



Review of the Seasonal Worker Visa: Annexes

July 2024

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Annex A: Call for Evidence and Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

This Annex details the Call for Evidence (CfE) and engagement with stakeholders that was carried out to support this review.

Findings from these activities, as well as additional evidence submitted, have been analysed and written up throughout the report to support and illustrate the relevant sections. We also present quotes (generally anonymised to protect participant confidentiality except where explicit permission has been sought to publish the name of the respondent) from these sources. The remainder of this Annex provides more detail on those who responded to the CfE questionnaires and participated in the stakeholder engagement events that took place.

Stakeholder Engagement

As with our regular commissions, we carried out a programme of stakeholder engagement to inform our analysis. This engagement played an important role in our understanding of some of the key issues of the Seasonal Worker Scheme (SWS). Committee and Secretariat members met with representative bodies of the sector from all nations in the UK, some on multiple occasions. There were also meetings with the Devolved Administrations (DAs) in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to understand the complexities being faced by those responsible for policy in those jurisdictions. As part of this review, in addition to the CfE responses and primary research, we met with a number of stakeholder organisations:

- Home Office (HO);
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra);
- Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA);
- Officials from DAs;
- National Farmers' Union;
- Association of Labour Providers (ALP);
- Scheme operators; and,
- Employee welfare organisations.

The Call for Evidence

Overview

The CfE for this commission comprised of [3 questionnaires](#) – for employers, representative organisations, and individuals responding in a personal capacity. Respondents were initially directed to a landing page which forwarded them to the most appropriate of these questionnaires for their circumstances. As part of the online

CfE, individuals and organisations were also able to submit evidence directly to us – either as an attachment to a completed questionnaire, or by email.

The CfE questionnaires were open for around 13 weeks, from 27 June to 2 October 2023. We received 64 questionnaire responses in total and an additional 22 email responses, some of which provided supplementary information or to replace a questionnaire response. We therefore received 83 unique responses. The questionnaires can be found [here](#).

Because of the small numbers of responses received, and the self-selecting nature of the sample, the CfE does not constitute a formal statistical survey, and we have therefore avoided the use of percentages. The large number of unrestricted free-text questions does however mean that the CfE responses contain a lot of rich qualitative information. We have used this evidence to help inform our overall assessment.

Topics

The employer and representative organisation questionnaires asked respondents about the following key themes:

- Experience of using the Seasonal Worker Scheme;
- The extent to which recruitment needs were being met and the ability to plan;
- Views on visa length;
- How well the scheme safeguards employees – including auditing, scrutiny, enforcement and the complaints process;
- The employee experience – costs, treatment, accommodation, the ability to choose work and employer;
- The wider social and economic impacts of the scheme;
- The potential to automate; and,
- The implications of ending the scheme.

The questionnaire for those responding in a personal capacity was centred on the experience of using the SWS (for those who were completing it as a worker or ex-worker), along with any other information the respondent felt was important to the review.

Who responded to the Call for Evidence?

A total of 83 responses were received across the 3 questionnaires:

- 42 from employers;
- 17 from representative organisations; and,
- 24 in a personal or other capacity.

When analysing the CfE responses, it is always necessary to acknowledge that those who respond do so from a specific perspective, whether as an employer using the immigration system, as a representative organisation representing individuals or employers, or an individual working in or interacting with the seasonal worker system. We are grateful for the contribution of all those who have participated and for the time they have taken to respond.

Respondent characteristics – employers

Of the 42 employers that responded to the review:

- 37 were users of the SWS;
- 5 were non-users of the scheme;
- Around half were medium-sized organisations with between 50-249 employees, with both larger and smaller businesses comprising a quarter each;
- The most common geographic areas in which employers had the majority of their employees were West Midlands, East of England and Northern Ireland followed by the South East and Scotland; and,
- 4 employers were multi-site organisations.

Respondent characteristics – representative organisations

Of the 17 representative organisations that responded to the review:

- 1 was a trade union;
- 11 were trade associations; and,
- 5 were producer organisations connected to Seasonal Worker Visa industries.

