TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY
Workforce Development Strategy

"Attracting and keeping

good people in the tourism

and hospitality industry"

SERVICESKILLS
AUSTRALIA

TOURISM, HOSPITALITY
AND EVENTS

Contents

The following document is supported and endorsed by the tourism and hospitality industry. Whilst the document sits with Service Skills Australia (the Industry Skills Council for the Tourism and Hospitality Sector) it is owned and maintained by the sector, for the sector.

Message from Industry

National and international data indicates that there is a contributing shortage of suitably qualified and skilled workers for the tourism and hospitality industry.

The tourism and hospitality industry is forecast to experience continued strong growth in the years to come. To support the industry's success, and facilitate this projected growth, industry must work together to ensure we have access to suitable skilled labour. Appropriately skilled, quality personnel are integral to the success of business in any industry, and can provide a competitive advantage.

Customers already expect high levels service from our businesses. This means that industry must find innovative and flexible ways to manage our existing and future staff. It will require looking beyond traditional methods and sources to attract and retain staff.

This Workforce Development Strategy is an important step in continuing to address the skills and labour shortages in the tourism and hospitality industry. The document represents a commitment from industry to work together. It is a way for industry to articulate their vision for workforce development.

The workforce development strategy focuses on four key priorities:

• The creation of a highly skilled workforce.

• Access to quality employment.

• Shaping the future through better workforce planning.

• Expanding the traditional workforce.

We would like to acknowledge the support of the Australian Hotels Association in the development of this important document.

With the support of our industry skills council, Service Skills Australia, the industry has united with a common vision of a strong, successful future, fostered by access to quality trained, skilled employees. This workforce development strategy provides the means for that vision to be realised.

John Hart   and   *John Sweetman*

Co-chairs of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry Advisory Committee

Message from the Service Skills Australia CEO

Service Skills Council is proud to present the Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Strategy. This is an important document and represents a common clear vision that industry has for its labour force and its development.

Workforce development covers a wide range of key activities, strategies and policies impacting on individuals and teams, the organisation in which they operate, the systems that surround them, as well as on the broader industry, regional business and community environment. It can include business analysis, policy, job design, recruitment, attraction, retention and separation, as well as resources, support mechanisms, capability development and incentives.

To the Commonwealth Government, workforce development means improving the productivity of Australia's workforce and increasing participation in the workforce—in essence, increasing the capability and capacity of the Australian workforce.

The Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Strategy outlines the priority areas for achieving the overall goal of access to the number of skilled employees that the tourism and hospitality industry will require to be successful in the future. A number of particular focus areas have been outlined in the strategy that will require action to attain these priorities.

This document has been developed by industry, for industry and will provide clear direction and an agreed strategy to confront the challenges facing the tourism and hospitality industry.

By industry working together, with Service Skills Australia, we can ensure that the tourism and hospitality industry will have access to the right people, with the right skills, at the right time.

Jeanette Allen

Chief Executive Officer, Service Skills Australia

Perspectives of a Treasury Head

As a rather crude but nevertheless instructive generalisation, there is no policy intervention available to government, in these circumstances that can generate higher national income without expanding the nation's supply side capacity: policy actions that expand the nation's supply capacity target at least one of the 3 Ps – Population, Participation or Productivity.

Many of the policy problems that we face today have a whole-of-government character. There is no room for silos between central, line and operational agencies; nor between levels of government.

Comments made by Ken Henry – The Secretary of The Treasury

Preamble

The tourism and hospitality industry ("our industry") must plan for the future if it is to ensure skill and labour shortages will not derail projected growth. Demographic and economic challenges mean Australian business will be confronted with continuing skill and labour shortages over the next two decades. If overall business performance is to improve, the issues surrounding skills and labour shortages must be managed more effectively.

The challenge is greater than finding sufficient people to meet a growing market.

An increasingly demanding customer will expect higher service levels, and increasing the productivity of the workforce will require an innovative and flexible approach to our existing and potential staff. Employers will need to look beyond traditional workforce issues and consider how they can develop attractive, productive workplaces.

