VIC: Blunder threatens thousands of job visas

The legal status of more than 130-thousand foreign work visa decisions made by a federal government body is reportedly under a cloud, because of a string of bureaucratic bungles.

Fairfax says both JOE HOCKEY and JULIA GILLARD, in respective workplace ministry roles, failed to ratify Trades Recognition Australia as a relevant authority under the Migration Act to ensure foreign workers met Australian standards before being approved for employment.

The Saturday Age says immigration experts believe the paperwork blunder has implications for many of the 135-thousand skilled assessments made between 2007 and 2011.

A spokesman for Tertiary Education and Skills Minister Chris Evans has confirmed the bungle, saying steps have been taken to rectify the situation.

AAP RTV cad/wz
A NEW skill body will help ensure the right skills are in the right place at the right time to assist Australia’s workers and workplaces to function at their best.

The Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency will replace the current advisory body, Skills Australia, but will have a broader role in workforce development.

It aims to give industry a stronger voice and ensure government investment in training delivers the skills that industry and the economy need.

Skills Minister Senator Chris Evans says the aim of the new agency is to improve long-term workforce planning and development to address skills and labour shortages.

It also aims to contribute to improvements in industry and workplace productivity.

“Importantly, the agency will have the ability to advise the Government to direct funding to areas of critical industry need and will be an authority on workforce development policy,” he says.

“The agency will have a stronger research, analysis and advisory role, enabling it to specifically address improvements in Australian workforce productivity.

“Through the work of the agency, we are planning today for the jobs of tomorrow and putting the skills needs of Australians first.”