Respondent characteristics – individuals responding in a personal or other capacity

Of the 24 individuals that responded to the review:

- 14 responded in a personal capacity – of these 5 had been employers giving an opinion separate from their organisation, 3 were workers who had been on the SWS, 3 were workers who had not used the scheme and the remainder were academics; and,
- 10 came from a range of respondents including government departments, Non-Governmental Organisations, retailers, researchers and journalists.

Annex B: Primary Research

Introduction

This Annex provides more detail on the methodological details of our primary research. The research was split into 2 parts, with site visits and employer interviews carried out by Revealing Reality focussing on agricultural businesses, supplemented by additional interviews and site visits carried out internally as well as primary research in Kyrgyzstan.

Methodology

- **Kyrgyzstan research**
 - We conducted a field trip to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. This was chosen because it has become a key source country for Seasonal Workers coming to the UK, and because of the timing of a recruitment event. We also met Kyrgyz government officials, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and the British Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan;
 - We observed a Seasonal Worker recruitment event in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, delivered in Russian and interpreted by an independent interpreter;
 - Short face-to-face intercept interviews were conducted in both Russian and Kyrgyz with 28 prospective and returning seasonal workers (22 male and 6 female) at the event; and,
 - We were able to conduct a longer 1-hour follow-up online interview in Russian with 1 of these workers who was now in the UK.
- **Primary research** – We commissioned our independent research contractor, Revealing Reality, to undertake 30 in-depth employer interviews and site visits to enable observation of tasks, environment, and processes, and to speak to managerial, supervisory and seasonal work staff. 12 x 1-hour interviews and 18 x half-day site visits were conducted, with pairing (as far as possible) of similar organisations using and not using the SWS. To ensure diversity, the sample frame covered a variety of characteristics, including geography (all 4 nations of the UK), size of business and a number of additional characteristics that were monitored throughout the project to ensure a range of viewpoints (see table B.1).
- This research was supplemented with an additional 3 employer site visits carried out internally by members of the MAC and the Secretariat.

Table B.1: Sample Frame

| Quota | | Site visits completed | Remote interviews completed | Total |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| SWV | User | 15 | 6 | 21 |
| | Non-user | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| | Both | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Type of work | Horticulture | 12 | 8 | 20 |
| | Ornamental | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| | Poultry | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| Region | England | 12 | 9 | 21 |
| | East Midlands | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | West Midlands | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| | East of England | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| | Yorkshire & Humber | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Greater London | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | North East | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | North West | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | South East | 5 | 4 | 9 |
| | South West | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Northern Ireland | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| | Wales | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Scotland | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Size of farm | Small | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| | Medium | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| | Large | 9 | 5 | 14 |

Annex C: Topic Guide

This Annex sets out our topic guide, used to guide our interviews and conversations with employers.

MAC Seasonal Worker Visa Topic Guide: Employers/farmers

Project objectives

The aim of this project is for the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to better understand the Seasonal Workers Visa (SWV). Our intention is to take a broad look at this route. This will include consideration of the rules under which the scheme operates, the size and costs of the scheme, the potential for exploitation and poor labour market practice, evidence from international comparisons, the long-run need for such a scheme and what it should look like.

The MAC are looking to run a self-commissioned project exploring how the Seasonal Worker Visa (SWV) is operating in practice. The ambition of the project is to understand, in detail, how this visa route is used by employers and what can be challenging. More specifically, this project would seek to understand:

1. Employer decision-making around using the Seasonal Worker visa route – perceived benefits, perceived costs, perceived alternatives;
2. Employer experience of the scheme rules – skills needs within workforce, challenges associated with Seasonal Worker visa, value to the business; and
3. Employer experiences of using the Seasonal Worker Visa scheme – recruitment, relationships and experiences with scheme operators, onboarding of new workers, initial and ongoing costs, type of workers hired, challenges with accessing staff needed.

