



Australian Government

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN

Bundaberg-Hervey Bay Priority Employment Area

Local Employment Coordinator
Steve Hogan



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The document must be attributed as the Regional Employment Plan – Bundaberg-Hervey Bay Priority Employment Area.

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REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN

Local Employment Coordinators have been appointed to 21 priority employment areas through the Priority Employment Area initiative. They will work closely with employers, employment services providers, local communities and all levels of government to help drive local solutions to labour market issues. This involves identifying opportunities, issues and helping to coordinate responses from businesses, government and other organisations to put in place strategies to help address them.

Local Employment Coordinators also develop and implement a Regional Employment Plan that sets out their key goals and strategies to address unemployment, skills and labour issues for their priority employment area.

The Local Employment Coordinator for the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area is Mr Steve Hogan. Mr Hogan has developed this Regional Employment Plan with support from an Employment Project Officer and an Advisory Committee made up of key local stakeholders who will work with him to implement the strategies set out in the plan.

The committee comprises key local stakeholders and includes:

- Mr Cameron Bisley, Bundaberg Regional Council
- Mr Grant Maclean, Regional Development Australia Committee Wide Bay-Burnett
- Mr John Suthers, Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment
- Ms Donna Constable, Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment
- Paul Collits, University of Southern Queensland
- Mr David Spear, Fraser Coast Opportunities Ltd
- Mr Lance Stone, Maryborough Chamber of Commerce, Chief Executive Officer Fraser Coast Training Employment Support Service
- Ms Marion Eddison, CRS Australia
- Mr Kim Roberts, Community Solutions
- Mr Kerry Blackman, Gidarjil Aboriginal Corporation
- Ms Tanya O'Shea, Impact Make Your Mark Bundaberg
- Ms Judi Heard, Impact Make Your Mark Hervey Bay
- Ms Cheryl Graffunder, NEATO Employment Services, Bundaberg Chamber of Commerce
- Mr Michael Hopkins, Master Builders Association
- Ms Sheryl Woznitza, Busy at Work
- Ms Linda Mortimer, Department of Employment
- Michael Meehan, Department of Employment

The Department of Employment acknowledges the traditional owners of the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area and their elders past and present recognising their continuing connection to country. This Regional Employment Plan strives to build and harness mutually respectful relationships and reflect community priorities in employment, skills and jobs development for the region.

The Local Employment Coordinator for the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area is Steve Hogan.

Steve can be contacted on 0400 111 518 or at steve.hogan@employment.gov.au

Steve is supported by an Advisory Committee comprised of key local stakeholders.

SUMMARY

This regional employment plan for the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area aims to maximise employment opportunities in the region.

The broad goals outlined in this Regional Employment Plan are supported by specific strategies to:

- increase the wealth of the region;
- protect against future economic downturns;
- support diverse career choices of young people;
- build up the local economy by improving the productivity of businesses and workers and maximising labour force participation;
- support employers and retrenched workers to link with Job Services Australia providers, the Australian Government Department of Human Services - Centrelink and Registered Training Organisations; and
- reduce the drift of young people from the region by creating career pathways that encourage them to stay or return to contribute to the region's economic growth.

The activities endorsed under the Plan align with existing regional plans, including the Fraser Coast Regional Council Economic Development Strategy, the Bundaberg Regional Economic Development Strategy, the Regional Development Australia Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Roadmap, the Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Plan and the Regional Employment Plan of the adjoining Southern Wide Bay-Burnett priority employment area.

The plan identifies opportunities for collaboration across the local labour market, including three levels of government, employment, training and community sectors and industry to optimise local investment and its impact on job creation and skills development.

The Queensland and Australian Governments' business, employment and skills development assistance programmes and local government's economic and community development functions will be used to support industry to maximise its capacity to employ local people. These programmes will also help the community develop a strong and diverse skills base, targeted at skill shortages and priority industry sectors.

The Plan's initiatives will improve the links between local labour market supply and demand and will harness existing programmes and resources through extensive employer and provider networks and collaborative projects.

The Local Employment Coordinator, Advisory Committee and other stakeholders will use established local committees and networks to drive specific initiatives that are consistent with their mandates, providing an ongoing mechanism to sustain initiatives beyond the term of the Local Employment Coordinator.

