACKLE SKILLS SHORTAGE

The award winning *Live in Canberra* program will target overseas skilled workers by participating in the *Opportunities Expo* to be held in South Africa on 15 and 16 September 2007.

Chief Minister Jon Stanhope said the Expo, to be held at Midrand, a town situated between Johannesburg and Pretoria, is a great opportunity to 'sell' Canberra to thousands of skilled South African workers looking for a better lifestyle.

"South Africans have been migrating to Australia for a long time, traditionally to Western Australia," Mr Stanhope said. "Last year more than 4,200 South Africans migrated to Australia, now the fourth highest source of skilled migrants who move here.

"The ACT is now ready to join other States and Territories which are actively marketing in South Africa to attract skilled workers and their families to Australia. The Northern Territory, Tasmania and Western Australia are also participating in the *Opportunities Expo*.

"With an unemployment rate in South Africa of around 25 per cent, there is a real incentive for highly skilled workers to seek better work and lifestyle opportunities for themselves and their families.

"Migration agents operating out of South Africa are recommending Australia to South African workers who approach them. These agents are very keen to talk to the *Live in Canberra* and Skilled and Business Migration teams to receive more information about Canberra to give to their clients. The team will meet with these migration agents and conduct *Live in Canberra* seminars for their clients outside of the Expo."

Mr Stanhope said that in the last six months the ACT Government had sponsored eight skilled South African workers and their families to live in Canberra under the State and Territory Nominated Independent Visa Scheme.

"These South Africans will be arriving soon, filling vital skilled positions in Canberra that local employers are finding hard to fill. They will be bringing with them a total of AU\$1.3 million for settlement purposes.

"Skilled migration is an important function of the Government to ensure there is a steady arrival of skilled workers to keep up with demand in Canberra.

“The recent announcement by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that Canberrans are earning, on average, \$199.10 more per week than the national average, sends a clear message to skilled workers from around the globe that Canberra is the place to be in Australia for a rewarding, well paid job and a lifestyle second to none.”

Statement Ends

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Editors note – *Live in Canberra* Manager, Simon Kinsmore will be in South Africa from 13 – 20 September and is available on 0417 208 345.