Where possible, within site visits, we will also aim to explore:

4. Employee experiences of employment on the Seasonal Worker visa – expectations and preparation for the move, information provided by employers, reflections on type of work, reflections on support available (e.g., costs and accommodation),

Finally, there is a much wider interest in the potential for employee exploitation within this visa route. Although the format of this fieldwork, focused on interviews with employers, will make this challenging, where possible, researchers seek to understand challenges that could and have arisen in exploitation.

About this guide / outline

This guide is for interviews with UK farmers who employ workers across the industries of poultry and horticulture (both edible and ornamental). We anticipate undertaking approximately 1-hour remote depth interviews with 22 farms and site visits to 8 farms.

We are aiming to speak to pairs of farms – one as a user of the scheme and one as a non-user. Organisations will be paired by similarity in size, geographic proximity, industry, labour market, and type of labour performed etc. Note that non-users of the Seasonal Worker Scheme may still be users of other seasonal labour, and that users of the scheme may also use other seasonal labour.

The interview is in four main parts (in addition to normal opening/closing sections):

- Section A – overview of the organisation and of recruitment practices generally. This is asked to **everyone**.

- Section B – use of the Seasonal Worker Visa – this will be asked to everyone who uses the Seasonal Worker Scheme or does not use it now but has done so in the past.
- Section C – working without the Seasonal Worker Visa – this will be asked to everyone who does not use the Seasonal Worker Scheme, and who has never done so.
- Section D – summing up. This is asked to **everyone**.

Guide outline

Overview of consent (10m)

1. Researcher to provide an overview of the research and talk through confidentiality and consent. The researcher will explain that:
2. Taking part in the interview is optional and you don't have to answer anything you are not comfortable with. You are also welcome to take a break at any point.
3. We are speaking with farms about their use of the seasonal worker visa. When reporting we will be analysing the themes that come out of these conversations and report on the general findings to MAC.
4. Everything you say will be anonymised – we give everyone we speak to a pseudonym, so nothing is linkable back to your real name, or any of your personal details. We will present our findings back to our client, the MAC, but no data that could be linked back to an individual/organisation will be shared, and the HO will not know which individuals have said what. Nothing you say will affect any dealings you may have with the Home Office or the Seasonal Worker Scheme, either now or in the future.
5. The information you share with us today will remain confidential and will not be shared with your colleagues.
6. [Researcher note: Read through the consent form and get verbal agreement at the start of the interview.]
7. We will talk through our consent form again after the interview but if you have any questions about the research, you can let me know at any point.
8. We would like to record this session for note-taking purposes so we can go back to things you say in more detail afterwards. Are you happy for me to start recording?

Section A: Ask to everyone

Getting to know the organisation (10m)

Work background- organisational

- Tell me about your organisation?
 - What do you produce?
 - How many sites does your organisation have?
- When are the busiest and least busy times of year for your farm?

Work background- personal

- Tell me about your role?
 - What does your day to day look like?
 - What responsibilities do you have? PROBE: HR related/strategic role
 - How long have you been working in this role?

Organisation's workforce

- Tell me a bit about your employees.
 - How many employees are there in your organisation/at each site?

- What sort of roles/teams do they have?
- What are the different levels of seniority?
- Do you use apprentices?
- What skills are required for the different roles/teams?
- Has there been any recent changes in the make-up of your work force? PROBE: number of employees/who is employed.
- To what extent does your workforce allow you to meet your organisation's needs/production? PROBE: number of employees and skill level
 - Does this vary throughout the year?
 - Probe on seasonal peaks and troughs, when these come and how they are managed
 - Probe on use of seasonal workers and distinguish between those who are/are not on the Seasonal Worker Visa
 - Has this changed at all in recent years?
 - If it has changed, why do you think so?
- Have you made any changes to help meet your labour needs?
 - Have you changed shift patterns to attract different/more workers?
 - Have you tried to attract workers by increasing pay or benefits?
 - Have you introduced automation of processes to reduce the number of staff you need?
- Where do your workers come from – the UK/abroad/ a mix?