Seven (7) key goals have been identified by the Local Employment Coordinator and the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay Advisory Committee:

- Support employment, workforce participation and skills development including through maximising Government investments;
- Help retrenched workers transition into new employment and/or training;
- Facilitate employment and training opportunities for job seekers with a focus on industries experiencing skill shortages;

- Contribute to broadening the economic base of the priority employment area and promoting the growth of emerging industries by improving career and employment prospects for young people;
- Improve the productivity of the priority employment area by maximising labour force participation and skills development;
- Improve the transition of young people into local employment and skilling opportunities; and
- Build strategic connections that take advantage of growing business and job opportunities.

This Plan identifies activities for the 2013-2014 Financial Year.

BUNDABERG-HERVEY BAY PRIORITY EMPLOYMENT AREA

The Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area covers the Local Government Areas of the Bundaberg Regional Council, the majority of the Fraser Coast Regional Council and part of the Gladstone Regional Council, and corresponds to the previous seven Local Government Areas of Bundaberg, Burnett, Hervey Bay, Isis, Kolan, Maryborough and Miriam Vale. The Federal Electorate of Hinkler and significant parts of the electorates of Flynn and Wide Bay fall within this priority employment area.

The priority employment area lies within the larger Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Force Region of Wide Bay-Burnett. As some statistics are only available at the larger Labour Force Region level, care must be taken when applying statistical information to the priority employment area.

The federal electorate of Hinkler and part of the electorates of Flynn and Wide Bay fall within this priority employment area.

The federal electorate of Hinkler and part of the electorates of Flynn and Wide Bay fall within this priority employment area.



Figure 1: Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area

Unemployment is higher, and participation lower, in the priority employment area than the national average.

In general, the priority employment area is characterised by a higher than average unemployment rate and lower than average workforce participation rates, levels of education and income levels, with a significant proportion of the population receiving income support payments.

Employment and labour market participation

Labour market conditions have weakened in Bundaberg-Hervey Bay over the last year. To illustrate, the region’s unemployment rate has risen by 1.5 percentage points over the period, to 9.1 per cent in September 2013, well above the national rate of 5.6 per cent. The region’s participation rate has declined by 6.2 percentage points over the period, to 50.8 per cent in September 2013, well below the national average of 64.9 per cent. Moreover, the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area has historically exhibited a high degree of labour market disadvantage and, with around one in four people (or 24.6 per cent) in receipt of income support in September 2013, conditions in the region remain weak.

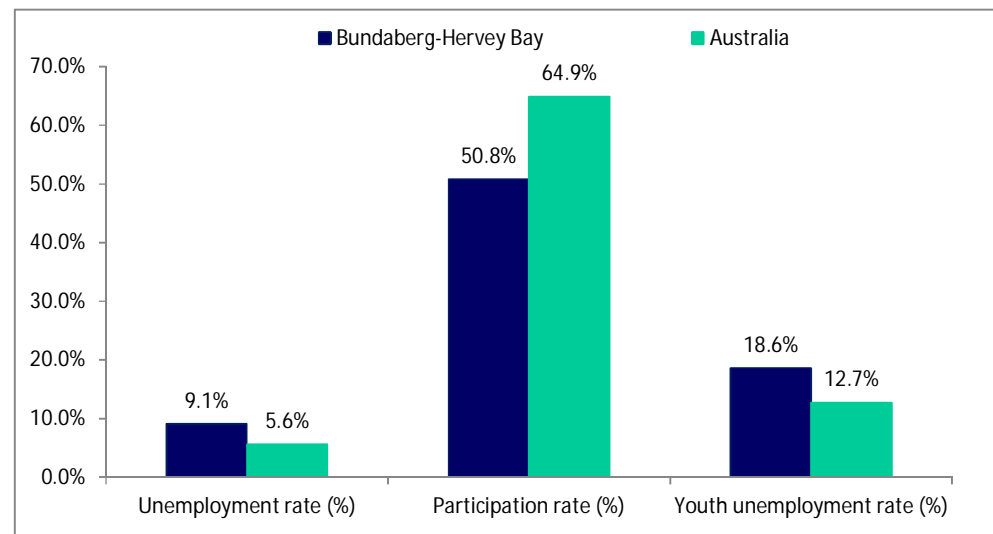


Figure 2: Unemployment and participation rates in the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area

Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, September 2013 (Cat No. 6202.0) and ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – Electronic Delivery September 2013 (Cat No. 6291.0.55.001). Data for Australia are in seasonally adjusted terms, while data for the region are three-month averages of original estimates, with the exception of youth data which are 12-month averages of original data. The priority employment area of Bundaberg-Hervey Bay is approximated by the ABS Labour Force Region of Wide Bay-Burnett.

