

DEPARTMENT OF TRAINING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Skilling WA

A workforce development plan for Western Australia

Progress Report
for the period October 2012 – March 2013

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Executive Summary

Now into its third year, significant progress has been made towards the implementation of *Skilling WA – A workforce development plan for Western Australia (Skilling WA)*. As reported in the *Skilling WA* annual report (September 2012), all priority actions have either commenced, been completed or have been integrated into Government operations.

This report highlights key achievements for the six months to March 2013 and reveals that continued progress is being made by stakeholders in strengthening the capacity and capability of Western Australia's workforce. It reflects contributions made by government agencies, training councils and industry peak bodies in support of *Skilling WA*'s five strategic goals.

Highlights outlined in the report include:

Strategic goal 1

Increase participation in the workforce particularly among the under-employed and disengaged, mature-aged workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other under-represented groups.

- Reforms to the State Supply Commission's Open and Effective Competition policy to promote the employment of Aboriginal workers;
- Development of online tools and resources by the Department of Commerce promoting flexible work practices;
- Launch of the Aboriginal Business Directory WA to connect individuals with Aboriginal businesses and link them to employment opportunities; and
- Recognition of the success of the Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres, winning the 2012 Premier's Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management.

Strategic goal 2

Supplement the Western Australian workforce with skilled migrants to fill employment vacancies unable to be filled by the local workforce and address those factors which support a growing economy.

- Continued implementation of the *Western Australian Skilled Migration Strategy* and influencing national migration policy to meet the needs of Western Australia;
- Increasing the number of State nominated skilled migrants with occupations in demand to 4150 primary nominations in 2012-13;
- Processing improvements resulting in transparent and timely assessment of applications for the State and Regional Sponsored Migration Schemes; and
- Negotiations with the Australian Government on a national settlement framework aimed at strengthening the coordination of migrant settlement-related service delivery within and across jurisdictions.

Strategic goal 3

Attract workers with the right skills to the Western Australian workforce and retain them by offering access to rewarding employment and a diverse and vibrant community and environment to live in.

- Major investments in region building initiatives including Pilbara Cities, SuperTowns and regional Community Resource Centres;
- Enhancing infrastructure planning and coordination in Western Australia and the implementation of the State Government's *Affordable Housing Strategy*;
- Promotional activities by Training Councils to attract and retain employees in occupations and industry sectors experiencing skill and labour shortages; and
- Release of the Goldfields-Esperance and Wheatbelt workforce development plans (2013–2016) to address workforce challenges in these regions.

Strategic goal 4

Provide flexible, responsive and innovative education and training which enables people to develop and utilise the skills necessary for them to realise their potential and contribute to Western Australia's prosperity.

- 44 847 apprentices and trainees in training in Western Australia in December 2012, which represents an 18% increase since December 2011;
- A 17% increase in the number of Western Australians in training, from 128 000 in 2008 to 149 500 in 2012;
- Advancing reforms through the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform including the development of a training entitlement model for Western Australia; and
- Establishment of new traineeships and apprenticeships based on advice from Training Councils to meet the dynamic workforce needs of industry.

Strategic goal 5

Plan and coordinate a strategic State Government response to workforce development issues in Western Australia.

- High levels of workforce planning in the public sector with agency based workforce plans covering 99% of public sector workers;
- Development of an enterprise workforce planning and development package to assist small and medium businesses in meeting their workforce needs; and
- Cross jurisdictional collaboration and integration to develop and promote a national best practice approach in regional workforce planning and development.

Introduction

Skilling WA is the State Government's overarching workforce development planning framework to support activities to attract, develop and retain a workforce with the appropriate skills to service the economic and community needs of the State.

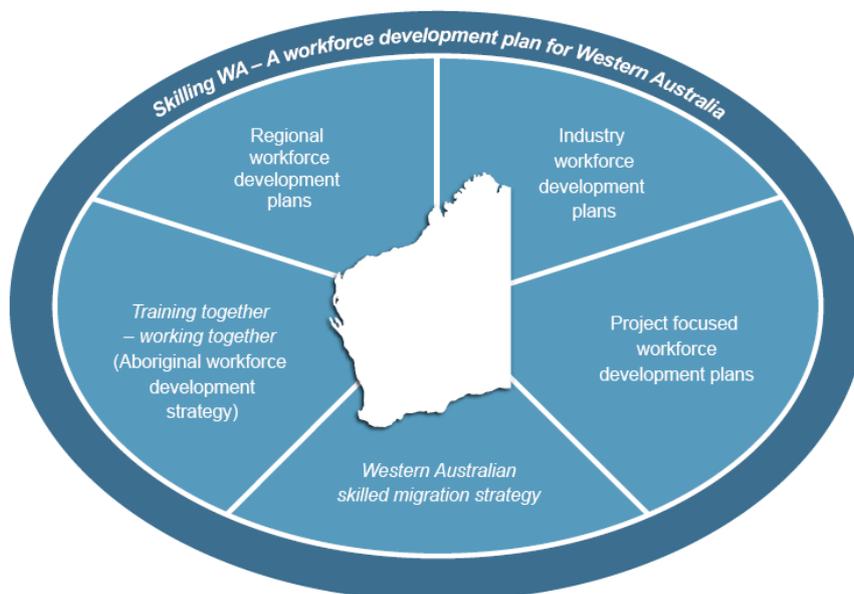
Launched in December 2010, *Skilling WA* was developed collaboratively with government, industry and community stakeholders to support the State's workforce needs now and into the future.

Skilling WA adopts a whole-of-government, evidence based and holistic approach to workforce planning and includes five strategic goals, 11 strategies and 68 short, medium and long term priority actions designed to address the State's workforce challenges.

The five strategic goals of *Skilling WA* are:

1. Increase participation in the workforce particularly among the under-employed and disengaged, mature-aged workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other under-represented groups;
2. Supplement the Western Australian workforce with skilled migrants to fill employment vacancies unable to be filled by the local workforce and address those factors which support a growing population;
3. Attract workers with the right skills to the Western Australian workforce and retain them by offering access to rewarding employment and a diverse and vibrant community and environment to live in;
4. Provide flexible, responsive and innovative education and training which enables people to develop and utilise the skills necessary for them to realise their potential and contribute to Western Australia's prosperity; and
5. Plan and coordinate a strategic State Government response to workforce development issues in Western Australia.

Figure 1: *Skilling WA* planning framework



This *Skilling WA* planning framework (see Figure 1) is inclusive of the State's industries and regions while also focusing on maximising individual worker's training and career outcomes. Each component of the framework both informs and is informed by the other components ensuring that overall workforce planning and development remains coordinated while eliminating any duplication of effort.

Key elements of the integrated framework include:

- Regional workforce development plans that are developed to take into account the specific needs of regional Western Australia;
- Industry workforce development plans developed by each of the State's ten industry Training Councils in collaboration with their stakeholders to reflect the needs of their industry sector;
- *Training together – working together*, an Aboriginal workforce development strategy designed to support Aboriginal people to gain the skills required to participate in the workforce;
- Project focussed workforce development planning designed to capture and address workforce development issues for major projects or projects of strategic significance to the State; and
- The *Western Australian Skilled Migration Strategy* developed to assist industry to fill skilled positions that cannot be met from the local workforce.

In mid-2012, the Department of Training and Workforce Development commissioned an independent evaluation of the *Skilling WA* planning framework. The evaluation concluded that *Skilling WA* provided a practical whole-of-government, integrated and collaborative approach to State workforce planning and development.

Skilling WA is continually reviewed to ensure its relevance and effectiveness is maintained. In this regard, this progress report serves as an important monitoring tool and provides useful input in shaping the current and future workforce development priorities for the State.

During 2013-14, the Department will be working with stakeholders to revise *Skilling WA*'s strategies to ensure that they remain targeted at addressing the State's workforce needs. Addressing the State's long term workforce development challenges including an ageing workforce and increasing completion for skilled labour will require continued collaboration from all stakeholders and an integrated approach to workforce planning and development.

Economic and Labour Market Outlook

Data on Western Australia's labour market suggests some softening over the six months to March 2013, with moderating employment growth and a slightly higher unemployment rate. However, conditions in the State's labour market remain relatively tight, with healthy wages growth and labour in parts of the market remaining scarce.

