

Migration doubles to highest in 25 years

TORY SHEPHERD

OVERSEAS migration to South Australia has almost doubled since last year, the latest figures show.

Statistics released yesterday show the state had a net overseas migration of 4800 people in the March, 2007, quarter – the highest level in 25 years.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the average quarterly migration for 2006 was about 2800.

For the year ending March 31, SA had a net overseas migration gain of 12,600 people, but lost 3500 to interstate migration.

Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade Karlene Maywald said the Government had committed \$267 million over four years to help settle migrants in SA.

“In our fast-expanding economy, it’s crucial that we have a range of strategies to develop and maintain our skilled workforce – attracting and retaining

people from interstate and overseas are crucial components,” she said. “By helping facilitate new arrivals to the state into employment, the skills of migrants are better used and the likelihood of their leaving for interstate to find work is reduced.”

Australian Population Institute chairman Michael Hickinbotham said SA was on track to meet its population target of two million people by 2050.

“I think the state is doing an excellent job,” Mr Hickinbotham said.

“It’s a great example of a State Government being proactive in the effort to grow the population in a responsible and sustainable way and it’s supported by the Federal Government with the regional visa program.”

Mr Hickinbotham said it was important to attract young people and convince them to stay here. “We need to redouble our efforts to offer opportunities to our young and entice

them to stay,” he said.

“Unless we can attract people with the appropriate skills we won’t be able to harness the opportunities available to us.”

Rebecca Jarrett, 30, moved to SA from the United Kingdom in June.

She now works as a French translator, giving language and logistical support to mining company Terramin Australia, which has mining projects in Strathalbyn and in Algeria.

She said she and her husband chose to come to Adelaide partly because the skilled migrant program opened up more opportunities, and partly because of the state’s “very vibrant, growing community”.

“We were attracted by the climate and by the size of the city, which is not too big but has lots going on,” she said.

“(Also) the fact you have got everything – the Hills, the coast and the vineyards.”



NEW LIFE: Recent migrants enjoying life in the city yesterday were Guida Coutinho (South Africa), Doris Abboud (Lebanon), Adva Webber (Israel) Richard Twyford (NZ), Natalya Kushnirenko (NZ) and Rebecca Jarrett (UK).

Picture: DEAN MARTIN