The youth (15-24 year old) unemployment rate in the priority employment area stood at 18.6 per cent in September 2013, significantly higher than the national average of 12.7 per cent. The Indigenous unemployment rate in the priority employment area was 24.9 per cent in August 2011 (latest available Indigenous labour force data at the regional level), compared with a national average of 17.1 per cent.

Issues that have been identified that influence unemployment rates include low levels of education attainment and mental health issues (both diagnosed and undiagnosed).

The Resource Sector Opportunities Study undertaken by Regional Development Australia Wide Bay-Burnett in late 2011 indicates a good supply of labour and ample supply of affordable housing in Wide Bay-Burnett¹. These are potential

¹ Regional Development Australia Wide Bay-Burnett Resource Sector Opportunity Study September 2011

benefits that could be used to attract business to the priority employment area in the future.

Education

The population in the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area has a significantly below average level of educational attainment. As at August 2011, only 39.4 per cent of the region's working age population had finished Year 12 (compared with 59.0 per cent for Australia), while just 11.3 per cent had attained a bachelor degree or above (compared with 24.4 per cent for Australia).²

The priority employment area has campuses for Central Queensland University and the University of Southern Queensland; however the region experiences a high outflow of young people who study and find work elsewhere, largely within south-east Queensland.

This has flow-on effects as this key group is underrepresented in economic return to the region in terms of housing and retail spending and further strategies are required to attract young people to local campuses.

The strategies outlined under Goal 6 aims to address these issues.

Industry composition

The largest employing industries in the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area in 2011 were Health Care and Social Assistance (employing 32,100 workers or 14.4 per cent of total employment in Bundaberg-Hervey Bay), Retail Trade (28,200 or 12.6 per cent), Manufacturing (21,700 or 9.7 per cent), Construction (20,500 or 9.2 per cent) and Education and Training (18,400 or 8.2 per cent). The region's industry employment profile broadly aligns with the national profile, although Bundaberg-Hervey Bay has a higher proportion employed in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (6.6 per cent) compared with Australia as a whole (2.5 per cent) and a much lower proportion employed in the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industry (3.9 per cent compared with 7.4 per cent nationally).

Between 2006 and 2011, the largest decline in share of employment in Bundaberg-Hervey Bay was in Accommodation and Food Services, decreasing from 8.4 per cent in 2006 to 7.1 per cent in 2011, whereas employment share in this industry at the national level recorded a small increase (up by 0.1 percentage points to 6.6 per cent). The employment share in the Retail Trade industry in Bundaberg-Hervey Bay decreased from 13.8 per cent to 12.6 per cent over the same period. By contrast, the share of employment in the area in Health Care and Social Assistance increased from 12.3 per cent in 2006 to 14.4 per cent in 2011. This increase in share was slightly larger than nationally (from 10.8 per cent in 2006 to 11.9 per cent in 2011).

The occupational profile of Bundaberg-Hervey Bay reflects its Manufacturing and Construction base, with a comparatively high proportion of Technicians and Trades Workers (16.2 per cent of employment in Bundaberg-Hervey Bay compared with 14.4 per cent nationally). The area's profile also suggests a lower skilled workforce than nationally, with a lower proportion of workers employed as Managers (11.4 per cent compared with 13.1 per cent) or Professionals (14.6 per cent compared with 21.7 per cent) and a higher proportion employed as Labourers

Low educational attainment is a significant issue for the priority employment area.

² ABS Census of Population and Housing, August 2011 (latest readily available data at the regional level).

(14.5 per cent compared with 9.6 per cent) and Machinery Operators and Drivers (9.1 per cent compared with 6.7 per cent).