According to Deloitte Access Economics, rising costs, weaker commodity prices and uncertainty over the direction of the iron ore price have somewhat moderated prospects for the State's pipeline of major investment projects. In this light, Deloitte's *Investment Monitor* data for the March quarter 2013 reported a decline in both quarterly (-13.1%) and annual (-7.1%) terms in the value of the State's economic infrastructure projects. However, notwithstanding some uncertainty over iron ore prices, Woodside's decision to shelve its intended plans for the proposed \$43 billion Browse LNG project was the main contributor to these declines.

Western Australia continues to experience record investment activity when compared to the rest of Australia, with the same *Investment Monitor* data also showing that with projects worth a total of \$250.4 billion, the State currently accounts for over a quarter (27%) of the total value of national current or prospective investment projects. Also, separate ABS data on engineering construction work on projects already underway in Western Australia shows that there is a 'buffer' broadly equivalent to about a year and a half's worth of work still to be done¹.

While those parts of the State's economy linked to the resources sector have typically done well in recent years, conditions in some of the State's other sectors have been more mixed. Various factors such as the high Australian dollar, fiscal conservatism by households, continuing volatility in the international outlook, a soft local housing market and an unwinding of post-GFC stimulus measures have acted to moderate activity.

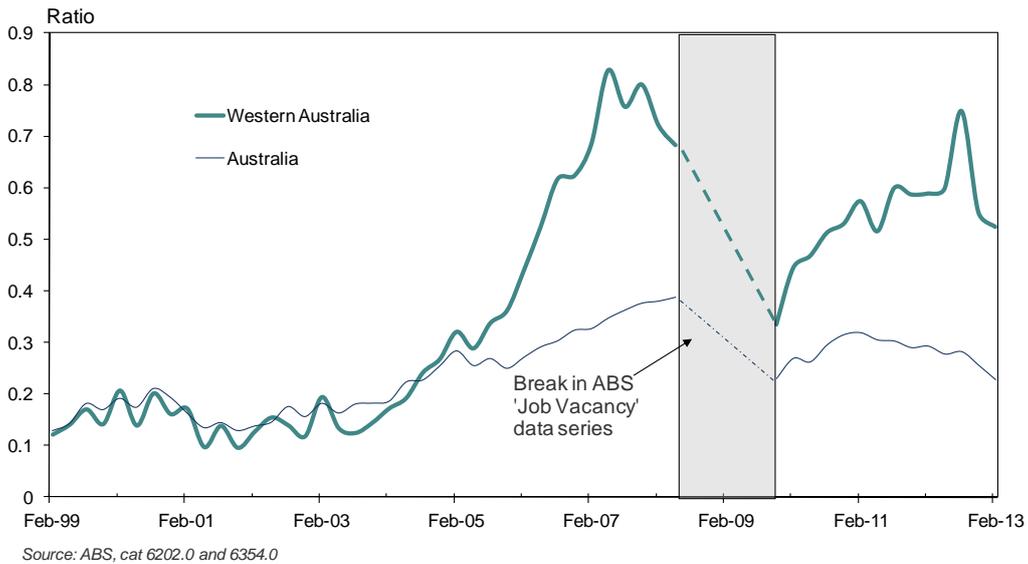
A breakdown of the State's employment growth by industry over the last year shows strong annual growth for electricity, gas, water and waste services (up 34.1% or 5400 more persons employed); administrative and support services (up 17.6% or 7300 more persons employed); financial and insurance services (up 16.0% or 4400 persons employed); and mining (up 15.7% or 15 400 more employed). In contrast, there were annual falls in wholesale trade (down 4.5% or 1900 less persons); public administration and safety (down 4.5% or 3300 persons); and construction (down 3.6% or 4700 persons).

Underscoring the relative strength of jobs growth in the State, Western Australia accounted for 40% of all jobs growth nationally over the past year, despite having only about 11% of the nation's population. About 90% of employment growth in Western Australia over the past year came from full-time jobs, with the male to female ratio of overall jobs growth in the State around 60% to 40%.

As a leading indicator of employment demand, job vacancy levels in the State remain high, despite some softening. While 2013 has so far seen the level of job vacancies moderate, the ratio of job vacancies to the number of unemployed persons shows the State's labour market remains considerably tighter than nationally.

¹ ABS Cat. 8762.0, Engineering Construction Activity, Australia, Dec 2012.

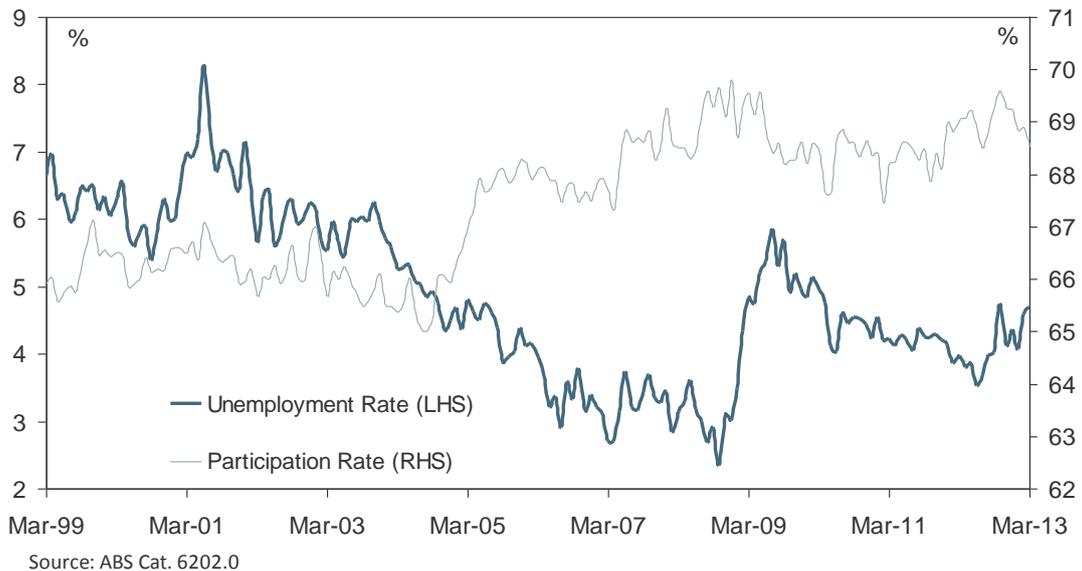
Ratio of job vacancies to unemployed



Consistent with this, the March quarter 2013 *Commonwealth Bank – CCI Survey of Business Expectations* labour scarcity indicator showed a decline, although a sizable 28% of local businesses noted labour as ‘scarce’. Strong wages growth of 4.3% for the year to December 2012 against national growth of just 3.4% also points to the relative tightness of the State’s labour market.

The State’s tight labour market has persisted even with strengthening population growth. Western Australia’s population growth of 3.3% over the year to June 2012 was the highest rate in Australia, with overseas migration a major driver, accounting for 60.4% (or 47 100 persons) of the State’s annual growth. Even so, the following chart below shows that while the State’s unemployment rate has recently moved between the 4% to 5% range, this is still higher than the much tighter labour market the State experienced from 2006 to 2008.

Unemployment rate and participation rate Western Australia



The preceding chart also shows that while the State's labour market participation rate has moderated, it still remains at historical highs.

However, the ability of the State's labour market to maintain high rates of participation in the face of expected ageing of its population still represents a key challenge for the Western Australian economy.

In particular, the State Government's Pre-election Financial Projection Statement² showed that population growth is expected to slow to an annual average rate of just 2.3% by 2015-16 and the State's core working age population (those aged 15-64) is expected to slow to a growth rate of only 1.8% by 2015-16.

The same set of projections has very strong growth of 6.0% in Western Australia's Gross State Product (GSP) for 2012-13, followed by solid growth of 5.0% in 2013-14, before moderating to 4.25% in both 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Deloitte Access Economics' March quarter 2013 *Business Outlook* similarly expects broadly healthy economic conditions in the State to continue in the near term, with forecast economic growth of 4.9% in 2012-13, moderating to a slightly lower rate of 3.2% in 2013-14.