If they have any migrant workers:

- What are some of the countries that migrant workers often come from? Does this vary? If so, how?
- What is the ratio of UK to migrant workers? Does this vary over the course of the year? Has this changed or stayed the same over time? PROBE: pre/post freedom of movement
- Which visas do you use for migrant employees now? PROBE: seasonal worker visa
- Have you used any other migrant visas in the past? PROBE: SAWS (Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme)

Recruitment (10m)

General recruitment

- Can you tell me about different recruitment channels in your organisation? E.g., Word of mouth, local press adverts, social media, agencies. (NB we are particularly interested in recruitment for those who do similar jobs to Seasonal Workers here – whether on a permanent or seasonal basis)
 - How successful are these routes?
 - How does this vary depending on who you are recruiting? (Permanent/seasonal?)
- Which roles are harder / easier to recruit for? Why?
- How easy/difficult do you find the recruitment process?
 - Are there any recruitment routes you currently use but would like to stop using?
 - Are there any recruitment routes you don't currently use but would like to?

Recruitment of migrants

- Have the recruitment routes that you use changed at all in recent years? If so, how/why?
 - PROMPT: Freedom of movement. Recruiting different types of workers e.g., British workers/ European workers who already live in the UK?
 - What has the impact been of any changes?

Section B: Experience of using the Seasonal Worker Visa

Ask ONLY to people working at organisations that USE/previously DID USE the seasonal worker visa (just use past tense for those who previously used it and compare to present – if organisation has not used seasonal worker visa, skip to section C)

Using the seasonal worker visa (15m)

General use of the seasonal worker visas

- Can you tell me a bit more about your organisation's use of the seasonal worker visa?
 - Why do you use the seasonal worker visa?
 - How long have you been using it for?
 - How did you hear about it?
 - What attracted you to using the seasonal worker visa?
 - What were your expectations for the SWV?
 - To what extent has the seasonal worker visa met your expectations?
 - How often do you use it?
 - What are some of the advantages/disadvantages of employing people with the seasonal worker visa?
- Tell me about the process of signing up to get seasonal workers?
 - What were some of the steps involved?
 - Was the process clear? Where did you find information about it?
 - Who did it involve?
- Thinking about workers on the SWV in particular, how do seasonal workers fit in with your organisation?
 - What jobs do SWV workers do at your organisation? PROBE: job titles and descriptions; any similarities/differences with other seasonal workers/permanent workers
 - To what extent does the SWV help you to/hinder you from meet your organisation's labour needs?

SWV recruitment

- Can you tell me about the steps involved in the recruitment process for SWV employees? (Probe on any differences between workers on the SWV and other seasonal workers)
 - Thinking of SWV workers in particular, what are the key milestones for recruitment of these workers? When do they happen and what do they involve?
DATA CAPTURE: timeline; try to draw out anything about similarities/differences in availability of workers and actual seasonal needs. Clarify that respondent is talking about SWV workers throughout.

Areas to map around:

- TIMINGS:
 - What timescales do you have in mind?
 - What deadlines do you have in mind?
 - Do these time scales work for you?
 - What is the impact to your organisation of guaranteeing an employee work for a specific time period?
- COSTS
 - What costs are involved in recruitment of seasonal workers?
- PREPARATIONS
 - What planning/preparation is involved in recruitment of seasonal workers?

- PARTNERSHIPS: Who do you work with for recruitment of seasonal workers? PROMPT: scheme operators?
 - To what extent would you say the partnerships help you to recruit workers?
- NUMBERS OF RECRUITEES:
 - Is your organisation able to recruit the number of workers they need through the SWV route?
 - How much choice do you have in the number of workers you choose to recruit?
 - How easily are you able to predict the number of SWV workers you need?
- RE-RECRUITMENT:
 - Do you re-recruit people on the SWV?
 - If so, what proportion of your workers come back for a second year/each year?
 - To what extent would you say the ability to re-recruit workers is important to your organisation?
 - How well/not well does the scheme facilitate re-recruitment?
- *[If used SWV for multiple years]* Has anything changed about the SWV recruitment process in recent years? PROMPT: Covid-19; ending of FOM.
 - If so, what has been the impact of these changes?
- What works more/less well for you during the recruitment process for seasonal workers?
 - How manageable/unmanageable do you find the recruitment process for seasonal workers?
- How does the recruitment process for SWV compare to recruitment of other people? PROMPT: other seasonal workers/domestic workers/workers on other visas/ workers previously under Freedom of Movement.
 - Prompts for comparison: TIMINGS, NUMBERS, COSTS, PREPARATION, FLEXIBILITY, PARTNERSHIPS, RE-RECRUITMENT, ADMIN
- Is there anything you think could be improved about the recruitment of seasonal workers on the SWV?
 - PROBE: What could you/seasonal workers/scheme operators/other organisations do to improve it?