Source: ABS 2006 and 2011 Census of Population and Housing. The Bundaberg-Hervey Bay Priority Employment Area consists of the Wide Bay-Burnett Local Government Area (LGA), 2006.

Opportunities

The nearby Surat, Bowen and Galilee Basins and the Gladstone region have been identified as areas of significant economic and employment growth as the Liquefied Natural Gas and Coal Seam Gas industries develop and new coal mines open.

This presents opportunities for residents in the priority employment area to gain jobs either in those regions or with local employers accessing the supply chain in those regions. This also presents challenges in terms of retaining a sufficiently skilled workforce in the priority employment area. The increase in labour and accommodation costs is putting pressure on companies in these growth areas, resulting in some firms considering relocating to the priority employment area. Further opportunities may be present to attract businesses to relocate and create more local job opportunities.

The strategies outlined under Goal 7 aim to address these issues.

Agriculture and associated industries will provide opportunities for many in the region. However, as the industry is seasonal, the sector depends on casual external labour. The Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association is working with growers to create a permanent local workforce, which would involve some changes to their business model. Producers are also seizing the opportunity to add value to their products and these value-adding processes are increasing labour demand.

The strategies outlined under Goals 3 and 5 aim to address these issues.

Collaboration is another area of opportunity to maximise education, employment and training opportunities. The Local Employment Coordinator will work with the regional councils of Bundaberg and Fraser Coast, incorporating their economic development plans into the Local Employment Coordinator's regional activity to bring about positive change. The Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning is also developing a roadmap of activity for the region. The Local Employment Coordinator is also working with Regional Development Australia to ensure a coordinated response to the priority employment area's challenges.

The strategies outlined under Goal 1 aim to address these issues.

Bundaberg

The region's economy is based on its traditional sectors of agriculture, horticulture and related manufacturing. Tourism and other service industries are increasing, leading to a broader and more sustainable economy capable of taking up opportunities and better enduring downturns.

Opportunities for investment, development and value-adding are emerging at the Port of Bundaberg and in the region's aviation, tourism, manufacturing, innovation and technology, lifestyle and food sectors.

The growing resources sector will present opportunities and challenges in the priority employment area.

Agriculture and associated industries provide opportunities for many in the priority employment area.

Bundaberg's broadening economic base provides better opportunities for the area.

Combined, the agriculture, forestry and fishing and manufacturing industry sectors contribute almost a quarter of the region's gross regional product.³ Compared with the Hervey Bay (Fraser Coast) region, where the economy relies heavily on the service industry, Bundaberg's regional industry base is sustainable and robust.

The Bundaberg regional economy continues to grow, making it a significant economic contributor to the Wide Bay-Burnett region and the state.

Fraser Coast (Hervey Bay)

Fraser Coast has a strong, varied economy in an attractive and affordable location. Apart from being a popular tourism destination, the Fraser Coast is also one of Australia's fastest growing regions, with two major centres servicing a population of over 95 000.

The Fraser Coast is the gateway to the world heritage-listed Fraser Island and the southern region of the Great Barrier Reef. The rural townships and areas offer lifestyles with benefits from the nearby cities of Maryborough and Hervey Bay. Hervey Bay is the key tourism hub of the Fraser Coast, and Maryborough has unique Queensland heritage values as well as major manufacturing and engineering operations.

A key challenge for the Fraser Coast is to broaden local industry and protect against future economic downturns.

The Fraser Coast includes major road, rail, air and sea transport infrastructure as well as considerable shopping, dining and entertainment facilities. However, there are demands for local public transport and information and communication technology networks.

Industry development

There is a recognised need to diversify the priority employment area's industry base. Manufacturing and agriculture, together with tourism, education and health, play a significant role in the area's economy.

The manufacturing industry will require support for a skilled and available workforce and needs to broaden and attract new types of business. The strategies outlined in this plan will support the manufacturing industry to create a skilled, trained workforce, encourage business diversification and attract new businesses to the area to reduce risks in future economic downturn.

The building and construction industry relies heavily on the domestic market in the priority employment area. Builders are being encouraged to broaden their business opportunities by expanding into major public projects, creating a buffer against future economic downturns.