In contrast, the Western Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (CCIWA) Outlook (December 2012) forecasts much stronger growth of 6.5% for both 2012-13 and 2013-14.

The diversity of views shown in these forecasts is in part indicative of the dynamic nature of the State's economy currently and in particular its external exposure to the global economic environment.

There are currently a number of key risks to the State's future economic growth profile that could represent challenges over the next few years. Although international economic conditions have been gradually improving since the post-GFC downturn, global risks remain significant and include: ongoing malaise with financial markets; fiscal issues in Europe; potential conflict in Korea; the still somewhat uncertain recovery path of the United States; and China's economic development moving away from infrastructure building.

² The 2012-13 Pre-election Financial Projections Statement (informed by economic assumptions) was finalised on 2 February 2013

Summary of Major Activities and Achievements

Significant progress has been made towards each of *Skilling WA*'s five key goals in the six month period to March 2013. Major activities and achievements are summarised as follows:

Strategic goal 1

Increase participation in the workforce, particularly among the under-employed and disengaged, mature-aged workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other under-represented groups.

Industry leadership

Diversity in the workforce

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the CCIWA have produced a range of guides to assist employers recruit and retain people from diversity groups. The guides provide advice and information to assist employers with the challenges to attract and keep a skilled and productive workforce.

The most recent guide *'Employ Outside the Box' – Mature Aged Workers – The rewards of a diverse workforce – A quick guide for WA* was released in October 2012 and adds to the *'Employ Outside the Box' – People with Disability – The rewards of a diverse workforce – A quick guide for WA* released in 2012.

The ACCI and CCIWA plan to release an *'Employ Outside the Box'* guide on employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in 2013.

The CCIWA has also established the Workplace Flexibility and Diversity Service, through support from the Australian Government, to assist businesses through personalised workplace visits to explore ways to attract, engage and retain workers from a whole range of different diversity groups by making workplaces more flexible.

CCIWA Partnership Broker Program

The CCIWA operates a Partnership Broker Service across the Fremantle-Peel and Goldfields-Esperance regions with its consortia partner South Metropolitan Youth Link and sub-contractors including the Kalgoorlie Boulder Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Partnership Brokers Program is funded by the Australian Government and aims to facilitate stakeholder engagement between education and training providers, business and industry, parents and families, and community groups to encourage shared responsibility for youth learning and development. This is designed to assist students transitioning from school into further education, training or work.

CMEWA Women in Resources Awards 2013

Now into its fourth year, the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia (CMEWA) conducted its Women in Resources Awards which recognise individuals and organisations working to build a world class resources industry which provides attractive career opportunities and recognises the participation of women.

Coinciding with International Women's Day on 8 March 2013, the CMEWA presented the 2013 Women in Resources Awards to four women working in the resources sector and a resources company initiative in recognition of outstanding contributions to the State's resources industry.

FastTrack initiative

FastTrack is a joint venture between the CMEWA, the Resources Industry Training Council and the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association to increase the representation of Aboriginal women in the resources sector.

All participants of the program have successfully completed their traineeship and three participants have gained employment in the resources industry. An evaluation of the program is being undertaken to provide valuable guidance to employers seeking to recruit Aboriginal women in the resources sector and broader industry.

Industry Training Councils

The Training Councils are supporting workforce participation of under-represented groups as demonstrated by the following achievements:

- The Community Services, Health and Education Training Council is assisting ten people with a disability to complete their Certificate IV Training and Assessment to develop the competencies required to perform the role of skilled trainer, facilitator and assessor in the workplace. This follows the success of the WA Training Project for People with Disabilities developed by the National Disability Service which resulted in seven people with a disability graduating with a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment;
- The Construction Industry Training Council has increased ties with the National Association of Women in Construction with the aim of increasing the status and participation of women in the State's construction industry. The Training Council actively participated in the National Association of Women in Construction Annual Crystal Vision Awards for Excellence held in Perth;
- Consultations between the Retail and Personal Services Training Council and industry stakeholders has resulted in the commencement of a six month youth mentoring pilot program with a major employer in February 2013. The Training Council is also working with the Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres and Aboriginal communities to develop skills programs for young Indigenous people;
- In February 2013, the Financial Administrative and Professional Services Training Council uploaded career videos on its website for the pest management, cleaning and security sectors to assist school leavers and under-represented people seeking employment in these sectors. There are plans to release another career video for the finance, insurance, property and real estate sector; and
- FutureNow along with the hospitality industry, employment brokers and other stakeholders in the Midland, Ellenbrook and Swan Valley areas are working together to establish the Swan Valley Hospitality Partnership Project – Hospitality traineeship and employment program. The project will target unemployed youth aimed at improving access to entry-level staff across various hospitality occupations which are experiencing labour shortages.

Public sector participation

The Public Sector Commission (PSC) is supporting workforce diversity by encouraging the employment of persons from under-represented groups. This is guided by its whole-of-sector framework *Strategic Directions for the Public Sector Workforce 2009–2014*. This includes the implementation of equal employment

opportunity management plans by all State and Local Government public sector authorities and public universities.

During the period, the PSC delivered diversity workshops in raising awareness of people with disabilities and Aboriginal culture as part of its ongoing strategy to increase public sector knowledge in employing people from these groups. It also hosted a 'Women in Leadership' event as part of its increasing diversity strategy.

State Government Contracting

On 5 November 2012, the State Supply Commission's Open and Effective Competition policy was amended to enable State Government contracting to assist Aboriginal economic and labour force participation. The amendment allows public authorities to purchase goods and services directly from a registered Aboriginal Business where the value of the purchase does not exceed \$150 000, subject to the procurement presenting value for money.

Flexible work arrangements

The Department of Commerce has developed the Flexible Workplaces Website to provide Western Australian employers, managers and employees with information and resources on how to implement flexible work arrangements. The website contains information specific to small business and large employers as well as resources for line managers and employees seeking flexible work. Importantly, the website is helping to reduce the barriers to workforce participation.

Youth mentoring

The National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions has provided funding over the four years to 2014 for selected youth mentoring projects in Western Australia. The Department for Communities is leading mentoring reform in the State through this initiative with the Department of Training and Workforce Development providing support for the program as contract manager with responsibility for auditing and progress reporting.

In November 2012, the Department for Communities released the Western Australian Youth Mentoring Framework and Implementation Plan. Substantial progress has also been made in demonstrating best practice in youth mentoring via four projects which are providing training resources to agencies that support young people in their transition into training, higher education and employment.

Ord-East Kimberley Expansion Project (OEKEP)

The OEKEP is a \$322.5 million State Government commitment to grow the agricultural industry in the East Kimberley region and improve social and economic outcomes of the traditional owners represented by the Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation (MG Corporation).

The Department of Regional Development in partnership with MG Corporation and other stakeholders is developing a range of training, employment and business development opportunities both within the immediate construction component of the project and the broader community service sectors.

The project is having a major stimulatory impact in the East Kimberley region with around 35% of the project funds being channelled through regional businesses. It is also facilitating positive employment outcomes for Indigenous people.

Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres

The State Government's commitment to increasing the levels of Aboriginal employment and workforce participation is embodied in the *Training together – working together Aboriginal workforce development strategy*, released in 2011. A key element of the strategy is the establishment of Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres in Broome, Bunbury, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie and Perth which are administered by the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

Highlighting the positive work of the centres in supporting Aboriginal employment in Western Australia, the Department of Training and Workforce Development was the overall winner of the 2012 Premier's Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management and also won the Improving Indigenous Outcomes category.

The award acknowledges the innovative network collaboration model adopted by the centres in developing partnerships with organisations providing employment, career, training and mentoring services, across the government, private and not-for-profit sectors. Importantly, the centres do not duplicate existing services but link services, add value and broker solutions leading to employment.

Between 1 October 2012 and 31 March 2013, 216 Aboriginal jobseekers were assisted into employment or training and 235 employers were aided with their Aboriginal employment strategies.

Aboriginal Business Directory WA

The Aboriginal Business Directory WA (www.abdwa.com.au) was officially launched on 9 October 2012 and aims to increase Aboriginal workforce participation by assisting individuals to connect with Aboriginal businesses and link them to employment opportunities throughout Western Australia.

