



Regional
Development
Australia

Far West NSW

Far West NSW
Workforce
Development Report
2025



This report has been developed to provide the evidence that enables strong planning, industry growth and a sustainable and prosperous region. Regional Development Australia Far West offer our sincere appreciation to the regions employers that took the time to complete the survey and inform this report.

This report is dated November 2025 and incorporates information and events up to that date only. All surveys, forecasts, projections, and recommendations contained in this report are made in good faith and on the basis of the information supplied by the respondents. RDA Far West has made all reasonable enquiries necessary in preparing this report.

Note: comments are included exactly as they are received through the survey

Cover: Evelyn Creek, Milparinka

Executive Summary

The Far West NSW 2025 Workforce Development Report identifies a region with strong economic optimism and clear growth ambition, yet employers continue to face structural workforce challenges that limit their ability to fully capitalise on emerging opportunities. Survey responses from more than 120 regional businesses reveal a region willing to invest, collaborate and innovate, but constrained by digital connectivity, training access, housing availability, childcare shortages and persistent difficulties attracting and retaining skilled staff.

Employers report that digital capability remains a critical enabler of productivity and training access, with 48% still dissatisfied with telecommunications services despite recent improvements. Skills shortages are widespread, particularly in trades, health, hospitality, education and technical roles, with many employers unable to attract qualified applicants or relying on short-term contractors. Recruitment challenges are compounded by regional liveability factors, including housing, childcare, and limited career opportunities for partners.

Training and professional development remain a major pressure point. 36% of employers are not satisfied with local training options, and 60% cannot access required off-the-job training locally for apprentices, forcing travel to Adelaide, Mildura, Dubbo and other centres. This undermines youth retention, employer motivation to take on apprentices, and the region's long-term skills pipeline.

Despite these challenges, business confidence is strong: almost 90% of employers are planning for growth, with most expecting to expand within the next two years. Employers show high willingness to employ diverse groups, including young people, mature workers, Indigenous people and those with limited experience, highlighting a readiness to build local capability if supported by the right systems.

Key barriers to attraction and retention remain consistent across survey cycles: isolation (58%), accessibility to and from the region (53%), housing availability (51%), childcare (49%) and partner employment opportunities (39%). These factors directly impact workforce stability, with many employers reporting higher-than-desired turnover and difficulty retaining skilled staff.

Strategic opportunities identified through the survey include:

- Strengthening digital infrastructure and capability to support training, business operations and regional competitiveness.
- Expanding local training delivery, including trade pathways, soft skills, leadership development and industry-specific qualifications and professional development.
- Developing coordinated regional attraction strategies, including housing solutions, childcare expansion, and improved regional promotion.

- Enhancing school-to-work pathways, with strong employer interest in engaging with students through work experience, industry talks and workplace visits.
- Building a regional framework for collaboration, enabling shared workforce planning, coordinated messaging, and stronger advocacy for government support.

The findings show a region with strong foundations, committed employers and significant economic opportunity. With targeted investment, coordinated leadership and a renewed focus on liveability, Far West NSW is well positioned to build a resilient, skilled and future-ready workforce that supports sustainable regional growth.

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World at Work Report - 2025

Technological development, the green transition, and economic and demographic shifts are reshaping the business landscape. Globally, as many industries attest, talent shortages are not due to a lack of people. It's a lack of specialised skills.

The World Economic Forum expects 170 million new jobs will be created by global macro trends this decade. However, these new jobs are also paired with the prediction that 92 million roles will be displaced. This means there will be a net employment increase of 78 million jobs, but for specific skills.

Demand for digital capabilities, including artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics and cybersecurity, is projected to increase at a faster rate than any other skill category over the next five years.

In alignment with these global trends, based on early projections and 2026 projected data, between 51% - 67% of employees in Australia intend to seek new employment opportunities in 2026. The majority of this movement is driven by a desire for improved wages and benefits to combat cost of living pressure, access to new skills, career progression opportunities and exposure to diverse working environments.

Employee job search intentions indicate a significant portion of the global workforce is considering a job change.

- Australia – Up to 67% of employees are actively seeking or planning to change jobs.
- UK – Over 50% of respondents said “yes” when asked if they plan to look for a new job in 2026, the highest in Europe.
- U.S. – Around 34% of employees expressed an intent to look for a new job in 2026.
- Germany – Around 47% of employees across Europe, including Germany are planning to look for a new job.
- Singapore – 56% were in the “somewhat / very likely” category in a 2025 report.