The health care industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the nation, and in the priority employment area, its impact is significant. The industry's high level of recruitment helped negate the contraction of many other industries across the region.

The aviation industry, particularly in Bundaberg, but also in Hervey Bay and Maryborough, may see opportunities increase as the industry expands. Through development of an aviation precinct in Bundaberg and the proposed developments

The Fraser Coast is one of Australia's fastest growing regions.

A key challenge is to broaden local industry and protect against future economic downturns.

The health care industry is becoming increasingly important to the local economy.

³ Bundaberg Regional Economic Development Strategy 2009-2014
[http://bundaberg.qld.gov.au/files/Bundaberg%20Regional%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202009-2014%20\(3\).pdf](http://bundaberg.qld.gov.au/files/Bundaberg%20Regional%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202009-2014%20(3).pdf)

across the region to attract new businesses and expand current businesses, there is great potential for the industry to grow.

The strategies outlined in Goal 4 are intended to address these issues.

Jobs and skills in demand

The Department of Employment's regular employer surveys provide an opportunity to assess the impact of labour market fluctuations on employer recruiting experiences. This provides useful information to help target or adjust activities.

The occupations most commonly reported by employers in the Bundaberg-Hervey Bay priority employment area as difficult to fill during the 12 months to October 2012 were:

Bachelor Degree or Higher Vocational Education and Training Qualifications	
Child Carers	Chefs*
Metal Fitters and Machinists*	Registered Nurses
Motor Mechanics*	
Other Vocational Education and Training qualifications and lower skilled occupations	
Truck Drivers*	Bar Attendants and Baristas
Aged and Disabled Carers	Dental Assistants
Waiters*	

*Occupations marked with an asterisk were also reported as difficult to fill in the region in September 2011, which suggests that employers have experienced persistent difficulty filling these vacancies.

Demand for skilled personnel in the hospitality, tourism and health industries across the priority employment area continues to be a major issue.

The priority employment area is heavily marketed for its unique and relaxed lifestyle, attracting an ageing population. The consequential growing demand for the provision of health-related training courses highlights the need to offer improved local education opportunities through the universities and technical and further education colleges.

Goals 2, 3, 5 and 6 detail strategies that will address these skills challenges and support the development of appropriate courses to satisfy the anticipated demand over the next five years and beyond.

There is also an ongoing need to increase apprenticeship numbers with a retiring labour force in the construction industry.

Demand from the resources sector will see the area potentially servicing the employment and commercial needs of large, geographically dispersed regions in the south and central west of Queensland.

Rather than the region sending much of its skilled workforce away to these areas, further planning to diversify local operations and bring in work for the existing workforce across the priority employment area could be an option.

There is high demand for skills in the hospitality, tourism and health industries.

The impact of opportunities in the resources sector provides a challenge for skills development in the region.

The strategies outlined under Goal 7 are intended to address these issues.

Transport

Airports are located at Hervey Bay, Bundaberg and Maryborough. Both Hervey Bay and Bundaberg have been upgraded to take commercial jet aircraft and all three offer growth capacity to support fly-in/fly-out operations to the resource sector and increased capacity for tourists.

The main rail line to the north travels through Maryborough and Bundaberg. This infrastructure is predominately used locally for passenger transport, with the Tilt Train providing a service to Brisbane. Train services offer potential for connectivity of the region to labour market opportunities in Gladstone but the current schedule could be more supportive.

A pre-feasibility study has commenced to investigate the development of a Queensland Rail fast train option from Bundaberg to Gladstone. Container transport on rail is currently not available within the priority employment area, resulting in reliance on the road network. This had a significant impact in early 2011 with flood waters cutting roads from the north and south, resulting in transport halts on goods and produce.

The 360 kilometre distance between Bundaberg and Brisbane is too long for a daily return trip by road, creating an opportunity for a potential merchandise or produce distribution centre in the priority employment area. This concept has received greater attention following the floods in early 2011. Local regional councils are trying to realise the potential of port facilities, with proposals for development in Bundaberg, Hervey Bay and Maryborough under consideration. Attracting new business and enhancing existing ones form the basis of these proposals.