Employment period (20m)

Arrival/settling in of new workers.

[When seasonal workers are mentioned, clarify whether SWV or other seasonal workers. Throughout, probe for differences between SWV and other workers.]

- What are your expectations for new employees? PROBE: skills, language, experience
- Do your employees meet your expectations? Why/why not?
 - How does this vary depending on how employees have been recruited? PROBE: SWV vs. other new employees.
- To what extent do workers know what to expect at the point they start with you?
 - Probe on anything they find surprising/better/worse than expected.
 - What information do migrant workers have before they start working? Does this vary depending on the visa they have?
 - Which migrant workers have a contract in their own language before they start?
- Do migrant workers typically arrive at the farm individually, or do they arrive in groups?
 - [If groups] why do they arrive in groups? How are they grouped typically?

- How does that impact your organisation?
- Does this vary depending on their visa?

Allocation of tasks/labour

- How do you determine which new employees are assigned to teams? What factors are considered for this? PROMPT: language, visa type, skills.
 - Do seasonal workers work with other types of employees or are they separated?
- How do you determine which tasks are assigned to new employees? FACTORS TO PROMPT AROUND: employees' skills or requests/productivity/barriers/challenges.
- Do all workers tend to work the same hours?
 - Prompt: do some work more than others; what determines the differences?
 - What are your overtime practices?
 - Are there ever times in which a worker wanted to work more hours but there was not enough work?

Accommodation

- Do you provide accommodation for any of your employees? PROBE: migrants, SWV, other seasonal workers
 - Roughly what proportion of your Seasonal Worker workforce live in accommodation you provide? (Differences between SWV and other seasonal workers)
 - Do workers have the opportunity to choose other accommodation?
 - Do you charge your employees for accommodation? How do you determine the price?
- If employees pay for accommodation:
 - How much do workers pay for accommodation?
 - How do you determine how much they pay for accommodation?
 - Are there any other costs? PROMPT: Wi-Fi, laundry, travel to local town for shopping
 - Do you offset against their pay?

Wages

- How much per hour does your organisation pay employees? Does it vary between SWV/other seasonal/permanent staff?
 - Prompt: basic rate, bonuses
 - Does this vary depending on pick rates? If so, what is the rough range of gross weekly pay that workers on the higher/lower end of the spectrum receive?
 - Are they able to guarantee a specific number of weeks' work?
- What do you pay beyond basic pay?
 - Prompt: holiday; sick leave; overtime; anything else
- Would there be any impact if the hourly wage increased/if employees were given guarantees about minimum earnings?

Retention

- How does retention of Seasonal Worker Visa employees compare to that of non-Seasonal Worker Visa employees?
- How often do your employees leave before the end of their contract?
- Reasons – Prompt: whether instigated by employer or employees?
- How often employees stay for the time that you need them?
- What happened to the people who have left before the end of their contract (e.g., moved on to other employers, returned home)?

End of employment period

- At the end of the contract, what is the process for workers returning home?

- Are there any difficulties for you as an employer at the end of SWV contracts. PROMPT: getting workers to comply with the terms of the visa and leave the UK after six months.
 - If so, what do you do?
- Are there any challenges for seasonal workers at the end of the contract?
 - Do you do anything about this?

