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ABSTRACT

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE PLANNING PROJECT

Australia is confronted with the global experience of technological and demographic changes that present both challenges and opportunities. All developed nations are heavily reliant on their capacity to drive economic growth through innovation and this in turn is dependent on the skills and knowledge of their workforces[1].

There is a growing amount of international research and documentation that demonstrates the link between the application of workforce planning processes, targeted workforce development strategies and increased productivity. It is now clear that if you are not developing workforce planning capabilities that enable you to produce evidence (supply-gap analysis and risk assessment of supply) on which to base your workforce decisions, your organisation will be less competitive in the labour market [2].

Local Government Councils across Australia need access to relevant and quality data to manage their current and future workforce needs as well as a good understanding of internal and external labour trends to ensure that they are retaining, developing and attracting the right people to meet service demands and strategic objectives.

The Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) has undertaken several workforce planning projects over the years to assist the Local Government sector in South Australia to respond to emerging trends and changing needs that impact on the workforce.

The project currently being undertaken involves six comprehensive workforce planning pilot projects - in small, medium and large country and metropolitan Councils. The pilot projects are testing current thinking and approaches and the knowledge and data gathered will then be used to establish a workforce planning service that will be available to all South Australian Councils.

The pilot Councils received assistance and support from the LGA and experienced workforce planning and workforce development advisors to assist the participating Councils to undertake workforce profiles and supply gap calculation projections and from this develop comprehensive evidence based workforce plans and workforce development strategies. The workforce profiles focused on gathering relevant workforce planning data both from the organisational perspective and directly from the Council employees. This information was then integrated into the supply gap calculations which determined supply risk and overall risk mitigation strategies. The workforce development strategies focused on staff retention, succession planning, recruitment, training, mentoring, resource sharing and collaborative initiatives and practices.

This paper outlines the process undertaken for this innovative project with the six diverse pilot projects, and the summary results from the workforce data collection, the workforce plans and the workforce development strategies.

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[1] Leitch 2006 Review of Skills, prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills final report. Treasury www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/leitch Foreword
[2] Julie Sloan 2010 The Workforce Planning Imperative

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BACKGROUND

Local Government is an employment and economic driver that delivers key social, environmental and economic services to communities across Australia. It operates within a dynamic and complex economic, legislative and industrial environment.

To be effective, Local Government as with all other sectors requires a skilled workforce, but it competes with other spheres of government and the private sector to attract and retain skilled staff. It also faces a raft of challenges arising from the shift in Australia's population demographics and an extensive and ongoing program of governance reform. Not only does it need to accommodate an increasingly diverse and mobile workforce, it also has an ageing workforce and needs to plan to replace skills and knowledge and to consider job redesign as an avenue to create a better match between available supply and service demands.

Workforce capacity and associated productivity are the most important levers for success in achieving organisational reform and operational priorities. Conversely, inadequate planning, skills shortages and labour market competition pose the real threat of directly contributing to an underachieving sector.

To deliver on organisational priorities, Councils need to fully understand their current and future workforce – who they have, who they need and when they need them – and the data must be evidence based not just anecdotal. A thorough understanding of internal and external labour markets is essential to attract, develop and retrain the right people for the job at hand. Regional South Australia, in particular, faces added challenges in engaging the skills and expertise required.

NATIONAL HISTORY

In April 2006 Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) National facilitated a Skills Shortage Forum in Canberra to explore and define skills shortage issues in Local Government. An outcome of the forum was the formation of a National Local Government Skills Shortage Steering Committee and the development of a National Skills Shortage Strategy for Local Government.

Five key initiatives were identified in collaboration with the State, Territory and Commonwealth Governments in the National Local Government Skills Shortage Steering Committee (2007) *National Skills Shortage Strategy for Local Government : New ways of thinking – Doing business differently*[3]. These are summarised as follows:
1. Establishing a virtual Local Government Centre for Excellence (Leadership)
2. Adopting "New Ways of Working" which address the demand drivers of skills shortage
3. Developing a range of Local Government training and professional development initiatives to address shortages in the supply of appropriately skilled workers.
4. Attracting new workers, to address the decline in the natural rejuvenation of the Australian workforce

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[3] National Local Government Skills Shortage Steering Committee (2007) *National Skills Shortage Strategy for Local Government : New ways of thinking – Doing business differently*

5. Promoting local government an "Employer of Choice" to progress community understanding of local government as a responsive, community-engaged and multi-faceted sector with diverse and rewarding career opportunities.

In November 2008, the Rudd Government announced an $8 million commitment to funding a Centre of Excellence for Local Government to help improve the capacity of the sector's workforce. Following the second meeting of the Australian Council for Local Government (ACLG) in June 2009, the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) was set up as a collaboration of universities and professional bodies including the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG), University of Canberra, Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) National and the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA).

The role carried out by the National Local Government Skills Shortage Steering Committee has since been taken over by ACELG's National Workforce Development Reference Group. ACELG has set up a Local Government Practice Unit to formulate and implement a national workforce development strategy and related measures to assist in addressing the sector's workforce challenges, build capacity and make Local Government a national employer of choice.

The goals of the Practice Unit are:
- To establish a national workforce development reference in place of the National Skills Shortage Steering Committee to provide an interface between ACELG and the sector.
- To review previous skills strategies against current developments and economic conditions to inform completion of the Federal Government's National Local Government Workforce Strategy and a Local Government Workforce Development Blueprint and Action Plan, linked to the strategy.
- To implement Local Government Workforce Development Blueprint recommendations and Action Plan in order of priority, beginning with the establishment of a minimum National LG Workforce Data Set.
- To develop and implement a National Local Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.
- To convene a National Local Government Workforce Development Forum on an annual basis.