There is an increasing demand for public transport to support the significant older population that lives in the Hervey Bay region and also Bargara. This population will place demands for additional community support services across the entire region. There is also a demand for regional bus services to meet the needs of school populations.

While addressing the fundamental issue of infrastructure to support transport is beyond the scope of this plan, opportunities to put in place local and specific project-based solutions will be explored through the strategies broadly outlined under Goal 5.

Airports in the priority employment area offer growth capacity to support fly in/fly out operations.

There may be opportunities to better utilise rail transport in Bundaberg-Hervey Bay.

There is an increasing demand for public transport services.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The Local Employment Coordinator and the Advisory Committee have identified seven (7) key goals for this Regional Employment Plan:

- Support employment, workforce participation and skills development including through maximising Government investments;
- Help retrenched workers transition into new employment and/or training;
- Facilitate employment and training opportunities for job seekers with a focus on industries experiencing skill shortages;
- Contribute to broadening the economic base of the priority employment area and promoting the growth of emerging industries by improving career and employment prospects for young people;
- Improve the productivity of the priority employment area by maximising labour force participation and skills development;
- Improve the transition of young people into local employment and skilling opportunities; and
- Build strategic connections that take advantage of growing business and job opportunities.

Each of these goals is also underpinned by the broader strategy of building and strengthening relationships between stakeholders including employment service providers, Registered Training Organisations, Energy Skills Queensland, local employers and the three tiers of government.

The Local Employment Coordinator will meet regularly with these stakeholders to share information regarding existing initiatives, programmes and services and identify opportunities to work collaboratively to develop projects which will maximise employment and training outcomes for local job seekers.

Goal 1: Support employment, workforce participation and skills development including through maximising Government investments

Strategies

- 1. Identify workforce development needs and emerging skill shortages and work to address these needs by:**
 - collaborating with and supporting local chambers of commerce, the Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, and regional industry associations such as the Wide Bay manufacturing network to develop a regional skills strategy to skill workers for the local manufacturing industry;
 - working with the Trade Training Centres to implement courses and provide training opportunities for local job seekers;
 - working with industry associations such as Energy Skills Queensland to undertake projects to up-skill job seekers for resource sector jobs in the Surat Basin; and
 - investigating projects to address horticultural skill shortages in the priority employment area by liaising with employment services networks, state and government bodies and industry groups.

2. Help employers to identify workforce development needs by:

- promoting and supporting the opportunities available through the Australian Government's initiatives such as the \$700 million National Workforce Development Fund;
- providing information and support to local industry through events such as workshops, information sessions and one-on-one meetings with individual employers to advise of labour market assistance;
- promoting the Australian Government Jobs and Skills Expos to increase job seeker, employer and industry turnout at the event in collaboration with local employment service providers and Advisory Committee members; and
- engaging with industry bodies to promote and encourage the development of proposals under the National Workforce Development Fund.

3. Support flood recovery and provide up-skilling opportunities for job seekers by:

- working in collaboration and developing projects with the Job and Skills Development Officers and regional Indigenous Employment Coordinator;
- working with councils, employment service providers and other stakeholders to facilitate work experience and training programmes for local job seekers; and
- Support the economic recovery efforts of local economic recovery committees established to address the devastation of major flooding throughout the region

4. Access available funding resources to increase the skills of job seekers, including people with disability, leading to employment and training opportunities. The Local Employment Coordinator will work with stakeholders and proponents to:

- develop proposals for funding through the Local Employment Coordinator Flexible Funding Pool;
- identify Local and State Government resources; and
- assist affected landowners and businesses and regional councils to access funding under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements to undertake projects to alleviate flood damage and provide job seekers with new skills.

Goal 2: Help retrenched workers transition into new employment and/or training

Strategies

1. Support retrenched workers by:

- working collaboratively with the Department of Human Services - Centrelink, the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment and other community support organisations to deliver a rapid and coordinated response; and
- meeting with company or administrative representatives to plan the transition of redundant employees to alternative employment or training.

2. Ensure all stakeholders quickly engage to support retrenched workers by:

- engaging with Job Services Australia providers and Registered Training Organisations when redundancies occur;
- organising information sessions for retrenched workers; and
- providing assistance with retraining and job referrals.