Australian context

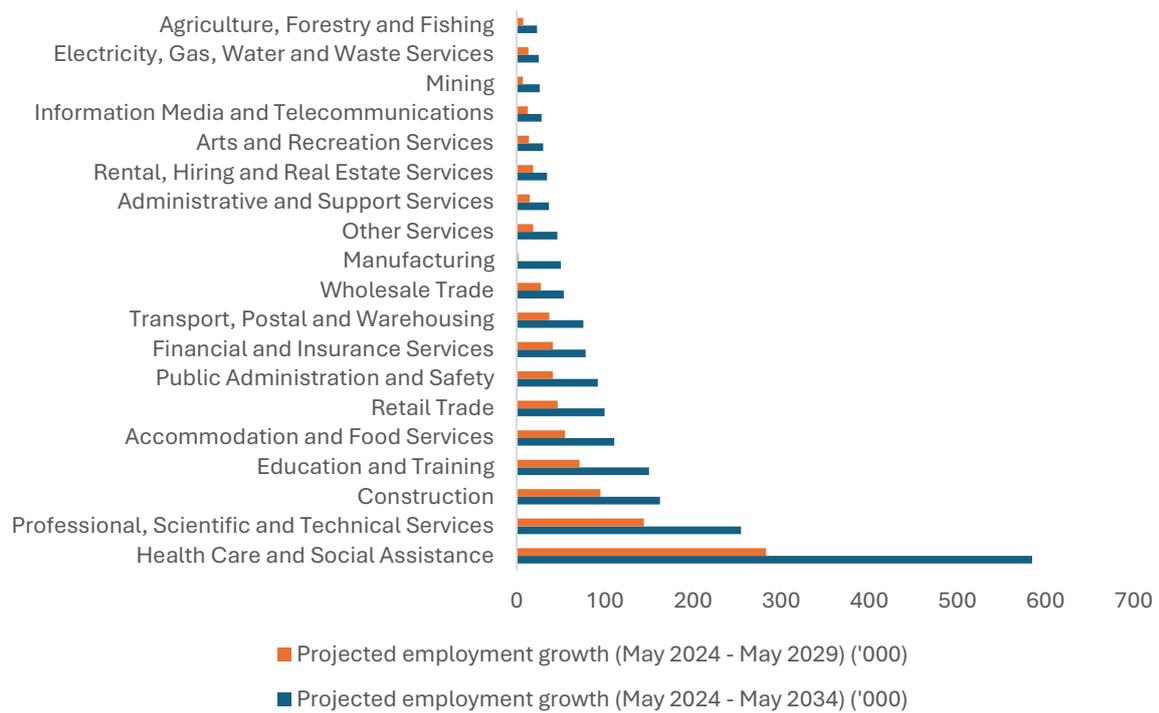
Australia is forecast to experience significant workforce expansion, with total employment projected to grow by approximately 950,000 people (6.6%) over the next five years and by nearly 2 million people (13.7%) over the next decade, reaching an estimated 16.3 million employed people by May 2034.

This growth is expected to be concentrated in sectors such as health care and social assistance, professional services, technology, construction and renewable energy, reflecting both population needs and economic transformation trends.