Our aim should be to ensure that quality staff will choose to work in the industry over other sectors.

Employees should have their choice to work in our industry confirmed by feeling valued through secure and rewarding jobs that offer coherent career paths and competitive salaries.

Overview

The Workforce Development Strategy will act as a catalyst for an industry wide approach to human resource needs, by providing a strategic response to the issues identified.

This document has been developed with industry, and by industry, to provide an overarching framework to address the workforce challenges confronting the tourism and hospitality industry. Whilst the document will sit with the Industry Skills Council (Service Skills Australia) it will be owned by the industry and to that extent, industry will take responsibility for its currency and relevancy.

The strategy seeks to encourage all those involved in the industry, including government, to work together. The strategy identifies priority areas and actions that can be realised in a coherent and coordinated way to address workplace issues. It seeks to transform businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry into employers of choice, that deliver highly profitable, world class visitor experiences.

Final word

Whilst much of the detail of the strategy will be implemented within sectors, and at a regional level, it is important that solutions will require industry, education and training providers, and government to work together, and individual businesses to examine what they are doing today, and what they can do differently tomorrow.

The aim of the strategy

People working across tourism and hospitality will be appropriately skilled and able, through the application of their expertise, to contribute to the growth and development of a sustainable, productive and profitable tourism and hospitality industry.

The goals of the strategy include:

GOAL 1

There are enough people to do the work required, to the standard required, to consistently deliver a world-class visitor experience.

GOAL 2

The people who work in the tourism and hospitality industry have appropriate skills and the personal attributes to deliver a quality experience. There are education and training systems in place to recognise and deliver the skills and knowledge required to resource the tourism and hospitality industry.

GOAL 3

People with experience and expertise are retained within the tourism and hospitality sector because they have opportunities to grow and build satisfying careers.

GOAL 4

Businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector have the right information, management systems and processes in place to maximise the contribution of their people.

GOAL 5

The tourism and hospitality industry has the structures and mechanisms in place to address its future workforce and skill needs on an ongoing basis.

The industry's workforce development strategy will be based on the following interrelated priority areas:

- the creation **of a highly skilled workforce**

- access to **quality employment**

- shaping the future through **better workforce planning** and

- **expanding the traditional workforce**

Each **priority area** contains a series of **focus areas** that this strategy document seeks to clarify and explain.

Background

Successful tourism and hospitality businesses depend first and foremost on the people at the coalface. People deliver a world-class visitor experience. Tourism Australia is committed to attracting high yielding visitors to Australia and this coupled with an increasingly demanding domestic consumer means that now more than ever the industry must deliver a premium experience.

This requires a strategy that does more than simply 'puts a body' in front of customers.

Employers across the industry, large and small, face the same challenge—to attract and keep people with the right skills and personal attitudes and attributes to deliver a quality experience. However, there are labour and skills shortages in a number of occupations and regions in the tourism and hospitality industry. These shortages cannot be simply attributed to demographic changes, a growing economy or blamed on an education and training system delivering insufficient numbers. Industry and regional structures, business size, workplace conditions, and the mobility of workers are all contributing to these shortages and these are likely to continue for the next two decades.[1]

Staff shortages, inadequate skills and knowledge and/or high turnover can impede the ability of a hotel or other tourism business to deliver quality service.

Successful businesses, regions and nations recognise that investment is increasingly attracted to locations that have the best available pool of skills and knowledge. Cost competitiveness is important but it is not enough on its own. Quality people provide a key competitive advantage. Labour shortages and the constant scramble to replace staff can damage the ability of a business to continuously deliver quality service. A failure to provide solutions will put a brake on projected growth.

The creation of an efficient and productive workforce requires more than an adequate number of workers. The unpredictable 24/7 trading environment and the small number of very busy peak periods within the week (Friday and Saturday nights and Sundays) have led to a heavy reliance on casual workers. Part time work in the industry fulfils a vital need in society. Students, working parents and older Australians want part time work to enable them to earn an income whilst meeting other commitments.