The web based directory provides a free service to all businesses that are at least 50% owned by Aboriginal people and have Aboriginal interests represented in the management and operations of the business. Since the website went live in March 2012, 141 businesses from across the State have registered.

The Aboriginal Business Directory WA was developed in collaboration between the Department of Training and Workforce Development, CCIWA – Project Connect, Department of Indigenous Affairs, and the Small Business Development Corporation.

Education and care services

The Department of Communities and Local Government leads the implementation of the *National Quality Agenda (NQA)* for education and care services in Western Australia. The objective is to improve the quality of education and care services across:

- Centre based care (previously known as long day care and outside school hours and vacation care); and
- Family day care services.

The Department of Communities and Local Government has worked closely with education and care providers to ensure they understand the requirements of the NQA, including legislated qualification requirements.

The Regional Community Child Care Development Fund (RCCCDF) was established through Royalties for Regions funding of \$9.3 million over four years to support the transformation and longer term sustainability of regional community managed education and care services.

The fund focuses on enhancing the sustainability of the regional education and care sector through a range of initiatives including a grants program that supports:

- Access to professional development and training; and
- The development of innovative professional development initiatives.

The RCCCDF grants will contribute to the capacity of educators and regional education and care services to operate within the requirements of the NQA.

Strategic goal 2

Supplement the Western Australian workforce with skilled migrants to fill employment vacancies unable to be filled by the local workforce and address those factors which support a growing population.

Skilled Migration Strategy

Skilled migration continues to be critical in filling those vacancies unable to be filled by local workers. The Department of Training and Workforce Development continued to support skilled migration to Western Australia through:

- A consistent and integrated planning approach to skilled migration;
- Accessible and quality information on skilled migration;
- Supporting a more flexible and responsive migration program; and
- Discussions with the Australian Government to influence migration policy in line with the needs of Western Australia.

The *Western Australian Skilled Migration Strategy* will be reviewed during 2013-14 in line with the revision of *Skilling WA*.

Western Australian Skilled Migration Occupation List

The Western Australian Skilled Migration Occupation List (WASMOL) is a list of priority occupations used to guide skilled migration into Western Australia under the State Nominated Visa program. It is based on the State Priority Occupation List (SPOL) and developed via analysis of economic and labour market indicators supplemented by intelligence provided by Western Australia's ten Industry Training Councils. The SPOL and WASMOL are reviewed each financial year.

State nominated skilled migration

State nominated skilled migration allocation

The Department of Training and Workforce Development successfully negotiated for an increase to Western Australia's allocation of visa nominations under the State Nominated Visa Program to 3850 primary nominations for 2012-13. Following the mid-year review, the Department negotiated for a further 300 nominations to a total of 4150 for the year. As at 5 June 2013, the Department had processed 3581 applications nominated for State sponsorship.

The mid-year review also resulted in the Business Innovation and Investment Program being added to the State Migration Plan. This program, managed by the Small Business Development Corporation was allocated 496 nominations for migrants who are committed to using their investment and business skills to contribute to the growth of the Western Australian economy.

Improvement in processing

Following initial implementation of a customer relationship management (CRM) system in late 2010, the Department is in the final stages of implementing an enhanced CRM that manages enquiries, application receipt and processing for the State Sponsored and Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) programs. This is in response to changes implemented by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) for the State Sponsored program and the RSMS on 1 July 2012.

Applications are submitted online through a CRM interface on the migration portal, and receipted directly into the CRM. This enables complete applications for the

State nominated program and RSMS to be received and assessed efficiently. To maintain timely turnaround of applications, the Department has significantly developed the CRM to improve service delivery for these programs and position Western Australia as a key destination for skilled migrants.

Recognition of overseas qualifications

Skills assessments

Under a contract arrangement with Trades Recognition Australia (TRA), the Department works in partnership with Victoria University as the lead contractor to conduct a skills assessment service for skilled migrants from specified countries who wish to apply for temporary employer sponsored visas and/or permanent visas in nominated trade occupations. Successful applicants are issued with a migration outcome letter which is compulsory for their visa application.

Applicants with a successful skills assessment in a non-licensed trade are issued with a relevant qualification, which is often required before a worker can commence at a worksite. Applicants who have undertaken a skills assessment for a licensed trade are provided with an Offshore Technical Skills Record (OTSR) for migration purposes. This document is also required for applicants to apply for a licence when they arrive in Western Australia.

The Department's contract for this skills assessments service was renewed in July 2012 and is in place until April 2015.

In partnership with Victoria University, the Department is actively promoting the skills assessment service to increase the number of assessments conducted in Western Australia.

Assessment of overseas qualifications

The Department of Training and Workforce Development's Overseas Qualifications Unit (OQU) offers a free service to onshore migrants, which provides a comparison between an overseas qualification and the Australian qualification level according to the Australian Qualifications Framework. The OQU does not assess trade qualifications.

To maintain a timely turnaround of applications in an environment of increased demand, the Department has introduced a simplified online application process, and improved referral services to other recognition and assessment agencies. Continued efforts are being made to enhance the management of enquiries and applications for overseas qualifications assessments.

Community Services, Health and Education Training Council

The Community Services, Health and Education Training Council has embarked on a project to develop an improved assessment system that supports skilled migrants with overseas qualifications below Certificate IV level to have their qualification recognised for employment purposes. This will help to address skill shortages in the disability, aged care and children's services sectors.

Overseen by an industry working group consisting of key stakeholders, the project plans to produce online assessment and recognition tools for overseas trained workers with qualifications deemed to be lower than Certificate IV level.

State migration information portal

The Department of Training and Workforce Development continues to manage the Western Australian Skilled Migration portal (www.migration.wa.gov.au). The portal showcases Western Australia as a desirable place to live and work and provides a suite of resources and information on Western Australia to inform potential migrants about the opportunities and lifestyle available in the State. In the six months to March 2013, the portal averaged nearly 35 000 hits per month.

Marketing Western Australia to the world

Migration expos and seminars

The Department of State Development and the Department of Training and Workforce Development continue to work cooperatively to promote Western Australia as a destination of choice for skilled migrants. This is achieved through the network of the Western Australian Government's International Trade and Investment Offices located in the State's key export and investment regions.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development also has a Skilled Migration Manager (UK and Europe) based in London who attends migration expos and conducts information sessions in Britain, Ireland, Scotland and Europe to provide information to potential skilled migrants about state nominations and guidance on living and working in Western Australia.

CCIWA SkillsMatch overseas recruitment

CCIWA's SkillsMatch overseas recruitment program provides member companies with additional human resource support by attending overseas migration and jobs expos on their behalf. Established in 2003, the service has proven to be very successful and a cost effective way of matching skilled foreign workers with the requirements of Western Australian employers.

Regional certifying body – Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)

During 2012-13, the Department of Training and Workforce Development became the regional certifying body for all regions in Western Australia, except Goldfields-Esperance. Assessment of applications is required by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for positions to be filled using the RSMS. Extending the Department's certification responsibilities provides employers with increased consistency across regions in the assessment of certification applications. As of 5 June 2013, the Department had processed 1651 applications under the RSMS.

Representation of Western Australia's interests in skilled migration

The State Government continues to work the Australian Government to negotiate optimal outcomes for Western Australia's participation in the national migration program including advocating for greater flexibility in the national migration program and improving immigration processes.

Input has been provided to a number of policy issues including simplification of the visa process; eligibility requirements for the Working Holiday Maker visa program; proposed changes to the 457 visa; and assessment requirements under the RSMS.

Western Australia's skilled migration interests are represented by the Department of Training and Workforce Development on the Ministerial Advisory Council on Skilled Migration (MACSM) which consists of representatives from government, industry,

trade unions and academics. MACSM has been established to provide the Australian Government with expert advice on the role of skilled migration in the development of Australia's migration policies and programs.

The Department is also a member of the Australian Government's recently formed Skilled Migration Officers Group which is comprised of Australian, State and Territory Government representatives and provides another avenue to advocate the State's position on skilled migration issues.