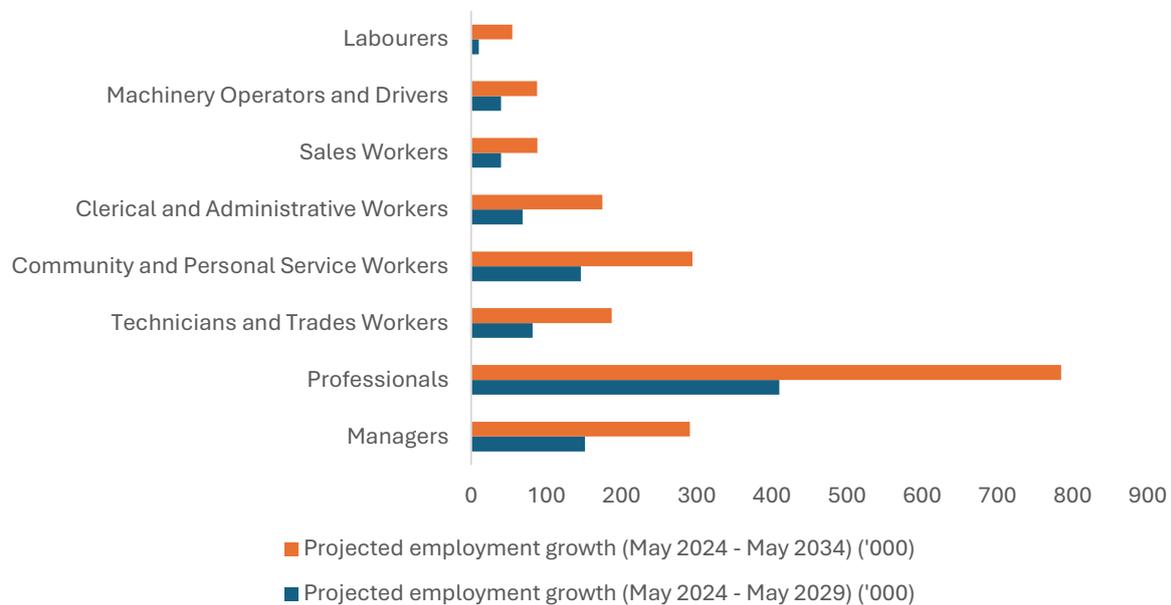
Understanding these national workforce dynamics provides critical context for assessing regional workforce readiness and aligning policy and training responses to future skills demand.

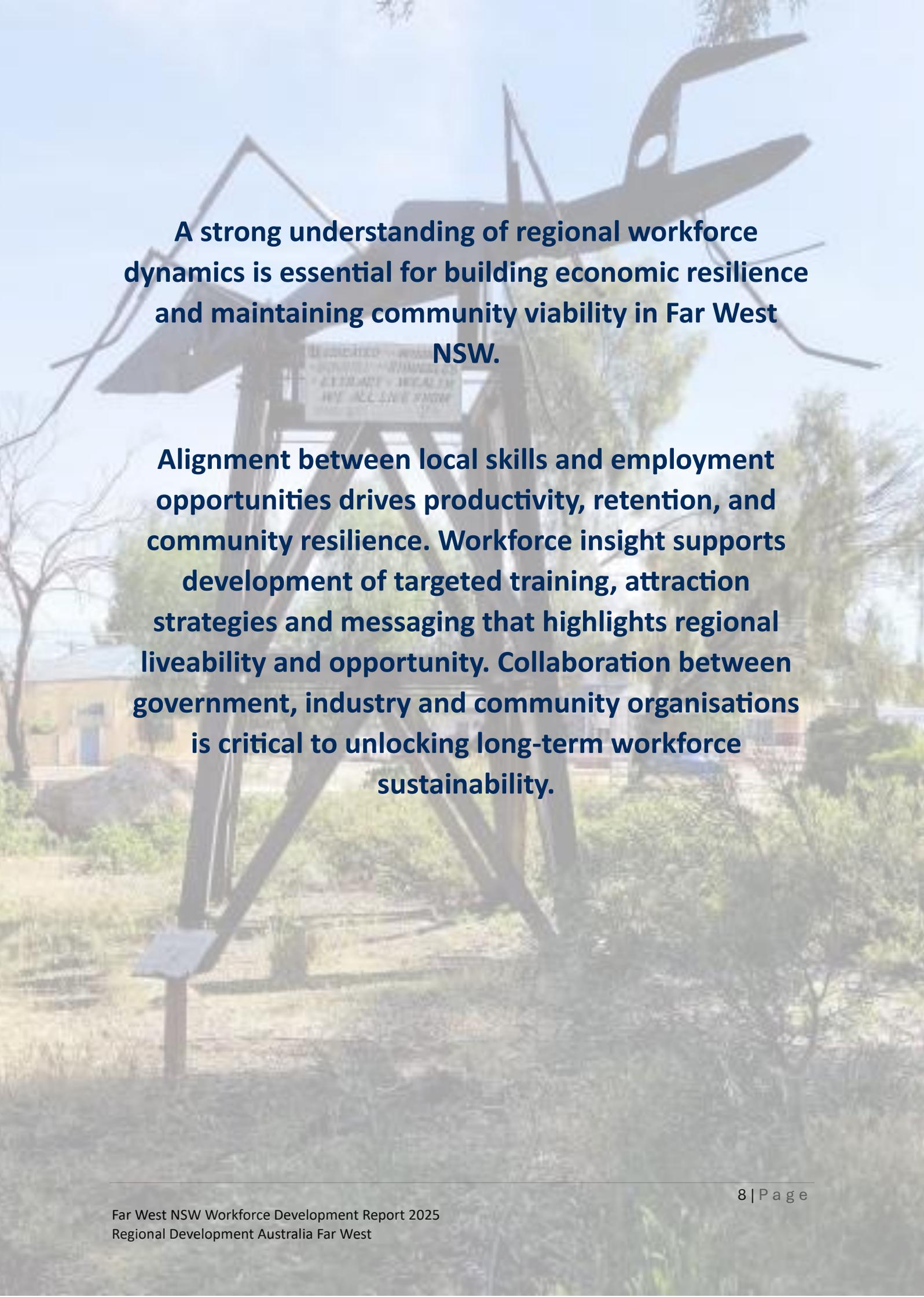
(Jobs and skills Australia employment predictions)