The continuity of the industry's commitment to these employees, along with creating further career options for full time employees, is important.

People wanting to work in the industry must be able to find rewarding employment that meets their personal and family responsibilities. By recognising the importance of long term workforce planning, we can assist the industry, community and business partners to address the specific issues of skill shortages and workforce development.

Whilst in the past formal education and training has been seen as a key mechanism for developing the workforce, the approach outlined in this strategy recognises that there needs to be better co-ordination across a broader range of areas if we are to achieve the required improvement in workforce productivity. Some effort needs to be made to ensure that the investment in skilling employees and potential employees is made in those with aptitude for role in which the skills are to be used.

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1 An Employment Profile of the industry is located in Appendix One

In addition, areas such as industry development, workplace relations, effective education and training, the introduction of family friendly work practices, accessing overseas workers, retaining mature age people through changed retirement patterns and encouraging people currently outside the workforce to seek employment, will all influence the desire and ability of people to take up jobs in our industry and will determine the shape of the future workforce.

This document calls for industry to collectively focus on both workplace and workforce planning and development to meet the challenge of a world class tourism industry. Industry must create a culture that values skills, innovation and the people who work in our businesses.[2]

The Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Strategy (THWDS) acknowledges that skill acquisition is an ongoing, incremental process that is best driven by continuous improvement in the workplace.

The responsibility for meeting the skills acquisition needs of the industry and individuals is not confined solely to our education and training systems.

Work organisation, recruitment policies and practices, employee relations and job design are also involved. Assuring appropriate skills acquisition strategies for the industry and individuals requires some consideration of all these elements.

The strategy outlined here aims to create an environment where a highly skilled culture can grow and flourish by forging strong partnerships between the industry, workers, the education and training sector and government.

The THWDS acknowledges that the development of a skilled workforce capable of supporting the industry and maintaining high standards cannot be left to chance. It requires deliberate strategy that draws together the policies and practices that contribute to creating an efficient, highly skilled workforce. This will ensure the industry has people with the right skills, both now and into the future.

A number of issues need to be addressed to achieve this. These include:

- A better understanding of current and future skill and labour needs, shortages and possible areas of supply.

- Establishing ways of identifying and attracting suitable people currently not engaged in the labour market.

- Implementing workplace structures and practices that encourage increased productivity and efficiency.

- Ensuring the industry is an attractive long term career option.

- Creating an industry led, demand driven training and education system.

- Improving labour market matching services.

- Reducing regulation that negatively impacts business performance.

- Encouraging innovation in all aspects of business process.

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2   The exact skills that will be required by the Hospitality & Tourism workforce over the next two decades are uncertain but are broadly defined in the accredited Training Package and tertiary education programs. We must monitor trends and constantly adapt these to future needs

Priority areas of action

A highly skilled workforce

Focus Area 1
Creating a more responsive training and learning system

Focus Area 2
Better recognition of learning and skills

Focus Area 3
Accelerated pathways

Focus Area 4
Focus on management and business skills

Expanding the traditional workforce

Focus Area 1
People currently not in workforce & welfare to work targeted groups

Focus Area 2
Engaging Indigenous workers

Focus Area 3
Managing the generational change: Young people and existing and mature age workers

Focus Area 4
Using overseas workers

Access to quality workplaces

Focus Area 1
Improved attraction and recruitment

Focus Area 2
Enhanced retention strategies

Focus Area 3
Flexible work practices and employment arrangements

Focus Area 4
Improving industry image and the provision of career pathways

Better workforce planning

Focus Area 1
Better information and analyses of data at a regional level

Focus Area 2
Destination management planning and labour force mapping to assist workforce planning

Focus Area 3
Provide high quality workforce information, tools and services

Priority Area 1: A highly skilled workforce

Developing and enhancing the skills of the workforce is a critical component of this strategy. The strategy is underpinned by the assumption that a better match between the skills of employees and the skills required in the workplace make for a more productive industry. It also assumes that effective education and training is an essential component of a sustainable industry.