3. Provide immediate recruitment and retraining support for retrenched workers to move into alternative industries by:

- coordinating the efforts of Job Services Australia providers and other stakeholders to provide assistance such as resume preparation, skills recognition, training needs analysis, career planning and job search techniques; and
- linking retrenched workers to alternative employment opportunities in similar industries within the priority employment area, where possible.

Goal 3: Facilitate employment and training opportunities for job seekers, with a focus on industries experiencing skill shortages

Strategies

- 1. Identify emerging job opportunities and skill shortages** across the priority employment area by:
 - engaging with industry bodies, chambers of commerce and economic development staff at regional councils;
 - building relationships with employment service providers and other stakeholders to foster improved linkages between industry skills needs and training and recruitment opportunities;
 - continuing to link employment service providers with opportunities for participants in current skilling projects conducted through programmes funded by Australian Government and state programmes; and
 - working in conjunction with regional partners to undertake a skills survey of employment service providers' job seekers to identify potential workers for the resources sector and identify skill shortages across the priority employment area.
- 2. Plan and coordinate the roll out of Indigenous employment and skilling projects** across the priority employment area by:
 - working with the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment, the Regional Development Australia Wide Bay-Burnett Indigenous Employment Coordinator and Department of Employment's Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Coordinator; and
 - working with Indigenous Employment Programme panel members to up-skill Indigenous job seekers and support existing Indigenous employment projects already approved in the priority employment area.
- 3. Support job seekers into employment in industries with skill shortages** by maximising the use of Australian Government and state programmes, including:
 - promoting programmes such as Experience+, National Workforce Development Fund and Australian Apprenticeships Access Programme to employment services providers, training providers, industry and other stakeholders; and
 - working with Australian Apprenticeships Centres, Group Training Organisations and industry associations to encourage greater take up of apprentices through promotional and awareness campaigns, focussing on traditional trades in emerging industries with skill demands.
- 4. Identify and address emerging worker skilling and supply gaps** by:
 - developing partnerships with the University of Southern Queensland, Technical and Further Education and Registered Training Organisations to develop strategies to address these gaps;
 - working with training organisations such as the Wide Bay and Bundaberg Technical and Further Education and local Registered Training Organisations to provide training opportunities to job seekers identified in the resources sector skills survey; and

- undertaking a forum specifically targeting Indigenous job seekers to promote training and employment opportunities to equip them for positions suiting their qualifications and expertise, in partnership with Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Development Australia.

Goal 4: Contribute to broadening the economic base of the priority employment area and promoting the growth of emerging industries by improving career and employment prospects for young people

Strategies

1. Promote opportunities for business diversification by:

- working with Department of Employment's Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Coordinator, universities, technical and further education and other education providers to identify opportunities to attract international and Australian students and retain local students in the priority employment area; and
- improving links between businesses and community to promote diverse workforce development through information sharing at peak body forums and network meetings.

2. Support local businesses to employ local job seekers, with a focus on apprentices and out-of-trade apprentices, by:

- working with employers that obtain government and private enterprise infrastructure work and linking them with job seekers through the employment service provider network;
- connecting local businesses to Job Services Australia providers, group training organisations, Australian Apprenticeships Centres and the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment's out-of-trade apprentice register; and
- working with industry associations such as the regional Master Builders Association to increase awareness of the out-of-trade register and advocate new apprentices to construction businesses.

3. Develop new and emerging industries in the priority employment area including green jobs and knowledge jobs by:

- promoting the region as a 'sea change' and 'tree change' destination to knowledge economy workers and support the local regional councils in their activities to promote and attract businesses to the region; and
- working with Department of Employment's Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Coordinator, educational institutions and training organisations to provide appropriate educational and training opportunities to develop skills for new and emerging green industries and knowledge workers, including opportunities to up-skill existing workers in the region.

Goal 5: Improve the productivity of the priority employment area by maximising labour force participation and skills development

Strategies:

1. Promote vocational and university education assistance by:

- engaging stakeholders in workshops to promote Australian Government Skills Connect, Australian Apprenticeships Centres, National Workforce Development Fund and other Australian Government skilling programmes across the priority employment area; and
- distributing updates and information on new skilling initiatives through the Local Employment Coordinator networks on a regular basis, to encourage stakeholders to take up these new opportunities and support stakeholders to develop applications where appropriate.