SA HISTORY

The Local Government Association (LGA) of South Australia is a membership organisation that provides quality service and leadership relevant to the needs of member Councils. There are 68 Councils (in both regional and metropolitan areas) in SA which are supported by 9,000 employed Council employees and 740 elected Council Members.

The LGA undertook two workforce planning projects in 2001 and 2005 to develop sector wide workforce profiles. The profiles were accessible to all SA Councils to enable them to compare their own workforce data with that of the sector as a whole. The profiles provided Councils with an understanding of contemporary workforce issues at the macro level and could be used as the basis for the development of individual Council workforce plans and development strategies.

The LGA of SA (2001) *Workforce Planning for Local Government in South Australia – Councils in Profile*[4] identified a comprehensive list of workforce planning issues that required further work. A summary of these recommendations follows:
1. The introduction of new legislation and functional and financial reform were identified as key issues impacting on Councils during the conduct of this study
2. The project identified the lack of data available in Councils regarding the educational/ qualification profile of their workforces

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[4] LGA of SA (2001) *Workforce Planning for Local Government in South Australia – Councils in Profile*

3. The study identified the increasing changing nature of IT in Councils and to some degree the lack of use of IT in delivering Council services
4. The study revealed difficulties in recruitment in specific functional areas such as planning, environment, health, accounting and natural resource management
5. The project revealed that the Senior Officers classification criteria in the Municipal Officers Award (MOA) may not be meeting the needs of Councils given the changing nature of positions covered by it
6. The consultations revealed that Councils appear concerned with the future of enterprise bargaining and in particular the desirability to identify further productivity gains and strategies to measure these gains
7. During the conduct of the project the issue of changes in service delivery approaches being undertaken, considered or researched by Councils was raised however there was insufficient data to draw conclusions regarding the impact of service delivery changes on the workforce
8. The consultations revealed an increasing need for leadership development amongst employees in Councils
9. The project revealed that respondents felt that demographic profiles were changing and so were the needs of communities. These changes represent challenges for Councils and employees alike in terms of meeting service needs
10. Salary surveying is an increasing service sought by Councils and offered by the LGA industrial team when Councils are deciding or assessing enterprise agreement quanta
11. The study identified some disproportionate representation between genders in some functional groups that could benefit from some specific research and corrective strategies
12. Several issues were identified with the award classification levels in the Municipal Officers Award (MOA) and Local Government Employees (LGE) Award
13. The study identified the need to address employee relations strategies and policies to manage the ageing workforce in Local Government in South Australia (which is slightly higher than the national average)
14. Employees 15 to 19 years of age are the smallest age group of the total study group. This suggests that Local Government in South Australia need to place a greater emphasis on recruiting young people. The under-representation of young people, apart from limiting diversity in Local Government, also flags future problems with the availability of suitably skilled and trained employees
15. The analysis has revealed a minimal number of positions for trainees and apprentices in all the functional areas
16. The survey reveals that there is a lack of balance between employment types and gender which, given the degree of difference, needs further exploration
17. The study reveals that the Human Services Functional Group has the lowest overall average length of service with the Environmental Functional Group also being well below the overall average
18. The information gathered through the survey regarding absenteeism and turnover could be expanded to collect data categorised into awards, functional areas etc to enable more detailed analysis
19. The ability to compare the statistical information gained against "like" industries in "like" functional groups was difficult to achieve in this study.

The recommendations from the LGA of SA (2005) *Workforce Planning for Local Government in South Australia 2005 Update[5]* are summarised as follows:
1. The lower levels in the classification structures are rarely used as the labour market tightens and a tendency towards 'over-classification' appears to be occurring to adequately compete for labour
2. The development of pathways for women in non-traditional roles such as heavy vehicle driving is recommended to address loss of skilled labour to the mining industry

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[5] LGA of SA (2005) *Workforce Planning for Local Government in South Australia 2005 Update*

3. The development of a broad cultural diversity program with an aim to include policies and procedures designed to increase indigenous and non-English speaking background labour to join Councils
4. The report establishes a significant increase in the portion of Council employees engaged in human services
5. The average age of a Council employee has increased by one full year since 2001
6. Approximately one-quarter of the workforce in Local Government is engaged on terms other than full time
7. The average length of service has fallen indicating the workforce is more likely to seek other employment opportunities although it should to be noted that retention levels in Local Government are significantly better than in private enterprise
8. Over-Award payments are now the norm in the majority of Councils.

Many of the recommendations from these two workforce planning profiles were addressed individually by a series of projects undertaken by the LGA in subsequent years. However, the findings from these profiles and the national priority being given to workforce planning encouraged the LGA to provide more comprehensive assistance and support to South Australian Councils to raise the level and sophistication of the workplace planning activities currently in place.

In late 2009, the LGA and the Department of Planning and Local Government (DPLG) made a funding submission to the Australian Government's Local Government Reform Fund for a comprehensive program titled *'Improving SA Councils' Asset and Financial Management Practices'* which had a workforce planning component. The LGA also committed considerable Local Government Research & Development Scheme (LGR&DS) funds to the overall project, some of which were earmarked for workforce planning activities.

In February 2010 the Australian Government approved funding for part of the project but the workforce planning component was still being considered as part of a possible second round of Reform Funding.

The work undertaken for the *Improving SA Councils' Asset and Financial Management Practices Program* included a *Managing for the Future – Performance Improvement Program* that was rolled-out progressively across Councils. It involved a comprehensive assessment of each Council's progress in the areas of Strategy & Planning, Annual Planning & Budgeting, Governance & Management and Capacity & Resilience (workforce planning was included as part of the Capacity & Resilience work) to establish a baseline position for reform work undertaken to date, and preparation of a continuous improvement plan to guide further reform work.

