



FMM Welcomes New Foreign Worker Application System, Calls for Accountable and Seamless Implementation

Kuala Lumpur, August 22, 2026 — The Federation of Malaysian Manufacturing (FMM) takes note of today's announcement by the Ministry of Human Resources (KESUMA) on the full implementation of the new foreign worker employment application process through the Foreign Workers Centralized Management System (FWCMS), effective August 22, 2026.

FMM supports the objective of improving transparency, governance and efficiency in the foreign worker employment process. The transition from manual submissions to an online platform is a positive step, and the effectiveness of the new system will ultimately be reflected in its ability to deliver faster approvals, reduce administrative burdens and recruitment costs, and provide employers with greater certainty and transparency throughout the application journey.

The commitment to issue the Conditional Approval Letter (SKB) within 14 days, subject to complete documentation and compliance with the relevant requirements, is a positive and important service delivery target. Based on the process flow chart, the 14-day timeline appears to encompass key stages including the scheduling and conduct of interviews with the relevant Regulatory Agencies (AKS) and payment of the foreign worker levy.

FMM believes this should be supported by a clear end-to-end service standard so that employers have certainty over the overall processing timeline. While FWCMS provides the main application platform, levy payment appears to involve the separate MyIMMs system, while physical interviews with the relevant AKS remain part of the process. Greater integration between FWCMS, MyIMMs and the systems operated by JTKSM, PERKESO and other relevant agencies would help reduce duplicated documentation and repeated data entry, and provide employers with a more seamless end-to-end process.

FMM also notes that 4,646 employer applications have been received and are currently being processed. KESUMA should provide employers with greater visibility on the expected processing timeline, supported by transparent application-status tracking as an integral feature of the system.

As manufacturing remains one of the largest sectorial users of foreign labour and a major contributor to national output and exports, pending manufacturing-sector applications should be processed expeditiously to minimise disruptions to workforce planning, production schedules, order fulfilment and business continuity.

At present, foreign worker recruitment for the manufacturing sector remains limited to new investments and replacements arising from Check Out Memos. FMM hopes that an announcement can be made soon on the opening of recruitment to other manufacturers that do not fall within these two categories, particularly where genuine workforce requirements cannot be adequately met from the local labour market.

FWCMS and its appointment-scheduling facility should also have sufficient capacity to manage both existing and new applications without creating new bottlenecks. During the

transition, employers affected by genuine technical difficulties or procedural uncertainties should not be unfairly disadvantaged or lose their existing application priority.

Employers should be able to track their applications at each stage, understand the reasons for delays or unsuccessful applications, and have access to an effective escalation and appeal mechanism. Clear guidelines, frequently asked questions and a dedicated help channel should also be made available, particularly for SMEs that may require assistance in navigating the new system.

FMM also believes that FWCMS should be firmly anchored on the principle of direct employer ownership of applications. Appropriate identity verification, access controls and audit trails should ensure that applications are submitted and managed only by legitimate and verified employers or parties officially authorised under the system, minimising the risk of misuse, manipulation or unnecessary intermediary costs. Employers requiring assistance should be supported through official KESUMA channels.

The implementation of the new process should not result in additional administrative charges, recruitment fees or other unnecessary costs for employers. FMM further urges continued oversight of recruitment agencies operating in source countries to ensure that recruitment arrangements remain transparent and that both employers and workers are protected from excessive or unjustified costs.

To strengthen transparency and accountability, FMM encourages KESUMA to regularly publish key performance data, including applications received, approved and rejected, as well as the proportion completed within the stipulated 14-day period. This would provide an objective basis for assessing the system's performance and identifying areas for further improvement.

Ultimately, the success of FWCMS should be measured by tangible improvements in processing time, cost, ease of compliance and certainty for employers. The immediate priorities should be to ensure consistent delivery of the 14-day service commitment, strengthen integration across the systems and agencies involved, and process existing applications without disrupting manufacturers' production planning and business operations.

FMM believes that close collaboration with KESUMA will be important in achieving these outcomes. Through continued industry engagement and feedback, FMM can support practical improvements to ensure that FWCMS meets industry needs while advancing the Government's objectives of stronger governance, transparency and service delivery..



Mr Jacob Lee Chor Kok
President, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturing

FMM Advocates Transparency, Integrity, Accountability and No Corruption

About FMM

The Federation of Malaysian Manufacturing (FMM) (formerly known as Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers) has been the voice of the Malaysian manufacturing sector since 1968, advocating policies and initiatives that drive industrial growth, competitiveness and workforce development. Representing over 13,540 member companies (4,270 direct and 9,270 indirect) from the manufacturing supply chain, FMM is actively engaged with government and its key agencies at Federal, State and local levels. FMM is also well-linked with international organisations, Malaysian businesses and civil society. Apart from benefitting from FMM's advocacy, FMM members enjoy value-added services including training, business networking and trade opportunities as well as regular information updates.

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