Focus Area 1: More responsive training system

It is essential that the education and training system meets the needs of employers and their staff. Whilst, training and education must be seen as only one element of a broader national "human capital" agenda,

> **poorly designed or delivered training fails to deliver the skills and knowledge required by individuals and their employers and does not maximize the significant investment of public and private funds.**

It is evident that barriers exist for both workers and employers when addressing the accessibility of training. This can relate to the viability of the programs, as well as the availability within the appropriate work/ life balance. Training should be certified, have a flexible delivery format, and be conducive to employee's work and life commitments.

Despite a network of high quality training providers that provide internationally recognised programs[3], there is a lack of industry confidence in the current vocational educational and training (VET) system.[4] Many of the key elements of an effective system are in place. This strategy aims to provide for better co-ordination, improved communication and industry leadership to create a truly customer driven system. Key principles underpinning this are:

- Suppliers (e.g. RTOs) must be accountable to the 'consumers' (businesses and employees in the industry).

- State agencies need to stop impeding the emergence of an industry led national system Regulatory systems need to speak in harmony with the needs of industry rather than against them.

- Consolidated labour force data at a national, state and regional level is required to inform operators, service providers and policy makers.

The establishment of Skills Australia and an expanded role for Industry Skills Councils will assist this process. Other key components of focus area include:

Access to quality education and training

Industry would expect that the number of the additional 630,000 places will be made available to businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry given the size of the industry, its projected employment growth and the current qualifications profile of workers in the sector.

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3   Typically at tertiary level.

4   A recent Tourism Skills Survey showed that only 30% of tourism employers believed graduates from VET courses have the skills to meet employer needs. More than three quarters of the respondents wanted more input into course content and believed the vocational education and training sector needed to provide more practical job skills. Major issues included;
-   limited industry involvement in decision making and ineffective consultative arrangements
-   glorification of traditional trades and lack of parity of esteem for the skills of service industries
-   a supplier dominated training system with limited focus on workplace needs
-   ineffective monitoring of RTOs
-   limited confidence and understanding by employers and employees in the system

Industry leadership

The broader role envisaged for skills councils is also welcomed and these should become cross portfolio "skills and labour force" councils that advise government on key workforce and workplace issues. The revised *Tourism, Hospitality and Events Tourism Package* aligns competencies more closely with industry practices and provides the foundations for an effective qualification framework for the industry.

Ensuring quality demand driven service provision

Concerns remain with the level of oversight of registered training organisations by State Training Authorities. There should be a return to similar arrangements as were operating in the 1990's when the industry training council played an active role in screening training providers.

> Industry requires that they can ensure that assessment processes are rigorous enough to increase and maintain the integrity of industry VET qualifications.

Focus Area 2: Better recognition of existing knowledge and skills

Tourism and hospitality occupations are often not recognised as professions and the skills and occupations not appropriately valued. Greater effort is required to use Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to provide formal recognition and qualifications for people that have been working in the industry for many years without forcing them to undertake a full VET course. RPL processes that have the confidence of the industry must be identified and funded. The coordinated use of the new training places should help achieve this goal.

Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways

There is a need for alternative models of apprenticeship training to promote accelerated learning and make trades such as cooks more attractive to mature workers and not disadvantage people who wish to stay in regional locations.[5]

Focus Area 4: Enhancing business and management skills

> Greater effort is required to develop and maintain the capacity of managers in the industry to run operations effectively and to attract, develop and retain staff.

These skills will be highly variable in any industry dominated by owner/operator SME's, such as tourism, hospitality and accommodation. There needs to be a targeted effort to ensure operators have the skills and knowledge to operate productive businesses, and provision to fill the gaps is accessible to industry. It should be noted that industry has significant concerns about the consistency and quality of training and assessment of its potential and existing employees.