Projected employment growth by industry (5 and 10 years) Persons, Australia



Projected employment growth by major occupation (5 and 10 Years), persons, Australia



A wooden signpost with a sign that reads "UNDEVELOPED - WORKERS - UNEMPLOYED - UNWANTED - ATTRACT - HEALING - BY ALL IN THE FUTURE". The signpost is made of dark wood and has a sign attached to it. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with trees and a building.

A strong understanding of regional workforce dynamics is essential for building economic resilience and maintaining community viability in Far West NSW.

Alignment between local skills and employment opportunities drives productivity, retention, and community resilience. Workforce insight supports development of targeted training, attraction strategies and messaging that highlights regional liveability and opportunity. Collaboration between government, industry and community organisations is critical to unlocking long-term workforce sustainability.

Background

The first Far West NSW Workforce Development Study was undertaken in 2016 in response to growing concerns across the region about staff attraction and retention, the alignment of education and training pathways, and the overall readiness of the local workforce. At the time, community sentiment suggested that employers were experiencing increasing difficulty filling roles and accessing appropriate training, but there was limited evidence to confirm the scale or nature of these challenges, and it was important to understand the real experiences from an employer's perspective.

To address this, Regional Development Australia Far West (RDA Far West) developed a comprehensive employer survey, tested with community organisations and government representatives to ensure its suitability and structure. The survey captured employer experiences across growth aspirations, training access, attraction and retention, workforce impacts, and barriers. It also collected insights to support school-based work readiness programs and job-seeker preparation, including employer expectations around resumes, employability skills and job readiness.

The 2016 findings informed several major regional initiatives, including the establishment of the Country Universities Centre Far West, the Far West Proud campaign, and the Training and Employment Coordinator position. These outcomes demonstrated the value of evidence-based workforce planning and reinforced the need for ongoing monitoring.

In 2019, the survey was repeated with only minor adjustments to maintain comparability across study periods. This allowed stakeholders to assess whether employer needs had changed, whether implemented strategies were effective, and how workforce conditions had evolved. The 2019 study again provided critical insights into employer aspirations, confidence in local training providers, and persistent barriers to business growth.

The 2022 survey was conducted during a period of significant disruption. COVID-19, border closures and lockdowns had reshaped labour markets globally, creating widespread skill and labour shortages and impacting supply chains, manufacturing and transport. The 2022 report noted impacting skill and labour shortages were reported almost daily, and for the first time in many years the world witnessed shortages of everyday items. Manufacturing struggled to keep pace with demand, transport was impacted and in 2022 as we learnt to live with COVID the impacts were still very visible.

The 2022 survey was updated to reflect these new realities and to capture emerging issues affecting regional sustainability.

In 2025, the survey again retained the core structure but incorporated new questions to reflect contemporary workforce dynamics, including the use of artificial intelligence in local business operations.

The findings highlight the need for stronger collaboration, shared leadership and a unified regional vision. As the survey results emphasise, supporting the growing workforce needs of the Far West NSW region is not the role of one organisation, government department or service provider. Developing, implementing, and monitoring strategies that make a real difference and support the needs of the region is a role for the region and will only be successful with the collaboration and shared vision of all stakeholders.

The 2025 survey results clearly demonstrate the need for far greater collaboration, leadership, support and a shared and well communicated vision, supporting the needs of the region is beyond ownership and working in isolation.

A collaborative approach is required.