The workforce planning assessment asked questions around the existence of workforce/human resource plans that link to Strategic Management Plans; articulated standards of service; employee skills information identified by work group; and employee qualifications information identified by work group. It also requested assurances that the Council regularly monitored and reviewed staffing levels and staffing capabilities; took action to identify skills gaps; and reviewed and updated its workforce/human resources plan annually.

The workforce data that was gathered from the performance improvement program indicated a high priority need for workforce planning to be undertaken across the sector and this reinforced the call for the LGA to assist in this area.

The LGA has only recently been informed (November 2011) that the second round of Local Government Reform Funding has now been approved and this will greatly assist the future roll-out of workforce planning support to all Councils.

The LGA is also currently undertaking a *Local Excellence – Councils Working Together for Communities Program*. The Program incorporates a range of new reform activities that the LGA is seeking to undertake

with Councils and also includes current activities that fit within the aims of the Program. Workforce planning is a key component of much of this work.

The Local Excellence Program aims to:
- Redefine the role and functions of Councils in key areas of activity
- Consolidate opportunities and identify service innovation using test sites
- Enhance the skills of staff and Council Members in governance and community engagement
- Identify the barriers to service delivery, governance and intergovernmental excellence in SA and strategies to raise performance
- Undertake research to enhance future State/Local Government relations.

For further information on the LGA Local Excellence Program please follow the link
www.lga.sa.gov.au/goto/localexcellence[6]

AIMS

The LGA was keen to assist South Australian Councils to raise the level and sophistication of the workplace planning activities they currently undertake and to link with the work being undertaken under the *Managing for the Future – Performance Improvement Program* and the *Local Excellence – Councils Working Together for Communities Program* (as mentioned above).

It was envisaged that this assistance would take the form of providing practical advice and support to prepare comprehensive workforce plans that include strategies covering skills gaps, staff retention, succession planning, recruitment, training, mentoring, resource sharing and collaborative initiatives/practices.

It was originally intended that the project would be undertaken in four parts – see **Attachment 1.** However as a final decision on the second round approval of Local Government Reform Funding had not been made by the middle of 2010 the LGA decided to make a start on the Pilot Projects (Stage 3 of Attachment 1) using seed funding from the Local Government Research & Development Scheme as it was felt that the project was a critical part of advancing the SA Local Government Reform process.

METHODS

In July 2010 an Expression of Interest was placed on the SA Tenders website advertising for consultants interested in undertaking the project. Fourteen replies were received from a mixture of local and interstate consultants. The LGA undertook a comprehensive selection process and invited seven for an interview. This was a very educative process for the LGA and assisted with the later refining of the project brief.

At the end of the interview process the LGA found it hard to choose between two very experienced consultants who could both provide evidence of their workforce planning expertise in a variety of local and national workforce planning projects. As part of the decision the LGA looked beyond the pilot projects to the later provision of a workforce planning service for all SA Councils and decided that it would benefit the sector if both consultants were engaged to work together on the project so that SA Councils would have access to two specialised consultants with a thorough understanding of the workforce planning needs of Local Government.

Julie Sloan, Director and Founder Workforce Planning Australia and Wendy Perry Head Workforce Planner Workforce BluePrint were chosen as the specialist consultants for this project. Their extensive workforce planning knowledge and expertise has been crucial to the success of the venture.

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[6] LGA of SA (2011) *Local Excellence – Councils Working Together for Communities Program*
www.lga.sa.gov.au/goto/localexcellence

The LGA invited Councils to nominate either as a pilot Council or as participants in a Workforce Planning Reference Group via LGA Circular. There was a high level of interest from Councils and the following representative group of small, medium and large country and metropolitan Councils was chosen to undertake the pilots:

- Municipal Council of Roxby Downs (small country – 20 employees)
- Renmark Paringa Council (medium country – 46 employees)
- Naracoorte Lucindale Council (large country – 101 employees)
- City of Prospect (small metropolitan – 83 employees)
- Adelaide Hills Council (medium metropolitan – 194 employees)
- City of Onkaparinga (large metropolitan – 673 employees).

The pilot Councils received assistance and support to prepare comprehensive workforce plans and workforce development strategies covering skills gaps, staff retention, succession planning, recruitment, training, mentoring, resource sharing and collaborative initiatives and practices.

A Workforce Planning Reference Group was also set up with 21 members - 15 of whom were from non-pilot Councils who were keen to be involved. This was a good way of keeping all the interested Councils involved in project discussions and decisions. We held four face to face meetings for the project and these meetings really assisted pilot Councils to network with each other and keep on track with the project.

The Workforce Planning Process[7] was identified as:
- Step 1 – Build a business case for workforce planning in Council and establish a workforce planning team to implement a workforce planning strategy and employee communication strategy.
- Step 2 – Link corporate, business and workforce planning by demonstrating the link between business and workforce plans.
- Step 3 – Identify mission critical job groups (skills shortage) and hard to fill job groups in conjunction with the executive management team to build workforce planning capabilities at manager level.
- Step 4 – Identify and address data gaps for mission critical job groups as existing workforce information systems may be deficient.
- Step 5 – Undertake supply and demand gap calculations for mission critical job groups and develop a systematic approach to workforce data gathering and analysis.
- Step 6 – Assess workforce supply sources to meet supply gaps for mission critical job groups and prepare supply gap calculations in conjunction with executive management team and the workforce planning team.
- Step 7 – Undertake risk assessment of mission critical job groups in conjunction with the executive management team and the workforce planning team.
- Step 8 – Use the evidence to verify mission critical job groups by risk assessment and timeframe and submit aggregated data to the executive management team for verification.
- Step 9 – Identify Council-wide workforce development strategies and make recommendations in conjunction with executive management team and the workforce planning team.
- Step 10 – Prepare succession plans firstly for mission critical job groups in conjunction with managers and then address all job groups.
- Step 11 – Prepare Council-wide Workforce Plan for timeframes consistent with corporate plan.
- Step 12 – Monitor workforce planning outcomes by measuring the impact of workforce planning against outcomes of workforce development strategies.
- Step 13 – Map and evolve Council workforce planning by integrating workforce planning into normal business planning cycle.