National migration settlement program

The Office of Multicultural Interests is representing the State in negotiations as part of the development of a National Settlement Framework aimed at strengthening coordination of migrant settlement-related service delivery within and across jurisdictions. It is also aimed at enhancing collaboration and the effective use of resources across the three tiers of government.

Strategic goal 3

Attract workers with the right skills to the Western Australian workforce and retain them by offering access to rewarding employment and a diverse and vibrant community and environment to live in.

Industry Training Councils

Training Council activity to attract workers with the right skills includes:

- The Electrical, Utilities and Public Administration Training Council is planning to undertake a project to determine: those industries targeting electricians to fill job roles not requiring electrical skills; the range of occupations licensed electricians seek in preference to their trade; why licensed electricians seek alternate employment opportunities; and what programs could be initiated to attract licensed electricians back to their trade;

The Training Council is also developing a skills road map to provide a comprehensive list of job roles within the waste industry and how they align to different qualifications. This is aimed at promoting career and employment opportunities in the waste sector to help overcome a poor image of the sector and associated difficulties in attracting school leavers and new workers;

- The Logistics Training Council is developing a DVD highlighting career and employment opportunities within the supply and logistics chain as a means of attracting new entrants. Industry stakeholders are supporting the development of the DVD through the collection of footage which will be used as a promotional tool;
- The Community Services, Health and Education Training Council is working with its regional industry advisory groups to further develop attraction and retention strategies for community services, health and education industries identified in industry workforce development plans. Particular focus is being given to attracting health and education workers in the regions;
- By promoting workplace planning, the Retail and Personal Services Training Council has been successful in working with a group of small business owners in developing strategies designed to improve employee attraction and retention. This has led to requests from other businesses to discuss workforce planning;
- Based on the success of the FutureNow Hospitality Ambassador Program, FutureNow is working with the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council (WAITOC) to establish the 'WAITOC – FutureNow Indigenous Tourism Ambassador Program' targeting Aboriginal students studying tourism and/or hospitality and Indigenous Tourism Operators in Western Australia;

FutureNow is also undertaking a project to develop seven career videos to promote the creative and leisure industries to potential students and new entrants. Profiled occupations include: chef; tour guide; farrier; jockey; IT security specialist; telecommunications technician; and printing;

FutureNow in partnership with the WA Sports Federation and Department of Sport and Recreation are developing an eNewsletter focusing on human resources and industrial relations issues to support and keep the sport and recreation industry informed on workforce planning and development issues and best practice examples; and

- The Engineering and Automotive Training Council has produced a promotional video to attract new people to the truck repair industry which is experiencing critical skill shortages for automotive technicians (Heavy Vehicle Road Transport). The video is available on the Training Council's website for use by career advisors and VET coordinators.

Enterprise attraction and retention

The Department of Training and Workforce Development, working in collaboration with CCIWA, Small Business Development Corporation, Small Business Centre Stirling, Department of Commerce and the State's industry Training Councils is developing the '*Workplace essentials for better business*' website. The website provides a suite of information on workforce planning and workforce development strategies which Western Australian enterprises can use to help plan and develop their future workforce. The website also contains a range of useful templates to help with identifying workforce needs as well as links to a range of government services and programs to assist with training and development.

Significant and major resource projects

Through negotiating agreements with major projects, the Department of State Development has secured commitments from proponents to undertake community development through providing social infrastructure, transport infrastructure upgrades and improving amenity for local communities. Key activities include:

- Wheatstone LNG project

The Wheatstone State Development Agreement includes significant social infrastructure contribution for Onslow including power generation, desalination plant, hospital upgrades, airport upgrades, schools upgrades, roads, land development, recreation facilities. The Wheatstone project is scheduled for completion in 2016.

- East Kimberley Development Package

The Department of State Development is facilitating the delivery of \$177.9 million of infrastructure projects with the intention of providing services to the communities of Kununurra, Wyndham, Warmun and other remote Indigenous communities ensuring all communities from these regions benefit from the projects.

The Health Service Provider Housing project has provided seven new houses for health professionals living in Kununurra. Two of the new houses have been allocated to the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Council for housing staff providing renal services and the Western Australian Country Health Service will be responsible for five of the newly constructed houses and two purchased houses. An additional purchased house is now owned by the Ngnowar-Aerwah Aboriginal Corporation for staff accommodation to support services at the Wyndham Rehabilitation Centre.

- Community Development Plans

The State Government has recently negotiated amendments to a number of State Agreements to incorporate provisions requiring companies to provide Community Development Plans which cover contributions to community development projects and town services and facilities.

Infrastructure planning and coordination

The Department of Planning on behalf of the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) has undertaken an Infrastructure Coordinating Committee (ICC) Refocus Program to investigate ways of improving the effectiveness of the ICC. This includes the establishment of a senior officers group in early 2013 to provide cross government advice to the ICC on issues such as infrastructure planning, coordination, prioritisation, financing and implementation.

The Department of Planning has also progressed various strategic plans and initiatives such as the State Planning Strategy, Directions 2031 and regional planning and infrastructure frameworks. These plans have been prepared through comprehensive consultation with a range of stakeholders from the public and private sectors and identify regional level infrastructure needs.

Land and housing supply

The Department of Planning's new Office of Land and Housing Supply continues to lead the coordination of the planning for land and housing supply in Western Australia. Key activities progressed to March 2013 include:

- Developing a tracking system of major land and housing projects for metropolitan Perth with a focus on affordable housing;
- Completion of the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia subdivisional engineering guidelines to streamline subdivision processes;
- Preparing options for the provision of affordable housing measures in local planning schemes and policies for WAPC consideration;
- Compiling the quarterly Land and Housing Supply snapshot report to ensure accurate and regular reporting on the land and housing situation and forecasts;
- Ongoing liaison with the Department of Housing to identify surplus government land that could be used for housing supply including park home proposals; and
- Facilitating the delivery of major land and housing infrastructure projects including Department of Housing land at Brownlie, Golden Bay and the East Rockingham waste water infrastructure corridor.

Affordable Housing

The *Affordable Housing Strategy 2010-2020 – Opening Doors to Affordable Housing* was launched in May 2011. The strategy sets out a whole of government approach to increasing the supply of affordable housing in Western Australia, particularly for those on low to moderate incomes by delivering 20 000 affordable homes by 2020.

The strategy is repositioning the State Government's role from focusing largely on the delivery of social housing to facilitating and enabling the increased supply of affordable housing through the broader housing market. This is seeing the State Government work in partnership with the non-government and private sectors to provide affordable housing opportunities to low to moderate income earners.

As at 30 June 2012, 6200 homes had been delivered as part of the strategy. In January 2013, the State Government announced that it had approved \$6.6 million of Royalties for Regions funding to build ten new dwellings for service workers in Newman and help address the critical shortage of affordable housing in the Pilbara.

Regional Workforce Development Plans

In late 2012, the *Goldfields-Esperance workforce development plan 2013–2016* and the *Wheatbelt workforce development plan 2013–2016* were released by the Director General of the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Dr Ruth Shean. These plans and their executive summaries are available at (www.dtwd.wa.gov.au).

The plans identify each region's workforce development and skills needs and identify Government, industry and community sector owned strategies to address these needs. The plans are the work of local workforce development alliances consisting of government, industry and community stakeholders, and map out priority actions across a number of areas including education, training, housing and health.

In addition to attracting skilled workers, the plans are designed to retain more young people in the regions. The Goldfields-Esperance plan includes strategies to reduce the high cost of housing, attract young people to the region and retain mature age workers. Similarly, the Wheatbelt plan proposes strategies to create more engaging career opportunities for young people, encouraging them to stay in the region.

The regional workforce development plans are designed to be dynamic, and as new key information and data comes to hand they will be updated. The plans will also inform and be informed by other strategic government planning processes, such as the Regional Development Commission's blueprints and Western Australian Planning Commission regional planning strategies.

The workforce development alliances are responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plans and will focus on identified priority areas each year.

Regional building initiatives

A number of the projects funded under the Royalties for Regions initiative are consistent with the strategic objectives of Skilling WA which support the creation of sustainable regional communities.