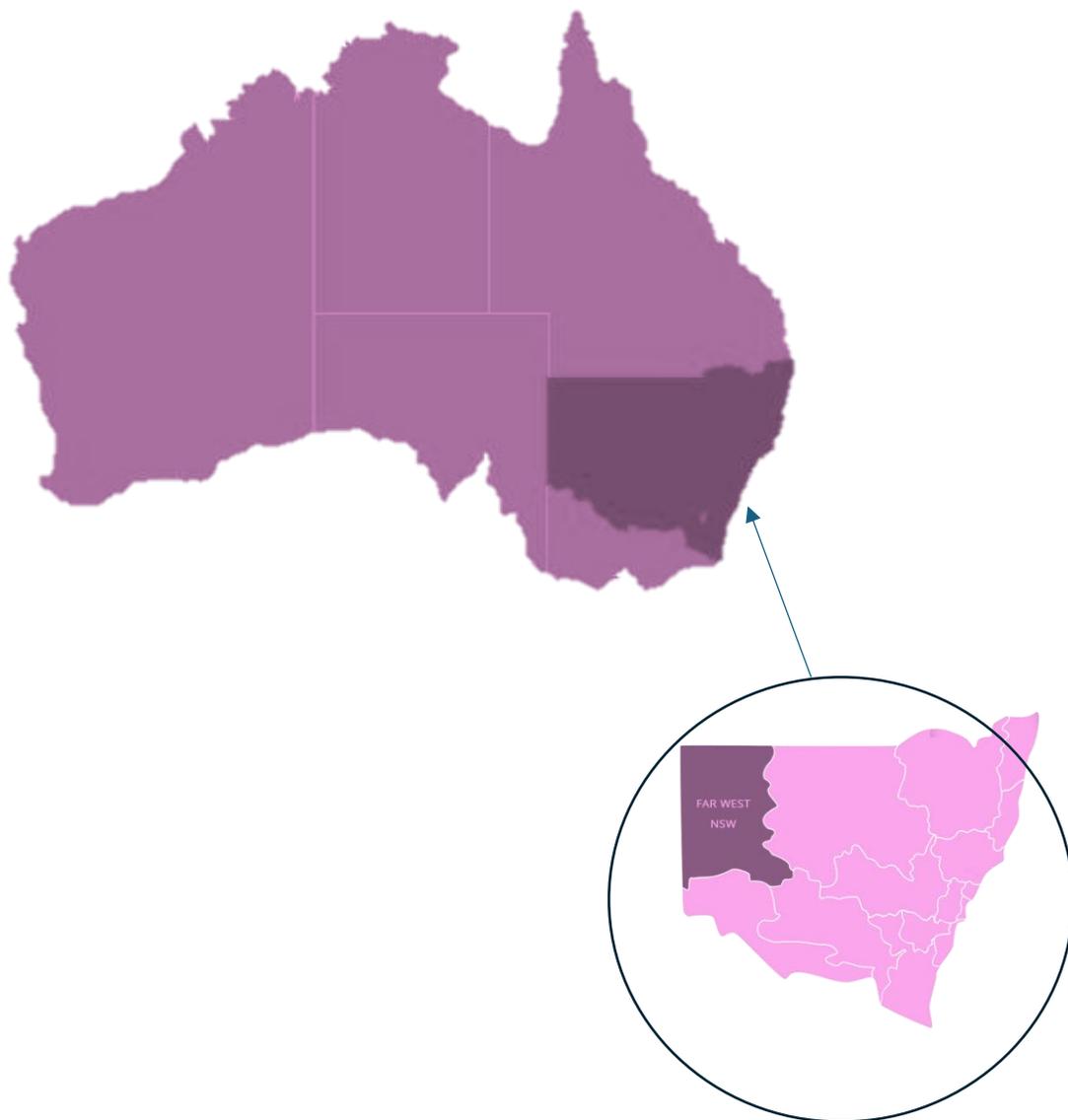
Despite strong regional optimism, driven by major events, planned projects and a buoyant real estate market, employers continue to face significant challenges. Housing shortages, childcare constraints, digital connectivity issues, physical connectivity and ongoing recruitment difficulties remain key barriers to sustainable growth.

Many employers have resisted the temptation to rely heavily on a remote workforce, recognising that long-term regional prosperity depends on building and retaining a strong local workforce.

Childcare availability again emerges as a critical constraint, with many parents unable to return to work without adequate, high-quality options. This reinforces the need for coordinated region-wide strategies that address both workforce development and broader liveability factors.