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[7] Julie Sloan (2011) *Workforce Planning : Training handouts*

The process undertaken for the six pilot projects was:
  A   Provide an information/briefing session for the pilot Councils and reference group to start the projects. This meeting was held in May 2011.
  B   Agree on data to be collected to provide the workforce information required. This included designing online employee and organisational surveys using a *workforce-profiler*^{TM} Workforce Planning Australia tool. See **Attachment 3** for the questions used on the organisational survey.
  C   Collect data from all employees at pilot Councils.
  D   Collect data at the organisational level from pilot Councils – the workforce planning questions used by the SA Local Government Grants Commission General Information Return (GIR) were used to collect the organisational level data so that the pilot Councils would not have to duplicate the collection of data for this year's GIR.
  E   Analyse data and provide individual reports for pilot Councils and a summary report for the LGA.
  F   Identify mission critical jobs.
  G   Identify supply gaps using a *Know-IT*^{TM} Workforce Planning Australia tool.
  H   Prepare workforce plans for pilot Councils.
  I   Prepare workforce development strategies for pilot Councils.

It was determined at project commencement that there was no consistent or reliable source of specific Local Government workforce planning data from which to build workforce plans. Accordingly a Workforce Profile Employee Survey was prepared (see B above) using Workforce Planning Australia's internet based tool *workforce-profiler™*. Each of the Councils applied their own communication strategy to engage their workforce in responding to the survey.

Workforce Planning Australia provided each of the participating Councils with a framework for gathering and reporting on workforce planning initiatives. The Councils were also provided with direct coaching and support to complete their framework documents, to gather and analyse their data and to link these outcomes to their workforce development strategies.

A comprehensive summary of the data collected via the Workforce Profile Employee Survey (see B & C above) was produced providing both evidence based (quantitative) and qualitative data on the following topics:
  •   Demographic profile
  •   Occupation profile
  •   Workforce experience, qualifications and training needs
  •   Current and future work demands
  •   Working life aspirations
  •   Recruitment – what attracts the Local Government workforce
  •   Retention – what retains the Local Government workforce.

Each of the 6 participating Councils received Workforce Profile Employee Survey Reports relevant to their Council as well as individual sub reports which provided cross tabulation on specific areas of interest.

Councils also received a Workforce Profile Organisational Survey Report (see B & D above) which provided a summary of their organisational wide data. See **Attachment 3** for details of the survey questions.

Using the evidence based data gathered through the employee and organisational workforce profiles, participating Councils then completed a supply gap calculation on either their whole workforce and/or specific job groups using a Workforce Planning Australia Supply Gap Calculator Tool *Know-IT™.* The supply gap calculation was based on current workforce levels, mobility trends, demand projections and risk assessments.

Councils were able to identify the projected workforce supply gap for their Council over a nominated timeframe and/or the projected workforce supply gap for a specific job group. Using this quantified supply

gap they were then able to determine the level of risk they had for retaining or recruiting their required workforce.

The pilot Councils gathered and analysed an enormous amount of evidence based workforce planning data and used the workforce planning tools and templates to assist them to integrate workforce planning into normal business practice. They then worked with Wendy Perry, from Workforce Blueprint on developing workforce development strategies to address the issues identified.

The template followed for the workforce plans prepared by the six pilot Councils included:
- Business case for workforce planning in Local Government incorporating national and state environmental scans – see Step 1 above
- Impact of the broader sector overview on the individual Council – see Step 1 above
- Links to Council strategic and business plans – see Step 2 above
- Workforce data story – mission critical and whole of Council job groups – see Steps 3 and 4 above
- Supply gap calculation for mission critical job groups – see Steps 5 and 6 above
- Risk assessment of supply – see Steps 7 and 8 above
- Risk mitigation/workforce development strategy – see Step 9 above
- Succession plans – see Step 10 above
- Next steps – integrating workforce planning into normal business practice at Council – see Step 13 above

Councils received one-on-one coaching and mentoring, and assistance with the analysis of the workforce planning reports to identify workforce gaps, issues and priorities. A workforce action plan template was used to provide a structured approach to addressing each workforce gap and the linkages to existing workforce development initiatives and Council's strategic plan. The Human Resource Manager also received support with presenting the results of the workforce planning report to their leadership team and advice on internal communication and dissemination strategies if required.

FINDINGS

The Council's participating in, and those observing, the Workforce Planning project were highly motivated to build their workforce planning capabilities to generate evidence based workforce planning data and to engage their Council executive team in building workforce planning systems and capabilities across their respective Councils.

The response rate to the employee survey was high, achieving a majority of each workforce in all six Councils, with rates ranging from 56% through to 100%. This produced an average response rate of 75% which is extremely high. A snapshot of the pilot Councils' responses to the Workforce Profile Employee Survey is included as **Attachment 3.**

A snapshot of the data collected from the six pilot Councils via the Workforce Profile Organisational Survey reveals:
- The workforce gender is 46% female and 54% male
- The 'outside' workforce was almost wholly male
- The junior officers salary stream shows a gender bias of 64% female and 36% male
- The senior officers salary stream shows a gender bias in reverse with 36% female and 64% male.

Early indications from the six pilot Councils on their mission critical/hard to fill job groups are:
- Experienced Managers/Leaders
- Qualified and experienced Plant Operators for external works groups
- Qualified Environmental Health Officers
- Building Surveyors
- Experienced General Inspectors

- Planners
- Policy Planners
- Experienced Procurement Officers
- Experienced Communication and Social Media Officers
- Experienced Marketing and Branding Officers
- Experienced Records Management Officers.