Current projects which will deliver the social and physical infrastructure to support the growing regional workforce include:

- SuperTowns

The nine selected SuperTowns (Boddington, Collie, Esperance, Jurien Bay, Katanning, Manjimup, Margaret River, Morawa and Northam) have now completed their growth plans and implementation schedules. The high quality growth plans were endorsed by the Western Australian Planning Commission in November 2012. The growth planning process was informed by the workforce development planning process via input provided by the Regional Development Commission's and the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

To date, 17 priority projects have been funded to the value of \$77.8 million. This includes economic projects, town centre revitalisation and infrastructure projects, community development project, waterfront project, environmental project, and a renewable energy project.

A number of economic development strategies have identified business opportunities and an integrated approach is being taken to establish industry growth. For example, as part of the Esperance SuperTowns initiative, a tripartite agreement between the Shire, Great Southern Regional Development

Commission and CCIWA has been developed to work together on business attraction. Similarly, major employers, the Peel Development Commission and Enterprise Connect are working collaboratively to identify opportunities to buy locally as part of the Boddington SuperTowns initiative.

A proposal is being developed to attract Australian Government funding through the Food, Fibre and Timber Training Council to assist three of the SuperTowns to address skills needs and gaps in the agrifoods sector.

The nine SuperTowns and associated Regional Development Commissions are working together to develop the growth plans to attract workers to key regional centres and to identify economic opportunities to grow these communities.

- **Pilbara Cities**

Pilbara Cities aims to address the issues associated with the significant growth in the Pilbara region. The objective is to build the populations of Karratha and Port Hedland into cities of 50 000 people, and Newman to 15 000 people, with other Pilbara towns growing into more attractive, sustainable local communities.

More than \$1.2 billion over four years in Royalties for Regions funding is committed to the Pilbara to help build modern, vibrant cities and regional centres that can support and deliver a skilled workforce for major economic projects in the Pilbara. Key focus areas comprise infrastructure coordination, land availability and development, community projects and engagement and economic diversification.

In January 2013, the State Government provided \$4.8 million from its \$50 million Royalties for Regions Pilbara Cities Education Partnership Fund to attract and retain the highest quality education professionals in the Pilbara. The funding is aimed at employing Pilbara specialist coaches, undertaking a rural and remote training schools project, supporting schools and teacher internship programs and supporting schools and teachers engaged in undergraduate teacher training schools.

- **Community Resource Centres**

There are 108 Community Resource Centres (CRCs) operating in regional and remote Western Australia administered through the Department of Regional Development. The CRCs continue to provide vital services that include access to computers, high-speed Internet and government information and services. They also provide a significant opportunity for training and workforce development initiatives in regional and remote areas of Western Australia.

The centres have expanded their services to provide comprehensive education and training that supports pathways to employment for regional people and assists in the future development of the WA Community Resource Network. This includes a traineeship program with participants receiving nationally recognised qualifications. Over 270 people have undertaken the program since December 2009 and there are currently 88 trainees employed by the CRCs.

In addition, the CRCs are providing training programs to staff and other community members in regional and remote areas via Westlink satellite television. Work is also progressing between the CRCs and C Y O'Connor and Curtin University to establish higher education partnerships aimed at supporting the delivery of online learning courses for regional Western Australians.

Strategic goal 4

Provide flexible, responsive and innovative education and training which enables people to develop and utilise the skills necessary for them to realise their potential and contribute to Western Australia's prosperity.

Apprenticeships and traineeships

The State Government guarantees to fund the training delivery for all Western Australian apprentices and eligible trainees. As at December 2012, there were 44 847 apprentices and trainees in training in the State, an 18% increase from December 2011³. This comprised 25 500 trainees and 19 347 apprentices in training, an increase of 32% and 4% respectively over the same period⁴.

Measures undertaken by the State Government to increase apprenticeship and traineeship numbers include:

- Increased access to qualifications including school based apprenticeships and traineeships and part-time options;
- Responsive trade training by the State Training Board to test an 'advanced pre-apprenticeship' model. Pilot programs include carpentry and joinery, electrotechnology electrician; telecommunications; and commercial cookery;
- Incentives for employers to take on apprentices and trainees through payroll tax exemptions on wages paid to apprentices and trainees;
- Financial incentives to Group Training Organisations (GTOs) to employ apprentices and trainees from under-represented groups, from regional and remote areas and in occupations experiencing skill shortages; and
- Facilitating the delivery of training in the home region of first year apprentices through local and metropolitan training provider partnerships.

In 2012, there were 35 680 apprenticeship and traineeship commencements, an increase of 21% compared to 2011 (29 578)⁵. This includes a 32% rise in traineeship commencements from 19 744 in 2011 to 26 069 in 2012 as a result of changes to Australian Government incentives⁶.

Apprenticeships Australia

Apprenticeships Australia (AA) is CCIWA's group training organisation that provides professional apprentice and trainee management services to employers. Between 1 October 2012 to 31 March 2013, AA commenced 163 individuals in apprentice or trainee programs. Of these, 36% of new commencements were people identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and almost 30% were women.

During the same period, AA introduced 85 newly qualified individuals into the workforce with more than 30% of these Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples.

CCIWA's Apprenticeships Solutions is an Australian Apprenticeship Centre and also assists companies looking to take on an apprentice or trainee.

³ Department of Training and Workforce Development, Training Records System

⁴ Department of Training and Workforce Development, Training Records System

⁵ Department of Training and Workforce Development, Training Records System

⁶ Department of Training and Workforce Development, Training Records System

Industry Training Councils

Training Councils have also been active in working to increase apprenticeship and trainee numbers as shown by:

- The Engineering and Automotive Training Council has supported the creation of three separate apprenticeships for the automotive heavy industry sectors including: Agriculture, Heavy Mobile Equipment and Heavy Road Transport Repairs. The apprenticeships in the new trade occupations commenced in January 2013;
- The Construction Industry Training Council has assisted in getting level 2 traineeships endorsed for the following VET in schools qualifications: Certificate II in Building and Construction (Pathway – Trades); and the Certificate II in Building and Construction (Pathway – Para-Professional). It has also initiated two level 4 traineeships including a Certificate IV in Building and Construction (Building); and a Certificate IV in Building and Construction (Contract Administration). The traineeships are key entry points into the building and construction sectors and provide a basis for further skills development;
- The State Training Board and the Financial Administrative and Professional Services Training Council have launched a newly established personal bankers' traineeship. Welcomed by banking industry representatives, State Training Providers, Australian Apprenticeship Centre representatives and the Training Accreditation Council, the Certificate IV in Banking Services is designed to give individuals specialist understanding of financial products and services in a banking, customer contact centre or retail financial services environment;
- Following extensive discussion with both national and state based companies, the Logistics Training Council was successful in getting two traineeships in International Freight Forwarding approved as a pathway for new entrants and existing workers to achieve a qualification and employment in the sector;
- The Engineering and Automotive Training Council is assisting the Car Craft Panel and Paint Group in getting two Certificate II traineeships endorsed for the automotive vehicle body repair sector to provide school leavers and under-represented groups with the opportunity to enter this industry sector;
- The Community Services, Health and Education Training Council, has created an industry working group to develop strategies to increase the uptake of the Certificate IV traineeship in mental health. This potentially includes creating appropriate promotional material and developing an awareness campaign targeting employers in the mental health sector; and
- Research and consultations undertaken by FutureNow has assisted in the establishment of a Certificate III in Hospitality (Catering Operations) which was gazetted on 30 November 2012. The new traineeship targets the skills shortage of qualified chefs within the catering industry, especially in the mining, entertainment and event catering sectors;

In addition, FutureNow has supported the establishment of a Certificate III in Arts Administration traineeship to cater for the growing need for adequately qualified persons to assist in the administration of galleries, museums, theatres, community arts centres and arts organisations; and a Certificate III in Tourism to meet the needs of tourism industry operators and venues.

Investment in education and training

In 2012-13, Western Australia negotiated for \$177.8 million in Australian Government funding attached to the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (NASWD) and its related National Partnerships and Project Agreement payments.

The NASWD is the overarching agreement between the Australian, State and Territory Governments which sets reform milestones and training delivery targets to be achieved in the training and workforce development sector.