How the scheme works (15m)

Scheme Rules

- Tell me about the rules you have to comply with for the SWV scheme?
- How easy/hard do you think it is to comply with the scheme rules?
- Which rules are easier or harder to comply with?
- Any rules they think are particularly good/bad:
- Prompt:
 - Six-month “cooling-off” period required for employees before returning to the UK
 - Must be over 18 to use the route
 - Not able to bring dependants
 - Must have enough money to support yourself easily (usually at least £1,270)
 - No English language requirement.
 - Employee choice to request to move to work elsewhere
 - Employer having to show proof of trying to recruit employees from the UK at DWP or elsewhere

Scheme costs

- Can you tell me about any costs involved with the SWV scheme for your organisation?
 - Prompt: travel from worker’s country of origin; travel for worker in UK; accommodation; visa cost; if accommodation mentioned, what sort is provided
 - How that compares to other workers/before the seasonal worker visa?
- What are the average costs or range of costs for these?
- Are these costs manageable?
- For these costs, do employees have to pay any of these costs back to your organisation?
 - Prompt: how this is done if so – e.g. taken out of salary weekly, repaid upfront
- What would be the impact to the organisation if costs changed?
 - Would there be any impact if higher fees per worker were charged?
 - Would there be any impact if higher fees for participation in the scheme?
 -

Communication/information

- Have you ever needed to look for information about the scheme? If so, how did you find this process?
 - Was it easily accessible?
- Where/who would you go to if you needed to find information about your use of the SWV?

Relationship with other stakeholders

- Can you tell me about your interaction with other organisations that are involved in the processes of you employing seasonal workers? PROBE: scheme operators, DEFRA, MAC, gov to add more?
- How would you describe your relationship with these organisations?
- How has the communication been?
- Have you needed to ask questions?

Scheme efficiency

- How efficient is the SWV route? PROBE: administration
- How efficiently do you think the scheme is organised by the government, which sets the overall rules and numbers for the SWV route?

Thinking about the future (5m)

- Would there be anything you would like to change about your use of the SWV? PROMPT: use it more or less/ change the processes involved /communication/relationship with other stakeholders.
- How would it impact your organisation if you used the SWV route more or less than you currently do?
- How would it impact you if you were not able to use the SWV route at all?

Section C: Working without the Seasonal Worker Visa

Ask ONLY to people working at organisations that DO NOT USE and NEVER have used the seasonal worker visa. This section will cover how organisations use other labour, including seasonal workers who are not on the SWV.

Managing and organising seasonal work without the SWV (15m)

General use of the seasonal worker visas

- Can you tell me a bit more about how you manage seasonal peaks and troughs?
 - Probe on any use of seasonal workers – and who they are
- How do seasonal workers fit in with your organisation?
 - What jobs do they do?
- Can you tell me about the steps involved in the recruitment process for seasonal employees?

Areas to map around:

- TIMINGS:
 - What timescales do you have in mind (note that some organisations will have “always on” recruitment)?
 - Do you guarantee seasonal employees work for a specific time period?
- COSTS
 - What costs are involved in recruitment of seasonal workers?
- PREPARATIONS
 - What planning/preparation is involved in recruitment of seasonal workers?
- PARTNERSHIPS:
 - Do you work with any other organisations for recruitment of seasonal workers?
PROMPT: job centre?
- NUMBERS OF RECRUITEES:
 - Is your organisation able to recruit the number of seasonal workers they need?
 - How much choice do you have in the number of workers you choose to recruit?
 - How easily are you able to predict the number of workers you need?
- RE-RECRUITMENT:
 - What proportion of your workers come back for a second year/each year?

- Has anything changed about the recruitment process in recent years? PROMPT: Covid-19; ending of FOM.
 - If so, what has been the impact of these changes?
- What works more/less well for you during the recruitment process for seasonal workers?
 - How manageable/unmanageable do you find the recruitment process for seasonal workers?
- How does the recruitment process for seasonal workers compare to recruitment of other people? PROMPT: permanent workers/workers previously under Freedom of Movement.
 - Prompts for comparison: TIMINGS, NUMBERS, COSTS, PREPARATION, FLEXIBILITY, PARTNERSHIPS, RE-RECRUITMENT, ADMIN

Employment period (20m)

