

## **SOUTH WEST CORRIDOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **Background**

The South West Group is developing a Workforce Development Plan for the South West Corridor of Metropolitan Perth in partnership with the Kwinana Industries Council, the Kwinana Industry Education Partnership, South West Corridor Development Foundation Inc, South Coast Economic Gateway, Bridging the Gap, Challenger TAFE, Department of Industry and Resources, LandCorp, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Peel Area Consultative Committee and Perth Area Consultative Committee.

The plan will seek to respond to the growth in the region over the next 15 years stimulated by:

- 1) The housing and servicing requirements of an additional 100,000 residents. Around thirty per cent of Perth's subdivision activity is within the region
- 2) The development of 2,000 hectares of industrial land and the growth in manufacturing
- 3) The infilling of existing industrial land, particularly in the Kwinana Industrial Area and IP14 Area at East Rockingham
- 4) The expansion of the Australian Marine Complex
- 5) Improvements in transport infrastructure and the development of transit orientated development zones at Canning Bridge, Murdoch, Cockburn Central, Kwinana (Wellard) and Rockingham
- 6) Development of the \$1.3 billion Kwinana Quays port
- 7) A new \$1.8 billion 643 bed tertiary care teaching hospital at Murdoch
- 8) The multi billion dollar opportunities flowing from development of Western Australia's mineral and oil and gas projects
- 9) The multi billion dollar opportunities arising from defence procurement and maintenance

The ageing workforce within the existing industry will produce a fundamental shift in the demographic profile of employees as a large tranche of older workers retire over the next decade. Replacement skills will need to be sought from a community which has had an aspiration of tertiary education rather than trade training.

Regional industry views the creation of a new workforce as being of fundamental importance to the future economic success of the region.

The South West Group has received funding of \$100,000 under the National Skills Shortages Strategy to carry out a regional workforce plan.

The Workforce Plan Facilitator has been appointed and a request for proposal has been advertised for consultants to develop the plan.

## **PROJECT AIMS**

### **Engage Industry, Small Business and the Community**

The South West Corridor is a complex, productive economy with skills development challenges and diverse employment opportunities. The Project seeks to build linkages between a wide range of players in the economy, training providers, schools and the community.

### **Develop or identify a tool to apply in assessing Skills Requirements and Areas of Skills Shortages**

Anecdotal evidence points towards significant skills shortages in the short to medium term and difficulties in recruiting new employees with appropriate skills sets. Poaching and importing skills are unsustainable practices for local companies and identifying a tool that can be applied on a periodic basis to gather and update comprehensive information on current skills needs and those anticipated in the near future is essential.

### **Addressing Gaps in Current Training**

While there is strong industry guidance for education institutions and training providers in the region there are opportunities for current training providers to work more closely with industry to provide skills to existing workers.

Challenger TAFE is particularly keen to extend its work with industry to develop new customer focused training solutions that incorporate skills recognition and skills training in the workplace.

### **Lift Employment Participation Rates**

Over 80,000 of the region population aged over 15 years are not in the workforce and despite the local employment opportunities unemployment is increasing to above the Western Australian average. New approaches involving work readiness and transition to employment programs as well as part time work, job sharing and flexible employment options are needed to lift Participation Rates. The Project will also take transport challenges into account.

### **Improve the Understanding of Small to Medium Enterprises of the Labour Market**

There are over 26,000 businesses in the region. Many of the smaller businesses have difficulty with staff recruitment and do not support services for selecting and training staff. SMEs will be consulted on the types of information that would address their Labour Market needs.

Mapping the providers of Australian Government employment services and developing a region portal to communicate with regional businesses will provide a rich source of user friendly information for SMEs as part of this Project. The Industry Direct web site has 1,475 regional businesses on its data base and will be used to assist communication with SMEs.

### **Increase take up of Apprenticeships and Traineeships**

The regional industry has a strong demand for the traditional trades. The Project will promote the regional opportunities for fulfilling employment and the wide range of career opportunities through apprenticeships and traineeships.

### **Improve communication between governments, industry, businesses and the community**

The Project will seek to improve the links between the three spheres of government, chambers of commerce, business enterprise centres, training providers and the community.

### **Improve communication between industry and regional schools**

There are over 100 schools within the region and 1000 significant businesses. The Project will establish direct links between schools and businesses for placements, training, school visits, career guidance and industry visits.

An Industry- Education Portal will be established providing contacts in each sector and training opportunities. Competitions, scholarships and award winners would also be communicated on the Portal.

The proposed Defence Training Scholarships are an example of the type of activity that could be promoted on the Industry-Education Portal.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Consultation tool for identifying Skills Needs and Shortages
- Participation rate increase
- Reduced Disability Pensions and other Centrelink payments
- Sponsorship Levels of Apprenticeships and Traineeships by Industry
- Annual measure of tailored programmes and courses and participants in those courses
- Successful frameworks established
- Hits on Regional Employment Portal
- Hits on Industry-Education Portal
- Completion of four case studies