Some of the workforce development strategies identified by the pilot Councils included:
- Attraction and recruitment strategies that market and position Council as an 'Employer of Choice' (especially in regional locations) and make use of the survey data on why people choose to work at Council. This is particularly for mission critical/hard to fill job roles
- Succession planning for mission critical/hard to fill job roles including Manager/Director/General Manager positions and external Works officers nearing retirement
- Knowledge management for mission critical/hard to fill job roles
- Phased retirement for mission critical/hard to fill job roles
- Cadetships, traineeships and apprenticeships particularly for mission critical/hard to fill job roles
- Buddying, coaching and mentoring particularly for mission critical/hard to fill job roles
- Job role redesign particularly for mission critical/hard to fill job roles
- Reward, recognition and appreciation strategies
- Retention strategies and leadership training for team leaders/coordinators/supervisors to enable them to move up to leadership/management roles as they become available
- Retention strategies and skills development training for younger employees
- Upgrading performance management systems
- Communication and change management initiatives to improve communication channels and workplace culture
- Work life balance initiatives around flexible work arrangements
- Cultural diversity recruitment to reflect community profile
- Ongoing professional development for professional staff
- Training needs analysis (against a competency framework) to facilitate skills matching and enable full utilisation of skills, development of learning and development plans, and identification of future skills needs and career pathways
- Training in civil construction
- Training in workplace health and safety including bullying and harassment and stress management
- Training in the use of technologies
- Training in workload management.

While each pilot Council had a number of workforce development strategies in place before undertaking the project, taking a workforce planning approach has meant that they have connected all existing initiatives together and identified a number of areas that weren't being addressed. Working through the allocation of priorities with the leadership team has given a sense of ownership and input as well as focus on what is most important. All pilot Councils will be carrying out further work on identifying the future (desired) workforce profile as well as undertaking a training needs analysis for all Council employees.

CONCLUSIONS

The project participants and the project observers have been on a steep workforce planning and workforce development learning curve throughout this LGA initiative. They have indicated that they wish to continue developing and maturing their workforce planning knowledge and capabilities. Many indicated one of the key challenges they now face is securing stronger executive management engagement in the workforce planning process – the ongoing daily demands of Council workloads create barriers to ensuring that workforce planning and workforce development is given the priority required to ensure that Councils are positioned to respond to the changing demographic climate and profile of both the workforce and the community.

What is clear from the participants is that they collectively recognise the importance of this issue to Local Government to assist with managing the dynamic environment in which it delivers its services.

From undertaking the workforce planning and workforce development process the participants have a good understanding of the steps in the process, the data and evidence required, the importance of engagement and communication across Council, and specific strategies to address workforce gaps and issues.

The findings from the pilot Councils echo the recurring themes from all of the previous studies but for the first time there is some evidence based data from the employees to confirm our anecdotal understandings.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The LGA has implemented a significant workforce planning and workforce development project in 2011. It has built the skills and competencies of the participating Councils and the Councils that observed the project. It now has the opportunity to expand on the project by taking the key learnings, and transferring these more broadly across SA Local Government.

Specifically LGA will consider:

o   Workforce planning service offered to all SA Councils to enable them to undertake workforce planning and workforce development activities. The service to be offered in conjunction with the *Managing for the Future – Performance Improvement Program* currently being offered.

o   Producing a Local Government Workforce Planning Manual which can be used by SA Councils undertaking workforce planning activities and as a training manual to continue to build skills and competencies in workforce planning and workforce development in SA Local Government.

o   Building a Local Government Competency Framework to be used by Councils wanting to undertake a training needs analysis and identify the future (desired) workforce skills profile with core skills (required by all job roles), functional skills (common skills required by multiple job roles) and job specific skills. The competency framework could be mapped to units of competency from national training packages to ensure that any training needs can be met by accredited training units.

o   Using the Workforce Planning Manual and the Competency Framework as the basis of unaccredited training courses on workforce planning and training needs analysis for Councils in both regional and metropolitan locations through the LGA Education & Training Service.

o   Maximising the value of the Workforce Planning Manual and the Competency Framework by offering a comprehensive accredited training program consistent with Standards Australia guidelines on workforce planning.

o   Establishing a secure web page to house the workforce data gathered through the evidence based supply gap projections to assist with identifying training and development requirements by job groups and by timeframes across SA Councils. The data will also assist in determining the risk assessment of the SA Local Government workforce supply and the aggregated risk mitigation/ workforce development strategies.

o   Evaluating and measuring all workforce planning and workforce development initiatives to gather data on productivity, retention and recruitment outcomes in SA Local Government over time.

Attachment 1

PROCESS FOR UNDERTAKING WORKFORCE PLANNING PROJECT

STAGE 1 – DATA COLLECTION	
	Task
1.1	Set up Reference Group/Champions Team for Workforce Planning project (8-10 HR Network members)
1.2	Provide information/briefing session
1.3	Establish engagement/communication strategy
1.4	Identify survey questions (including some high level competency questions and some local environmental scan questions) to be used to collect whole of Council workforce data from Councils
1.5	Circular to all Councils explaining project and asking for a nominated person for the project at each Council
1.6	Collect general Council-wide data from nominated person at each Council using *workforce-profiler*^{TM} tool
1.7	Analyse data collected in 3 above and produce reports as follows: • State-wide • 6 Regions • Large, Medium, Small Country • Large, Medium, Small Metropolitan