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5   For instance, the accelerated chefs apprenticeship established in Canberra provides an
    alternative to the time-based model and can encourage employers to invest in training

Priority Area 2: Expanding the traditional workforce

Increasing labour force supply or participation will be a key element
in addressing current and projected labour shortages.

Australia still has significant scope to increase workforce participation despite the current record employment levels.

The rate in some areas is still low compared to other developed countries.

Business can improve participation rates in our industry by developing strategies to target:

- People with disabilities, parents and welfare recipients returning to the workforce.

- Older workers, including those returning to the industry after a period of absence.

- Indigenous people.

- The emerging 'Generation Y' employee.

- Overseas workers.

- Current workforce.

- People who speak languages other than English.

Focus Area 1: Welfare to work target groups

There is significant scope to increase the participation of welfare recipients. The ongoing labour
and skills shortages will require the industry to invest more in recruitment strategies that seek to
engage suitable people from these groups. There is agreement among stakeholders that improving
workforce participation in the industry by under-represented groups could ease labour pressures
and bring broader benefits to the hospitality and tourism industry, society and the economy.

Improving workforce participation of these groups will require greater pre-employment screening to
determine suitability. There needs to be a willingness by employers to make reasonable adjustments
to employment arrangements and workplace practices to cater for the needs of these groups.

Focus Area 2: Engaging Indigenous workers

Tourism research indicates that engagement with Indigenous Australians and their culture
is one of the major experiences that overseas visitors are seeking when the travel here.

A significant number of young Indigenous people will be entering the workforce
over the next two decades. Many of these are located in regional areas
where tourism and hospitality businesses are major employers.

Employment in the hospitality and tourism industry has the potential to act as a pathway for Indigenous
economic independence through the development of Indigenous-owned tourism enterprises. Close
local community connections can increase the commitment to work from local Indigenous people
and increase the skills base of individuals interested in developing a career in the industry.

Focus Area 3: Managing the generational change: Young people

The 'Generation Y' employee (those born from 1978–1994) is a workforce challenge that employers will need to meet. It is this age group that provides a significant part of the traditional tourism and hospitality workforce and this generation has significantly different expectations of the workplace than previous generations.

Industry needs through its implementation of Discover Hospitality and Discover Tourism[6] make a concerted effort to improve its current image and brand to present itself as a career choice to this group. The campaign has considered the vocational motivations to Gen Y (among other target groups) and will, in its approach, appeal to this area of potential labour supply.

Existing and mature age workers

Initiatives introduced to attract older workers and accommodate their needs will prove even more valuable as this workforce pool grows.

> The industry is well suited to encourage participation of semi-retired workers who are seeking short-term jobs on a seasonal basis or jobs that offer reduced hours of work.

Labour shortages and increased longevity have meant that the participation of mature age people has increased substantially over recent years, but there is still room to increase numbers by encouraging mature aged workers to delay their retirement. Part time work in the tourism and hospitality industry fulfils a need for older workers to continue to augment this retirement income.

Industry's reliance on casual and seasonal labour is for many of the target groups a positive selling point for those who do not wish to work full-time. More flexible hours and conditions will encourage mature aged workers to remain in the workforce, rather than being forced to retire completely. These workers potentially bring personal and professional skills and knowledge which would benefit employers in the industry, whilst the flexibility of work hours in the industry may be an appropriate fit to the employees' lifestyle needs.

The industry will not be able to make further serious inroads into lifting participation by older Australians without a flexible workplace relations system that allows people to transition from full time employment into retirement through a mix of flexible working arrangements.

Further research is required to establish the motivators, attractors and inhibitors of this potential workforce.

In addition to addressing labour shortages, the employment of older workers is likely to:

- increase workforce diversity

- increase workforce expertise and experience

- reduce the budgetary pressures from ageing—generally, workers pay more tax and have a lower call on welfare and

- cater for an increasingly aging customer base.