The following National Partnerships and Project Agreements were in operation during the reporting period:

- National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform (01/07/12 to 30/06/17);
- National Partnership on Training Places for Single and Teenage Parents (07/03/12 to 31/12/15);
- National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions (02/07/09 to 31/12/13);
- National Partnership on TAFE Fee Waivers for Child Care Qualifications (01/01/10 to 31/12/14);
- Project Agreement for the Industry and Indigenous Skill Centres Program (20/06/12 to 30/06/13); and
- Project Agreement for the Commonwealth/State and Territory Joint Group Training Program (30/04/12 to 15/11/12).

The Department of Training and Workforce Development is developing Western Australia's training entitlement model as part of access and equity reforms under the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform. The model will be demand driven, student centred and takes into account the skills needs of the State.

Another important initiative is the introduction of a national unique student identifier for students undertaking accredited VET training. This initiative has been endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) as part of a suite of measures to enhance the effectiveness of the training system to better respond to student needs.

The National VET E-learning Strategy 2012–2015 is being progressed by the national Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG) which has the aim of developing the capacity of Australia's training system to capitalise on the rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN).

Training WA: Planning for the future 2009–2018

In 2009, the State Government and the State Training Board released *Training WA: Planning for the future 2009 – 2018*. This strategy recognised the need for continued investment in training and a flexible and innovative training system.

Training WA set a series of targets to be achieved by 2012. Many of these targets were achieved including:

- The number of Western Australians in training has increased from approximately 128 000 in 2008 to 149 500 in 2012⁷;
- A 37% increase in enrolments in publicly funded higher level qualifications (Certificate IV and above) from approximately 31 400 in 2008 to 42 800 in 2012⁸;

⁷ Department of Training and Workforce Development, WA VET Enrolment Data Collection

- A 33% increase in the number of Aboriginal people in training from approximately 7200 in 2008 to 9600 in 2012⁹;
- More Certificate III and above courses available to regional Western Australians, an increase from 403 courses in 2008 to 539 in 2012¹⁰;
- Greater competition for training and more flexibility for Western Australian students. with the proportion of training delivery allocated through competitive processes increasing from 27% in 2008 to 73% in 2012¹¹; and
- High levels of student and employer satisfaction with the training system. Employer satisfaction with training increased marginally from 85% in 2008 to 86% in 2012¹².

Public sector training

Increasing the availability of skilled labour in the public sector through the provision of apprenticeships, traineeships, cadetships and graduate programs is an important priority for the State Government.

This is being achieved through the implementation of the PSC's employment based training strategy which seeks to deliver apprenticeships, traineeships, cadetships and graduate programs within the public sector across the State. This includes:

- Release of the '*Graduate Program: a guide for agencies*' and ongoing support to agencies via consultation and advice to assist the implementation of public sector graduate programs in the future;
- Staged release of traineeships in 2013 and plans to introduce school based traineeships in 2014 in response to a completed feasibility study examining the suitability of public sector traineeships in regional Western Australia;
- Plans to develop and implement a cadetship program following a completed feasibility study to ascertain a suitable model to launch a cadetship program; and
- Promotion of an Aboriginal traineeship program designed to improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal youth. Commencing 1 July 2013, 32 and 20 Aboriginal trainees have been appointed in metropolitan and regional areas respectively.

Language, literacy and numeracy

Western Australia contributed to the development of the *National Foundation Skills Strategy* which considers workplace literacy initiatives.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development has completed development of a priority list for Foundation Skills qualifications in readiness for the implementation of an entitlement strategy for Western Australia. Activities to maintain key literacy curricula and associated funding and quality protocols has also been undertaken. A policy for delivering Adult English language, literacy and numeracy skills is under development by the Department.

⁸ Department of Training and Workforce Development, WA VET Enrolment Data Collection

⁹ Department of Training and Workforce Development, WA VET Enrolment Data Collection

¹⁰ Department of Training and Workforce Development, WA VET Enrolment Data Collection

¹¹ Department of Training and Workforce Development, WA VET Enrolment Data Collection

¹² Department of Training and Workforce Development, Student and employer satisfaction survey

Aboriginal literacy has been supported through the launch of the Tracks to Two-Way Learning professional development resource and the preparation of accreditation documents for the Certificate III in Two-Way Aboriginal Liaison. This new course will capitalise on the linguistic and cultural skills of Aboriginal people and develop skills in Standard Australian English that will enable Aboriginal people to more successfully participate in higher level qualifications.

Logistics Training Council

The Logistics Training Council has been awarded funding through the National Workforce Development Fund (NWDF) to coordinate training for Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) to complete a Vocational Graduate Certificate in Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice. The program will enable RTOs to complete graduate certificates in Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) training tailored specifically for the transport and logistics industry.

This LLN project is being implemented in Western Australia following the success of an equivalent pilot project undertaken in Victoria in 2012. The program will run for a year with students expected to complete the required training by late 2013. Highlighting strong interest from RTO's for this program, 30 trainers are completing their graduate certificate of LLN. The program addresses known LLN issues which exist in the transport and logistics industry.

Training working groups – under-represented groups

Aligned with the Department of Training and Workforce Development's *Workforce Participation Policy*, the Department continues to fund a range of programs for the engagement and training of those groups under-represented in the workforce. This includes the Equity Development and Innovation Program, Adult and Community Education grants and Equity and Work Readiness Programs. In addition, a proportion of funding for GTOs focuses on increasing under-represented groups in apprenticeships and traineeships.

The Department is also represented on a range of interagency and community networks related to training and workforce issues for under-represented and disadvantaged groups. These include the Western Australian Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Across-Government Network, Multicultural Consultative Forum, Interagency Settlement Group, Access and Participation Principal Committee –Adult and Community Education Sub Group, State and Territory Equity Managers Network and Disability Support Officers Network.

Industry leadership in training

Industry Training Councils

- The Resources Industry Training Council has participated in industry discussions to develop Certificate III level qualifications for tyre fitters and repairers of off-road and earthmoving tyres. Tyre management and repair has been identified as a significant safety risk for the resources industry. Stakeholder consultations are focussing on developing an appropriate training package including units of competency required for tyre repair;
- The Food Fibre and Timber Industries Training Council called for expressions of interest for consultants to undertake a Skill Set research project to identify skills not currently covered in existing industry training plans. Skill sets targeted include post trade skills in new technologies, supervisory skills, sustainability

skills and pre-employment programs. The Training Council is also seeking expressions of interest to undertake research to identify and address existing and potential 'thin market' issues. This relates to the difficulties for training providers to service sectors that have low employment numbers yet requiring highly skilled workers;

- The Retail and Personal Services Training Council is reviewing retail training packages to ensure that they meet the needs of industry. A new funeral services training package is being developed and contains qualifications suitable for pre-employment for school based training and new entrants to the industry. Consultations with training providers have been held with a view to provide funeral services training from Certificate II to Certificate IV level in 2014;
- FutureNow is working on a number of hospitality strategies including the expansion of the very successful Hospitality Ambassador program and several programs supporting participation in the hospitality and tourism industries. The establishment of a partnership between the Central Institute of Technology and the French academy Le Cordon Bleu to offer degrees in tourism and event management is a key development in the delivery of advanced level hospitality management and training to support the State's tourism industry;

FutureNow is also providing local stakeholders with the opportunity to contribute to the review of the Tourism and Hospitality and Sport Fitness and Recreation training packages to ensure industry skill needs are addressed; and

- The Community Services, Health and Education Training Council participated in the WA Clinical Training Network meetings organised by WA Department of Health to address issues related to clinical placements for health qualifications. The Training Council will undertake a project to research clinical placement requirements, policies and practices in an effort to develop state wide agreed protocols for supporting clinical placements for relevant occupations and sectors.

Muresk Institute

In December 2012, the Muresk Institute in Northam received a \$10 million investment under the State Government's Royalties for Regions program to secure agriculture and agri-business training and to deliver new courses provided by CY O'Connor and Curtin University. This funding is also being used to transform Muresk into a multi-use and multi-tenant facility to expand training opportunities in regional Western Australia.