STAGE 2 – MISSION CRITICAL	
	Task
2.1	Identify 3-5 skills shortage/mission critical jobs from the data collected in 1.4 above
2.2	Modify survey questions to be used for individuals to complete
2.3	Collect data from all individual employees in mission critical jobs across all SA Councils using *workforce-profiler*^{TM} tool
2.4	Use the supply gap calculator tool *Know-IT*^{TM} (including some competency questions) to assist in identifying workforce development strategies for mission critical jobs
2.5	Analyse data and provide State-wide reports on each of the mission critical job groups
2.6	Invite input from relevant professional associations/ networks
2.7	Prepare state-wide workforce plans and workforce development strategies for each of the mission critical jobs

STAGE 3 – PILOT PROJECTS	
	Task
3.1	Set up pilot Workforce Planning Projects - large, medium and small metro; large, medium and small country Councils
3.2	Set up pilot Champions Teams (6)
3.3	Provide information/briefing session for 6 Councils
3.4	Collect data from all employees in pilot Councils using *workforce-profiler*^{TM} tool
3.5	Use the supply gap calculator tool *Know-IT*^{TM} (including some competency questions) to assist in identifying workforce development strategies for pilot Councils
3.6	Analyse data and provide individual reports for each pilot Council
3.7	Prepare individual workforce plans and workforce development strategies for each pilot Council

STAGE 4 – SUMMARY & TOOLS	
	Task
4.1	Publish summary of project including results from Stage 1 and best practice from Stages 2 & 3 and conclusions drawn on suggested strategies for covering skills gaps, staff retention, succession planning, recruitment, training, mentoring, resource sharing and collaborative initiatives/ practices
4.2	Circular to all Councils encouraging them to undertake Workforce Planning with tools available
4.3	Develop workforce planning tools including: • Local Government Workforce Planning Manual • Templates for covering skills gaps, staff retention, succession planning, recruitment, training, mentoring, resource sharing and collaborative initiatives/ practices
4.4	Provide workforce planning training in regional and metro locations across the State
4.5	Set up a secure web page to house workforce data
4.6	Encourage Councils to update their online workforce planning data regularly – methodology and timelines to be determined

Attachment 2

WORKFORCE PROFILE ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL SURVEY FOR WORKFORCE PLANNING PROJECT

Local Government Association of South Australia

WORKFORCE PLANNING AUSTRALIA

LGA SA Workforce Planning Project 2011

ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL WORKFORCE PROFILE SURVEY

Introduction

This survey complements the 2011 LGA Workforce Profile Survey for employees as it gathers broader organisational information from Council which is relevant to Workforce Planning and Workforce Development. Your input into this profile will also assist you in completing your Grants Commission 2011 General Information Return questions.

If you have any questions about the survey please contact Julie Sloan, Director Workforce Planning Australia on (08) 82697433 or mobile 0417861350 or email jsloan@workforceplanning.com.au or Wendy Perry, Managing Director, Wendy Perry and Associates Pty Ltd on (08) 8387 9800 or mobile 0416 150 491 or email wendy@workforceblueprint.com.au

This survey will be open from Friday 1st July 2011 until 6:00pm Monday 25th July, 2011.

1. *In which Council do you work?
   - ○ Adelaide Hills
   - ○ Naracoorte Lucindale
   - ○ Onkaparinga
   - ○ Prospect
   - ○ Renmark Paringa
   - ○ Roxby Downs

   - ○ Other *(Please explain)*

2. *What is your job title at Council?
   - ○ Manager Human Resources
   - ○ Manager Governance & Community Services
   - ○ Manager Employment & Customer
   - ○ Manager, Human Resources
   - ○ HR Officer Risk Management/Events/OHS&W
   - ○ Manager Community Development, Governance & Strategic Support

   - ○ Other *(Please explain)*

PART A.
This section seeks information which is being asked in the Workforce Profile survey and is also asked in the Grants Commission General Information Return.
Please express the number of persons employed by the Council as Full Time Equivalents

3. Full Time Equivalents

Employment Data is collected by the Commission for use by Councils, the Local Government Association, the Public Administration Industry Training Advisory Body (South Australia) Inc. (SA PAITAB), and other interested parties.

Employment categories continue to be aligned with those commonly used by councils. This ensures consistency with the categories used by the Local Government Association in their workforce questionnaires.

There are four main categories:

1. Engineering / Infrastructure
2. Human Services
3. Environmental Services
4. Corporate Services

Each main category is divided into several sub-categories, including a sub-category called 'Management / Admin'. Where an employee is working in the 'Management / Admin' sub-category, and works in more than one main category (eg 'Corporate' and 'Environmental'), please apportion the FTE between the different categories.

1. Engineering / Infrastructure	*Staff FTEs at 30/06/2011*
Management / Admin	
Engineering, Professional	

Works Managers	
Administration	

Works / Horticulture

Construction, Maintenance of	
Roads, Bridges & Other Works	
Parks & Gardens - Works *eg gardeners*	
Sundry Trades *eg Quarry Workers*	
Other *(please specify)*	

Technical

Engineering, Other *eg Draftsperson, Surveyors*	
Other *(please specify)*	

Support

Stores/ Purchasing	
Mechanics	
Other *(please specify)*	

Asset / Facilities

General Maintenance *eg Home Handyman, Lockmaster, Caretaker*	
Cleaners	
Street Cleaning	
Caravan Parks	
Cemeteries	
Garbage Collection & Disposal	
Garbage Tip Maintenance	
Electricity Production, Reticulation & Maintenance	
Sundry Trades *eg Airport Groundsmen / Aerodrome Officer*	
Other *(please specify)*	