Arrival/settling in of new workers

- What are your expectations for new employees? PROBE: skills, language, experience
- Do your employees meet your expectations? Why/why not?
 - How does this vary depending on how employees have been recruited? PROBE: seasonal workers vs. other new permanent employees.
- To what extent do workers know what to expect at the point they start with you?
 - Probe on anything they find surprising/better/worse than expected.
 - What information do seasonal workers have before they start working? Does this vary depending on the visa they have?
 - Do seasonal workers have a contract? (Probe on details of this)

Allocation of tasks/labour

- How do you determine which new employees are assigned to teams? What factors are considered for this? PROMPT: language, visa type, skills.
 - Do seasonal workers work with other types of employees or are they separated?
- How do you determine which tasks are assigned to new employees? FACTORS TO PROMPT AROUND: employees' skills or requests/productivity/barriers/challenges.
- Do all workers tend to work the same hours?
 - Prompt: do some work more than others; what determines the differences?
 - What are your overtime practices?
 - Are there ever times in which a worker wanted to work more hours but there was not enough work?

Accommodation

- Do you provide accommodation for any of your employees?
 - Roughly what proportion of your seasonal workforce live in accommodation you provide?
 - Do workers have the opportunity to choose other accommodation?
 - Do you charge your employees for accommodation? How do you determine the price?
- If employees pay for accommodation:
 - How much do workers pay for accommodation?
 - How do you determine how much they pay for accommodation?
 - Are there any other costs? PROMPT: Wi-Fi, laundry, travel to local town for shopping
 - Do you offset against their pay?

Wages

- How much per hour does your organisation pay employees? Does it vary between seasonal/permanent staff?
 - Prompt: basic rate, bonuses
 - Does this vary depending on pick rates? If so, what is the rough range of gross weekly pay that workers on the higher/lower end of the spectrum receive?
 - Are they able to guarantee a specific number of weeks' work?
- What do you pay beyond basic pay?
 - Prompt: holiday; sick leave; overtime; anything else
- Would there be any impact if the hourly wage increased/if employees were given guarantees about minimum earnings?

Retention

- Do seasonal workers come back in subsequent years?
- How often do your employees leave before the end of their contract?
- Reasons – Prompt: whether instigated by employer or employees?
- How often employees stay for the time that you need them?
- What happens to the people who leave before the end of their contract (e.g., moved on to other employers, returned home)?

Seasonal Worker Visa (20m)

- Have you heard of the Seasonal Worker Visa Scheme?
 - If yes:
 - How did you first find out about the scheme?
 - What do you know/understand about it?
 - Is there anything attractive/unattractive about the visa to you?
- Have you considered using SWV?
 - What made you consider using it?
- Have you applied for it?

If didn't apply for some reason

- Why don't you use it?

Prompt: expense, timing, duration, application process, need to provide accommodation.

If applied for SWV and didn't get it

- How did you find the process of applying for SWV?
- Where did you get information about the application?
 - Did you find the information clear?
- Did you receive any feedback on why your application was rejected?
- From whom? What was this feedback? How did you feel about this?

Impact of SWV

- Why do you think some other employers in your sector use SWVs?
- Is there anything different about the nature of your business to others?
 - Prompt: such as what they produce/make-up of their workforce
- How, if at all, would being able to use the SWV make a difference?
- To what extent (if any) is there any impact on the business from not using the SWV?
 - What do you think could be better if you used the SWV?
 - What, if anything, could be worse?

Alternatives to using the SWV

- What have you been doing as an alternative to using the SWV?
- How are you managing seasonal peaks/troughs?
- How long do workers normally stay?
- How effective has this been?

Section D: Summing up

Future of the organisation and potential use of SWV (5m)

- What does the future look like for your organisation?
- Do you have any plans to use or (re)apply for the SWV in the future?
- If you were to (re)apply for the SWV, how would you go about this? PROBE: where to get information from/ who to contact.
 - How confident would you feel about the application process?

Conclusions (5m)

- Do you have any final reflections about the SWV route?

Close & consent (5 mins)

- Thank you for taking the time to talk to us for the research
- Do you have any final reflections?
- Researcher to close the interview
 - Talk through the consent form again