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6   An industry-wide career and vocational education information and promotional campaign

Focus Area 4: Using overseas workers

The industry currently utilises overseas staff through a range of measures such as Working Holiday Visas, employer sponsored 457 visas, overseas students and permanent residence arrangements for skilled migrants.

Research suggests that future workforce needs will require ongoing access to overseas workers. Therefore, consideration must be given to how the industry will enter the global market for skilled and unskilled labour without undermining the employment conditions of Australian workers.

Areas which warrant specific consideration include:

- Extending the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) to recognise front of house occupations and food and beverage managers as skilled trades.

- Linking recent changes that enable graduates to remain in the country for eighteen months after graduation to long term employment strategies.

- Reviewing 457 (employer sponsored) visa conditions and arrangements to make them more accessible to the industry or specific regions.

- Fast tracking visa processing through a greater use of labour agreements negotiated between the Australian Government and employers and/or industrial associations. Despite recent changes to the visa administration program now allows fast-tracking of applications for employers with a proven track record of employing visa holders, there is a need for further innovation in the area of immigration and visa processing.

- Reviewing existing educational visa and immigration agent arrangements to ensure they support industry labour force needs.

- Develop an integrated process to facilitate the migration of suitably qualified overseas workers to identified employers.

- Promote the establishment of relationships with identified countries that provide access to suitably qualified workers. This would include the development of programs to train people to a certain qualification levels, linked this to a fast track visa nomination process.

Focus Area 5: Current workforce

There is a greater need for industry to recognise and develop the current workforce that is already available to them. These people are already working, and therefore are willing and capable to work. This makes these workers a valuable and attractive source for employers.

This process can be achieved through making the job roles attractive to the workers, especially in comparison with other industries that they may have previously worked in.

These current workers are most attractive to employers as marginalised and vulnerable segments of the workforce may pose a demanding and problematic process. Industry must first prove its legitimacy, ability and capacity to treat such workers fairly.

Priority Area 3: Access to quality workplaces

Whilst acknowledging that work in tourism and hospitality fulfils a wide variety of need for both full time and part time workers, greater effort is required to assess the impact of existing employment arrangements and job design on the attraction and retention of quality staff.

An ongoing challenge facing the industry is how to reduce staff turnover and retain people in the industry for longer periods. Given some turnover is necessary given the profile of part time work, studies indicate that the tourism and hospitality sector has high levels of turnover which not only adds to business costs but also affects service levels and the industry's image. The industry should acknowledge that retention of full and part time staff has a link to the level of productivity and service offered.

The direct and indirect cost of high turnover needs to be monitored to assess the consequences a highly casualised workforce.

The industry has a focus to retain staff through a variety of measures; however, is aware of the demand for casual staff. The goal is to achieve a balance between staff, and have support from the skilled, full-time and part-time staff.

Focus Area 1: Improved attraction and recruitment of staff

Improved recruitment strategies, job matching and career development opportunities need to be employed to encourage people to seek work and remain in the industry. Some casual employees may have the skills and interest to progress in the industry work needs to be done (through Discover Hospitality and by other means) to better articulate these opportunities to existing staff. Other employees may be working casually by choice and they benefit from the flexibility that this provides them.

The use of customised recruitment tools and screening processes[7] can assess whether staff have the potential to work long term in the hospitality and tourist sector. These processes and tools aim to assess aptitude for the industry, establish attitude to work, recognise relevant prior learning and experience and establish skills gaps for each potential and existing employee.