Any other positions that do not fit into above groupings

Other *(please specify)*	

Total Engineering / Infrastructure	

2. Human Services	*Staff FTEs at 30/06/2011*
Management / Admin	
Senior Officers	
Administrative Officers	
Community Development	
Community Development Officers *eg Cultural Awareness, Youth Liaison*	
Crime Prevention	
Other *(please specify)*	
Economic Development	
Economic Development Officers	
Tourism	
Tourism Officers	
Community Services	
Information Officers	
Bus Drivers - Community Bus Services	
-Health & Welfare	
Community Services Officers *eg Community Centre Coordinators, Youth Workers*	
Home Nursing / Respite / Community Care	
Aged Care	
Childcare Centres	
Neighbourhood / Housing Support	
-Recreation & Culture	
Recreation Officer	
Swimming Pools	
Recreation Centres	
Community Arts / Theatres	

HACC Funded

Home & Community Care Officers	

Library

Librarians, Professional	
Librarians, Other	
Librarians, Administration	

Any other positions that do not fit into above groupings

Other *(please specify)*		

Total Human Services	

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3. Environmental Services	*Staff FTEs at 30/06/2011*
Management / Admin	
Senior Officers	
Administrative Officers	

Planning

Planning *eg Planning Officer, Planning Inspector*	
Other *(please specify)*		

Building

Building Officer/ Inspector	
Other *(please specify)*		

Health

Environmental Health Officer	
Immunisation	
Other *(please specify)*		

General Inspectorial

Public Conveniences - Inspection	
Traffic & Parking Control	
Dog Control	
Animal & Plant Control	
Other *(please specify)*		

Miscellaneous

Fire Control / Prevention *eg Fire Prevention Officer*	
Coastal Camping and Foreshore Protection	
Environmental Planning/ Projects *eg LA21, Pollution Prevention*	

Any other positions that do not fit into above groupings

Other *(please specify)*		

Total Environmental Services	

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4. Corporate Services	*Staff FTEs at 30/06/2011*
Management / Admin	
Senior Officers	
General Administration	

Strategic Planning / Policy Development

Strategic Planning Officers	

Finance

Finance	

Human Resources

Human Resources	

Information Technology

Information Technology	

Records / Rates

Records Management	
Rates Officer / Cashier	

Customer Service

Customer Service Officers	
Call Centre Officers	

Contracts Management

Contracts Management Officers	

Any other positions that do not fit into above groupings

Other *(please specify)*	

Total Corporate Services	

Total Council FTEs	

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4. Terminations of Employment

Please provide the number of FTE terminations of employment. Include only staff employed by the Council. <u>Do not include Agency Staff or Contractors.</u>

Council staff FTEs	*Year ending 30/06/2010*	*Year ending 30/06/2011*
Total number of FTE terminations of employment		

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5. Sick Leave (Paid and Unpaid)

Please provide the number of FTE days of sick leave taken by Council staff. Include all sick leave, paid and unpaid. Include only sick leave days taken by Council staff. <u>Do not include sick leave days taken by Agency Staff or Contractors.</u>

Council staff FTE days of sick leave	*Year ending 30/06/2010*	*Year ending 30/06/2011*
SA Municipal Salaried Officers Award (SAMSOA formerly MOA)		
LGE award		
Other classification structures		
Total		

PART B.
This section seeks information which is being asked in the Workforce Profile survey and is also asked in the Grants Commission General Information Return.
Please count all persons employed by the Council. Do not express as Full Time Equivalents. That is count each person as one, whether they work full or part-time

6. Total Number of Employees?

	Female	*Male*
Total		

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7. Gender and Age

Age	*Female*	*Male*
15 years - 19 years		
20 years - 24 years		
25 years - 29 years		
30 years - 34 years		
35 years - 39 years		
40 years - 44 years		
45 years - 49 years		
50 years - 54 years		
55 years - 59 years		
60 years - 64 years		
65 years and over		
Total		

8. What is the gender and employment status of your workforce (please include employees paid by the Council who are on leave e.g. maternity leave, leave without pay, long service leave)?

Employment Status	Female	Male
Permanent - Full Time		
Permanent - Part Time		
Casual		
Trainees		
Fixed Term contract less than 2 yrs		
Fixed Term contract greater than 2 yrs		
Total Employees on Payroll		

9. Gender and Length of Continuous Service

Length of Service	Female	Male
0 years - 2 years		
2 years - 5 years		
5 years - 10 years		
10 years - 15 years		
15 years and over		
Total		

10. Gender and Classification

Classification	Female	Male
SA Municipal Salaried Officers Award (SAMSOA formerly MOA) - Senior Officers		
Level 1		
Level 2		
Level 3		
Level 4		
Level 5		
Level 6		
Level 7		
Level 8		
Level 9		
Level 10		
Level 11		
Level 12		
Sub-Total		

SA Municipal Salaried Officers Award (SAMSOA formerly MOA)	Female	Male
Junior Officer		
Level 1A		
Level 1		
Level 2		
Level 3		
Level 4		
Level 5		
Level 6		
Level 7		
Level 8		
Sub-Total		

LGE Award	Female	Male
Grade 1		
Grade 2		
Grade 3		
Grade 4		
Grade 5		
Grade 6		
Grade 7		
Grade 8		

	Female	Male
Grade 9 (if applicable)		
Grade 10 (if applicable)		
Grade 11 (if applicable)		
Sub-Total		

Other Awards

	Female	Male
Other (please specify)		

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11. Gender and Occupation Stream

The LGA and Grants Commission have been asked to collect specific information about women in senior positions in local government. This question seeks to collect this information across the range of awards and classifications that may be used in local government.

Note that 'Senior Officers - non-classified' refers to officers employed under a common law contract with no level specified under an award who are working at levels commensurate with the SAMSOA award levels listed below.