2. Provide support for workers to develop skills by:

- collaborating with the Fraser Coast Regional Council, technical and further education, Australian Apprenticeships Centres, employer groups, chambers of commerce and other peak bodies to conduct a Fraser Coast Jobs and Careers Expo to provide job seekers with information about skilling, training and job opportunities;
- promoting the recognition of prior learning in formal meetings and industry forums to encourage businesses and employment service providers to up-skill workers;.
- promoting the engagement of mature age workers to industry and encouraging employers to retrain mature age workers through programmes such as Experience+; and
- working with employment service providers to facilitate volunteer and work experience activities that support skill and knowledge retention and transition to better equip job seekers for employment.

3. Encourage socially excluded groups to participate in the local economy by:

- supporting projects which specifically target job seekers in socially excluded groups through the Local Employment Coordinator Flexible Funding Pool; and
- liaising closely with Disability Employment Services providers across the priority employment area to develop projects and initiatives that will assist people with disability to gain sufficient skills for employment.

Goal 6: Improve the transition of young people into local employment and skilling opportunities

Strategies:

- 1. Engage local high school students in career planning and activities to encourage their retention in the priority employment area by:**
 - collaborating with key stakeholders, including the Schools Business Community Partnership Brokers;
 - promoting good practice work experience and school-to-work programmes that develop champions in industry;
 - increasing awareness of apprenticeship and traineeship programmes;
 - encouraging uptake of the Australian Apprenticeships Access programme, State Government projects and other programmes for young people; and
 - assisting in the delivery of these projects by creating linkages with local Job Services Australia providers and where appropriate, Registered Training Organisations.
- 2. Encourage school-to-work transition by:**
 - continuously engaging with Department of Employment's Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Coordinator to develop initiatives that support the transition of young people from school to employment or further education; and
 - assisting with the development of the Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Plan to ensure opportunities for collaboration across the region are fostered.
- 3. Provide a safety net for young people** who have discontinued education, are at risk of discontinuing, or have left the community by:
 - working with Youth Connections providers and School Business Community Partnership Brokers to identify opportunities to improve school retention; and
 - working with key stakeholders to encourage community and business engagement with schools in collaboration with Department of Employment's Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Coordinator.

Goal 7: Build strategic connections that take advantage of growing business and job opportunities

Strategies

- 1. Promote the priority employment area as a region for supply chain and labour force opportunities in the resource sector by:**
 - using workshops, forums and other networking activities to engage stakeholders in the region;
 - connecting to key stakeholders outside the region, including the Mining Industry Skills Council, Energy Skills Queensland, Queensland Resources Council and resource sector companies;
 - supporting Regional Development Australia and regional councils to develop and implement strategies to enhance connections between the region and resources sector opportunities, including fly-in/fly-out and drive-in/drive-out jobs; and
 - supporting the engagement of local businesses in supply chain opportunities.
- 2. Improve the capacity of the priority employment area to capitalise on opportunities available in the resource sector by:**
 - continuing to work with major bodies on the roll-out of assistance and training programmes in resource sector regions, including projects such as Energy Skills Queensland's Queensland Workforce Skilling Strategy; establishing a workforce development strategy to connect unemployed job seekers to resource industry opportunities in neighbouring fly-in/fly-out regions, such as the Coal Seam Gas and Liquefied Natural Gas industries in Gladstone; and
 - promoting attendance and engagement in the Queensland Government's Mining and Gas Jobs Expos and subsequent follow up activities.
- 3. Mitigate against the potential loss of key skilled workers from other industries to resource sector jobs by:**
 - collaborating with local businesses, the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment, the Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Australian Industry Engineering and Manufacturing Network, Master Builders Association, chambers of commerce and employment service providers to identify strategies to retain skilled workers or retrain existing workers;
 - running information sessions to connect businesses to training;
 - providing support to implement workforce development plans that focus on retention, up-skilling and backfilling strategies to reduce the risk and mitigate the impact of losing skilled staff; and
 - promoting effective workforce development strategies in the priority employment area.