

Local Government Skills Formation Strategy

-Planning for a skilled workforce



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Department of Local Government, Planning,
Sport and Recreation
Department of Education, Training and the Arts



- SFS Strategy Feb 07 to Feb 09
- Funded by DETA
- Consists of an overarching Taskforce
- Focus on 4 key occupations
 - Town Planners
 - Building Certifiers
 - Environmental Health Officers
 - Engineers



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Shortage across the board

- Local Government Sector:
 - over 400 occupations
 - Specific Data is limited
 - No benchmarks against which to measure the effect of key strategies
- In 2007 Survey conducted to establish the scope & extent of the shortages

Findings

5 key drivers for the current skills shortage:

- Inability to compete with market rates of pay
- Resources/Infrastructure Boom
- Shortage of skilled professionals
- High Cost of Living in regional areas
- Lack of services/lifestyle issues in regional areas



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Councils forced to employ less skilled workers in:

• Plant Operators	-	31%
• EHOs	-	28%
• Building Certifiers	-	26%
• DA Planners	-	26%
• Civil Engineers	-	18%
• Financial Accountant	-	15%
• Strategic Planner	-	15%
• Labourers	-	15%
• Construction Tradesperson	-	13%
• Other Tradespersons	-	13%
• Truck Drivers	-	13%
• Computing Professionals	-	10%



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Top 10 skill hot spots – 2007/08

1. Civil Engineering
2. Building Certifiers
3. DA Planners
4. Strategic Planners
5. Mechanical Trades
6. Electrical Trades
7. Plant Operators
8. EHO
9. Other Engineers
10. Construction Tradespersons



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PLANNERS:

- ❖ 60% of councils with shortage of DA Planners
- ❖ 45% of planners seriously thinking of leaving the profession
- ❖ 50-80% of females leaving profession



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Why?

- High **stress** levels:
 - 51 % of DA Planners in high to very high stress category
 - Once employed - Stress increases at 3-5 year and 10 year mark
- **Workload** increases since 2000:
 - 66% planners with workload increases > 50%
 - Due to introduction of IPA
 - Development Boom



Addressing shortage of Planners by:

- Lifting the profile of planning
- Lifting public awareness of planning as a profession
- Promoting **para-planning role**
- Developing **retention** strategies – **flexible working arrangements**
- Reviewing planning legislation



Planning is Awesome DVD – 2000 copies distributed to high schools & councils in Queensland

“This DVD showcases the work of 12 young professionals in a variety of planning disciplines from public, private and property development to social planning and planning law.

It was something that we had always wanted to develop but did not have the resources to progress.

The Skill Formation Strategy provided the vehicle for making it happen”

Quote: Kate Isles, PIA Young Planners Group

Environmental Health

- ❖ 45% of councils reporting a shortage of EHOs
- ❖ 28% forced to employ less skilled persons to perform this function
- ❖ 100% vacancy rate in some councils
- ❖ 36 % of current EHO seriously thinking of leaving the profession



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Loss of female professionals

- Equal numbers of male & female EHOs enter the industry each year
- At 10-15 year mark significant loss of females from the profession
 - Relates to job design/working arrangements



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Reason for wanting to leave profession:

- Poor pay rates
- Limited opportunities for **career progression**
- Tired and need a change
- Lack of recognition and **resourcing**
- Lack of employer support and strategic direction
- Regulatory nature of the job



Range of Functions

- 33.3% of respondents required to work across more than 11 environmental health functions
- 11.3% of respondents are required to work across 16-23 functions
- 25% of respondents are spending 1 day a fortnight on non EH related roles
- *Some of these roles, for example Regulated Parking, Pest Management, Animal Management, Local Laws could be competently performed by EH para professionals, easing the workload at the professional level*



What attracted you to your current employer?

- More suitable geographic location –
....moving closer to home....
- More favourable **working conditions**
- Opportunities for **professional development**
- Change of job role
- **Better work/life balance**



MOVEMENT BETWEEN SECTORS

FROM:

Local Government

State Government

Commonwealth Government

64.3%

17.3%

3.1%

4.1%

3.1%

TO:

Local Government

State Government

Private Consultancy

Local Government

Actions:

- **Developed an EHO Cadetship Program – template**
 - **“Grow your own Strategy”**
- **Developing a tool to identify the number of EHOs required across the Qld Local Government sector – looking at least 3-5 years out**
- **Developing a “model equipment list” for councils**



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Building Certifiers

WARNING !!! WARNING !!!WARNING !!!

- There are currently 384 licensed Building Surveyors in Queensland, and
- **90% of these will be eligible for retirement in 2014**



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In 3 years time we will need:

- 3 times the number of BS
- 3.5 times the number of ABS
- 1.6 times the number of BSTs
- Key Problem:
 - 92 % of cadets under distance ed. courses
 - Takes 6-7 years to get qualifications

Key Strategies

- Amend Legislation in relation to BSTs
- Fast track builders into the profession
- Recognise overseas qualifications
- Strategic allocation of PPP funding
- Seek designated ANZCO codes - to aid with migration strategies



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