Classification	Female	Male
Engineering		
SAMSOA award - General Officers Levels 6 and above		
SAMSOA award - Senior Officers Levels 1 - 4		
SAMSOA award - Senior Officers Levels 5 and above		
Senior Officers - non-classified		
Human Services		
SAMSOA award - General Officers Levels 6 and above		
SAMSOA award - Senior Officers Levels 1 - 4		
SAMSOA award - Senior Officers Levels 5 and above		
Senior Officers - non-classified		
Environmental Services		
SAMSOA award - General Officers Levels 6 and above		
SAMSOA award - Senior Officers Levels 1 - 4		
SAMSOA award - Senior Officers Levels 5 and above		
Senior Officers - non-classified		
Corporate Services		
SAMSOA award - General Officers Levels 6 and above		
SAMSOA award - Senior Officers Levels 1 - 4		
SAMSOA award - Senior Officers Levels 5 and above		
Senior Officers - non-classified		
Other		
Other (please specify)		
Total		

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12. Trainees

Number	Female	Male
Trainees paid via Council Payroll		
Trainees not paid via Council Payroll (ie paid via Accounts Payable OR by another body)		

Total No. of Trainees by Payment Method	Female	Male
Award		
SAMSOA		
LGE		
Other (please specify)		
Total No. of Trainees by Award		

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13. Gender and Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Female	Male
Of Non-English speaking background *		
Of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent **		
Total		

This means a person who was born overseas in a non-English speaking country, with one or both parents born overseas in a non-English speaking country and/or speak a language other than English at home. The following countries (other than Australia) are considered English speaking countries: New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Canada and USA

**An Aboriginal person is defined as a person who is a descendent of an Indigenous inhabitant of Australia and identifies as Aboriginal)*

PART C.
This section will assist with workforce development strategies in particular those relating to skills and competency requirements

Participating Councils will be asked to revisit this survey and complete Part C after the findings from Part A and B have been analysed.

Attachment 3

SNAPSHOT OF RESPONSES TO THE WORKFORCE PROFILE EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Response Rates:
- Average response rate across the six Councils was 74%

Participation rates by Council

Council	Potential respondents	Actual respondents	Response rate (%)
Adelaide Hills	194	119	61.3
Naracoorte Lucindale	101	57	56.4
Onkaparinga	673	381	56.6
Prospect	83	62	74.7
Renmark Paringa	46	45	97.8
Roxby Downs	20	20	100.0
Average response rate across Councils			74.47

Category of Employment:
- 7% indicated they had management roles
- 28 % indicated they had team leader, supervisor or coordinator roles
- 28% indicated they had administrative services roles
- 62% indicated they were 'inside' workers
- 35% indicated they were 'outside' workers

Age Profile:
- 59% were between 40 – 59 indicating an ageing workforce

Working Arrangements:
- The most striking feature was the security and full time nature of the employment of the sample with 71% full time with permanent conditions of employment and 15% permanent part time

Length of Employment:
- The largest concentrations were in the 2-15 year bracket with 25% 2-5 years; 20% 5-10 years and 15% 10-15 years

Highest Level of Qualifications:
- 31% Associate Diploma, Degree or Graduate Diploma
- 30% Certificate
- 7% Trade/Apprenticeship
- 9% Licences (eg Backhoe Licence)
- 15% School

Interest in Pursuing Further Qualifications:
- High proportion of the sample (68%) were interested in further training and skills development for their role in Council

Reasons for Choosing to Work in Council:
- 67% Security (permanence) of work
- 65% Ease of location
- 54% Regular hours
- 51% Flexible working arrangements
- 51% Working conditions
- 50% Level of enjoyment from the work
- 49% Diversity of work
- 49% Supportive work environment
- 47% Service to the community

Career Intentions – Remaining with Current Employer:
- 93% wish to continue their career with their employing Council for the foreseeable future

Career Intentions – Preferred Career Direction
- 44% remain in the current role
- 9% remain at the same level but in a different role
- 41% achieve a more senior role

Career Intentions – Expected Time in the Paid Workforce
- 63% intend to remain in the paid workforce from 11-26 years
- 14% nominated a period of 6 years or less

The Role of Location as a Retention Factor
- 75% indicated that their Council's location is a factor influencing their retention

Interest in Phased Retirement Options
- 31% interested with 58% of these indicated moving to part time as their preferred option.
- 44.3% considered it not relevant to them

Barriers to Continuing as an Employee of Council
- 27% no barriers
- The most frequently nominated barriers by the 73% remaining were: not feeling valued and respected; being able to attract a higher salary elsewhere for the same work; and negative internal politics

Current Use of Flexible Work Options:
- 70% have flexible work arrangements
- The most frequently used flexible work options were: time in lieu; rostered days off; part time; staggered hours; and working from home from time to time

Hard to Fill Job Groups:
- The most frequently nominated job groups were: experienced machinery operators, especially plant operators and grader operators; management roles of various kinds; planning staff; experienced tradesmen; and engineers

Managing Hard to Fill Job Groups:
- 62 % training of existing employees
- 48% retaining existing employees under negotiated arrangements
- 37% offering alternative working arrangements around these jobs
- 22% job or job group redesign

Working Smarter, Differently, More Effectively:
- The most frequently nominated suggestions were: making better use of information communication technologies, increasing use of electronic documentation, reporting etc; more streamlined work processes, reducing duplication; better communication between staff, and between management and staff; and better matching skills to the work role being undertaken

Changing Work Demands
- 56% indicated that their job had changed in the past five years

Future Skills Anticipated in Current Jobs
- The most frequently nominated suggestions were: skills related to emerging new technologies, in particular, IT related, as well as GIS and new technologies that bring about changes in machinery & equipment; skills associated with compliance with legislation and new legislation, including in relation to climate change; and project management and contract management skills

Strategies Suggested to Retain Local Government Staff
- 59% increasing recognition and reward for multi skilled workers
- 55% creating an ongoing and accredited learning and training environment
- 53% establishing a career path
- 50% flexible working hours, including part time and working from home
- 50% manageable workloads
- 50% study/training opportunities
- 46% exchange programs
- 44% reward and recognition programs that reward length of service