Focus Area 2: Enhanced retention strategies

The industry's high turnover rate is due in part to the seasonal nature of the sector which requires that a large influx of workers in the peak season and smaller numbers in off peak seasons. These characteristics, in conjunction with very few, very busy periods in many businesses weekly work cycle, necessitates a large proportion of part time workers are engaged. Whilst this suits many employees, who want part time work to achieve their work life balance, the industry still needs a base employment pool. The industry needs to work toward a balance of employment options that achieve both quality and flexibility objectives. In addition to targeted recruitment strategies and employment models to expand the potential workforce, the industry will need to facilitate strategies to retain people who are already working in the industry and encourage them to commit to careers in the sector (where this fits with their work life objectives). This may include innovative strategies such as seasonal job sharing, incentives, better articulation of career paths, improved employment conditions and

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7 Such as that developed by ACER (through the Hospitality NSSS Project).

the formal recognition of skills gained on the job to improve workforce retention. These initiatives may be developed at the individual workplace level or through an industry-wide approach. There can be a range of strategies that are flexible enough to be tailored to individual circumstances.[8]

Focus Area 3: Increasingly productivity through job re-design and more flexible employment arrangements and work practices

Businesses will need to maximize the productivity of each employee and achieve the highest level of workplace efficiency if they are to maintain profitability. This is especially so in an industry which has both a large and mobile workforce and narrow profit margins.

Greater collaboration between management and staff will be required to establish and maintain a workplace culture that fosters innovation and rewards effort.

Consideration needs to be given to redesigning jobs to enhance business flexibility and responsiveness and maximize the opportunities to utilise the skills of individual workers. It could also lead to increased employment certainty for these employees. Flexibility will especially benefit smaller businesses, those in rural and regional areas and those affected by seasonality.

Flexible employment arrangements will need to take account of the particular needs of an increasingly diversified labour force. Some employees will increasingly seek a better work-life balance which in many cases will result in their preference for part time work. Employers in tourism and hospitality can facilitate this to allow their staff can spend time with their families and pursue their interests and responsibilities outside work.

Focus Area 4: Improving industry image and the provision of career pathways

The tourism and hospitality industry by necessity engages a large number of part time employees and also needs a growing number of full time career aspirants to service healthy growth. Whilst this is the case, the industry involves, for many, working hours that are outside the 9-5, Monday-Friday traditional working day. This is to some unattractive and means that the drawing pool for potential employees is diminished.

In addition, the industry is made up of predominantly small businesses that operate on low margins. This makes it difficult for the industry to compete with industries that are in a boom cycle of higher returns that can afford to pay higher wages to attract workers.

The industry has developed and is implementing a vocational education and careers campaign that promotes the opportunities that the industry presents to a range of potential employees.

The resources (developed under the Discover Hospitality brand) feature a series of motivations that are designed to attracted younger job seekers, those looking to change careers, older workers, those in the welfare system and Indigenous Australians.

The industry need to be behind the implementation of the career and education strategy to better prepare itself with a workforce to meet future needs.

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8 The industry should seek to utilize the new training places announced by the Federal Government to support these strategies.

Priority Area 4: Better workforce planning

Significant and wide-ranging data about the current and predicted tourism and hospitality workforce is available in a range of government agencies.

However there are significant gaps, the data is not available in the one place and it is not provided in an easily accessible way to business. The many small business which dominate the industry find it hard to use in everyday operational settings.

It will be impossible to accurately predict and respond to the challenges confronting the industry without the availability of timely information on current and future labour market information. This information needs to be linked to broader industry and economic development processes at the regional, state, and national level.

Improved information is essential to support growth projections and investment decisions.

For many smaller businesses in the industry, everyday management decisions are similarly fraught due to a lack of operational data.

Industry has been provided with Commonwealth funding to establish a process to explore the feasibility of consolidating existing data sources into a comprehensive labour force information system. This system will assist businesses at the regional level by providing a profile of the current and future labour force and specific challenges. The profile will analyse such things as:

- The size and makeup of existing regional workforce.
- The number of high school and tertiary students.
- Level of unemployment and underemployment.
- Demographic profile of community and tourism and hospitality labour force.
- Industry growth projections.
- Options to increase the regional labour force.

Regional plans and workforce development plans should work together to maximise the benefit delivered to industry and the Australian Economy.

The profiles would cover the different sectors within the tourism and hospitality industry and provide appropriate regional projections of whole of industry, sector-specific and occupation-specific workforce and skill needs.

Support from our IAC members