In January 2013, the State Government, Ausdrill Limited and SiteGroup International signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a training mine site adjacent to Muresk to provide students with a safe environment to learn hard rock drilling, blasting and general mine operations.

Strategic goal 5

Plan and coordinate a strategic State Government response to workforce development issues in Western Australia.

Workforce development information and data

The Department of Training and Workforce Development publishes regular economic and labour market data to inform an understanding of Western Australia's future employment profile and to guide workforce development planning.

Key reports published on the Department's website (dtwd.wa.gov.au) include:

- Labour and Economic Snapshot

The quarterly snapshot analyses current labour market and economic conditions in Western Australia and considers the outlook for the State's economy.

- The Western Australian Labour Market Review

The review presents an overview of labour market outcomes in Western Australia in the financial year in the context of long term labour market trends and compares labour market performance against other Australian states and territories.

- Employment Trends and Prospects

The Employment Trends and Prospects report examines and compares changes in historical and forecast employment levels on an industry, occupation, and qualification basis for Western Australia.

The analysis is based on current ABS data and projections from Monash University's Centre of Policy Studies and is presented at the most meaningful level of disaggregation possible.

The Department is also working with State Government stakeholders to identify the components of workforce planning and development information and data, to develop a consistent framework to enable the sharing of relevant information.

At a national level, the Department is supporting the establishment of a national workforce development information repository.

Industry workforce planning information and data

The Department of Training and Workforce Development continues to work with industry organisations, enterprises and other stakeholders to share data and intelligence on workforce development.

The Department is liaising closely with all Industry Training Councils in the review and development of their industry workforce development plans. The plans will guide implementation of workforce strategies and priority actions as part of the overarching *Skilling WA* planning framework.

To inform the development of the plans and associated workforce strategies, Training Councils have undertaken various research and analytical activities and consultations with industry stakeholders. The Training Councils are also providing input into the development of regional workforce development plans.

In addition, the Training Councils have provided industry intelligence on occupations and sectors experiencing skill shortages as part of updating the State Priority Occupation List (SPOL).

Other activities undertaken by Training Councils in support of workforce planning and coordination included:

- The Resources Industry Training Council has commissioned research to examine workforce development issues in the process manufacturing sector. This will inform workforce strategy development for the sector which will be included in its Industry Workforce Development Plan;
- The Construction Industry Training Council publishes a Construction Industry Snapshot Report quarterly which provides an overview of employment in the construction industry. The reports are available from the Building Construction Industry Training Fund website (www.bctif.org); and
- The Community Services, Health and Education Training Council are undertaking analysis of jobs advertisements for the community services sector to inform future workforce planning. It is also conducting research to better identify and codify occupations in demand for the mental health sector.

State Government workforce development planning coordination and accountability

Revision of Skilling WA

Skilling WA has been operational since December 2010. During this time, each of the *Skilling WA*'s 68 priority actions have been either commenced, been completed or have been integrated into Government operations. To ensure that *Skilling WA* reflects the current and future needs of the Western Australian economy, a revision of *Skilling WA* will be conducted by the Department of Training and Workforce Development in 2013-14.

The review will be informed by:

- Critical analysis of economic and labour market trends as well as labour market forecasts using a range of scenarios;
- Extensive stakeholder consultations with small and medium enterprises, major employers, non-government organisations, industry associations, unions, regional alliances, training providers, industry training councils and government agencies;
- Assessment of current strategies, actions and barriers based on *Skilling WA* progress reports;
- State Training Board research projects;
- Research on approaches and strategies from other jurisdictions, including the Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (AWPA) National Workforce Development Strategy; and
- Industry and regional workforce development plans.

This process to revise *Skilling WA* will run concurrently and complement the development of a new strategic plan which will guide the Department for the next five years (2014–2018).

Independent evaluation of Skilling WA

The Department of Training and Workforce Development commissioned an independent evaluation of the *Skilling WA* planning framework which culminated in the report, 'Implementing of Skilling WA planning framework – evaluation report'. Findings contained in the report were based on interviews, research and analysis undertaken from July to October 2012.

The evaluation concluded that the *Skilling WA* provided a practical whole-of-government, integrated and collaborative approach to State workforce planning and development. The Department will be working with stakeholders during 2013-14 to revise *Skilling WA*'s strategies and priority actions to ensure they remain targeted at addressing the State's workforce needs.

Workforce planning in the public sector

The Public Sector Commission has taken a leadership role in enterprise workforce planning and development by developing agency based workforce plans which now cover 99% of public sector workers. Workforce planning and development strategies implemented by agencies are guided by the PSC's whole of sector framework *Strategic Directions for the Public Sector Workforce 2009–2014*.

Aligned with *Skilling WA*, key workforce initiatives implemented under the framework include improving participation rates for under-represented groups; succession planning; promoting and offering flexible working arrangements to meet changing work demands; building capacity; and identifying opportunities to increase the retention of employees particularly in regional locations.

Through integrating workforce planning and diversity objectives into their strategies, public sector agencies are strengthening their position in adapting to new policy, service and regulatory changes and the challenges of an ageing workforce.

Australian Government engagement

Representing the State Government, the Department of Training and Workforce Development engages with all jurisdictions to contribute to national workforce planning and development initiatives. This includes determining the type and level of investment in the skills and workforce development sector.

This engagement is primarily done through the Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTESE) and its related Principal Committees and working groups.

The Department is a member of the Workforce Development Supply and Demand Principal Committee (WSDSDPC) which reports to SCOTESE. During the period of this progress report, the WSDSDPC was chaired by the former Minister of Training and Workforce Development, Hon Murray Cowper MLA.

The current focus for the WSDSDPC is to develop a coordinated approach between the Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies on workforce development initiatives, information and regional planning.

Best practice in workforce development

The Department of Training and Workforce Development is working with stakeholders across all jurisdictions in support of coordinated regional workforce planning and development at a national level. This is in response to work

commissioned by the WSDPC which has led to the development of regional planning 'Best Practice Principles' and a 'Best Practice Framework'.

The 'Best Practice Principles' and 'Best Practice Framework' are outlined in "*Draft National Regional Workforce Planning and Development Report*" compiled by the Workplace Research Centre of the University of Sydney. The report is based on a stocktake of regional workforce planning and development activities in Australia and overseas.

The Department is leading the development of priority actions aimed at encouraging the implementation of the best practice principles and framework to guide regional workforce planning and development activities across Australia. As shown by the creation of comprehensive regional workforce development plans supported through extensive consultation via a network of regional alliances, the Department is driving best practice in regional workforce planning and development in Western Australia.

Enterprise level workforce development

The Department of Training and Workforce Development is developing an *Enterprise Based Workforce Planning and Development Package* to support small and medium enterprises towards implementing effective workforce planning and workforce development strategies. This is being done in collaboration with the CCIWA, Small Business Development Corporation, Department of Commerce, Small Business Centre Stirling and industry Training Councils.

Underpinning this initiative is the development of a '*Workplace essentials for better business*' website to guide small and medium enterprises to undertake workforce planning and development to assist them in meeting their future workforce needs. The website will provide employers with information, resources and tools to analyse existing workforce practices, identify any gaps and formulate appropriate strategies.

The package will also aim to promote workforce planning and development to enterprises. This includes promotion and marketing of best practice in workforce planning and development via employer brochures, stakeholder forums and events.

Conclusion

Skilling WA has been in operation for almost three years and is a central feature of the Western Australian Government's commitment to workforce development.

Guided by the *Skilling WA* planning framework, the work undertaken by government agencies, industry Training Councils, industry peak bodies, non-government organisations and other key stakeholders is playing an important role in developing the State's workforce as highlighted in this progress report.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development has been encouraged by the strong and continued support from all stakeholders in implementing the priority actions of *Skilling WA*.

Increasing demand for skilled workers in a globally competitive environment coupled with an ageing population will continue to present workforce challenges for employers.

It is imperative that government, industry and community stakeholders continue to work together in strengthening Western Australia's position in meeting future workforce needs.

During 2013-14, the Department will work with key stakeholders to revise *Skilling WA*'s strategies and priority actions to ensure that they remain relevant and targeted to address the workforce development challenges faced by the State.