Study Area

The geographical area of this study focuses on Far West NSW. The region consists of two local Government Areas, Broken Hill City and Central Darling Shire and Unincorporated Area of NSW and covers approx. 146,000 km².



Methodology

This study retained the basis of the surveys utilised in 2016, 2019 and 2022 to enable a comparison of data over the four study periods.

The original survey was developed in consultation and trialled with a number of NSW RDAs, industry sectors and government departments to ensure its suitability in both content and structure.

In 2022 a number of additional questions were included to capture supplementary information critical to the holistic growth of the region and to enable all stakeholders to better understand the needs and expectations of employers in the region.

In 2025, again a few new questions were included to reflect the world today, including questions about the use of Artificial Intelligence in business locally.

The survey was comprehensively promoted across the region's media, and individual invitations to complete the survey were forwarded to over 530 businesses across the region.

More than 120 regional businesses contributed to the survey with a completion rate of over 80 percent providing an in depth understanding of their experiences.

Note: Some of the questions asked in the survey offered respondents the opportunity to choose more than one response, as such percentages in the graphs may total more than 100% as respondents identified with several responses.



The Profile of Far West NSW





GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

\$1.6 billion

(2023-2024)



UNEMPLOYMENT

4.9%

(JUNE 2024)



JOBS

8,959

(2024)



BUSINESS

1355

(2024)

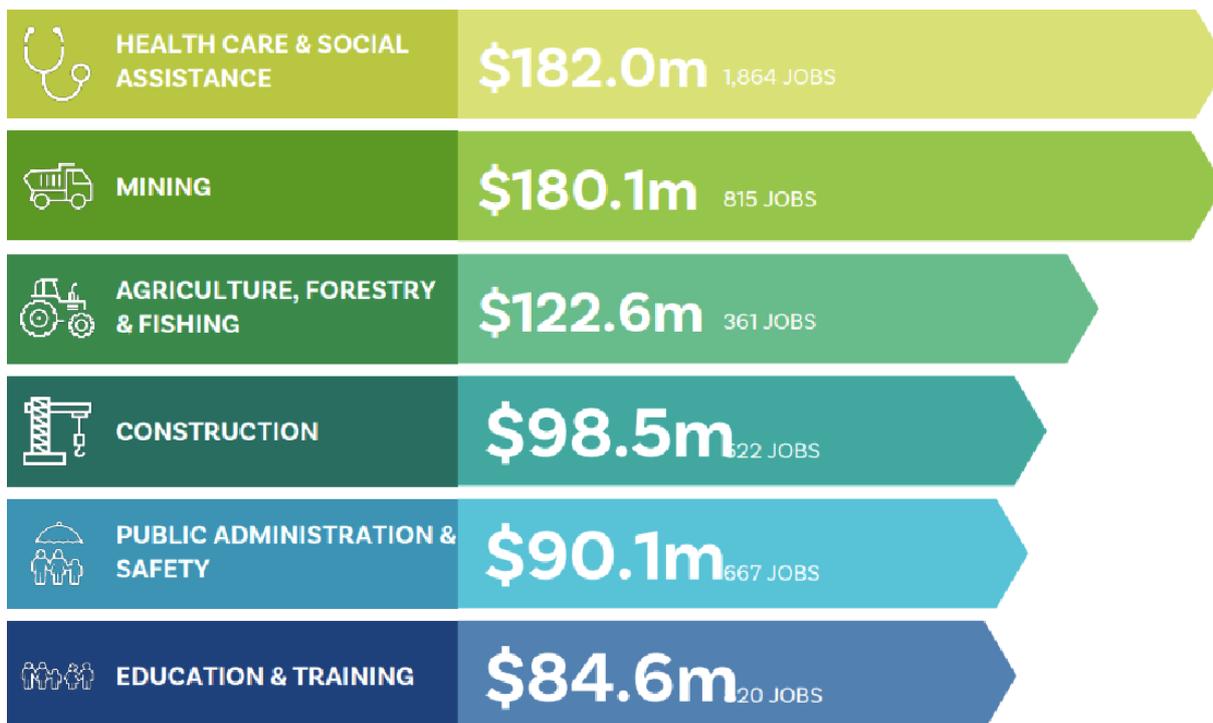


NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING APPROVALS

\$82,178.3

\$MILLION (2024)

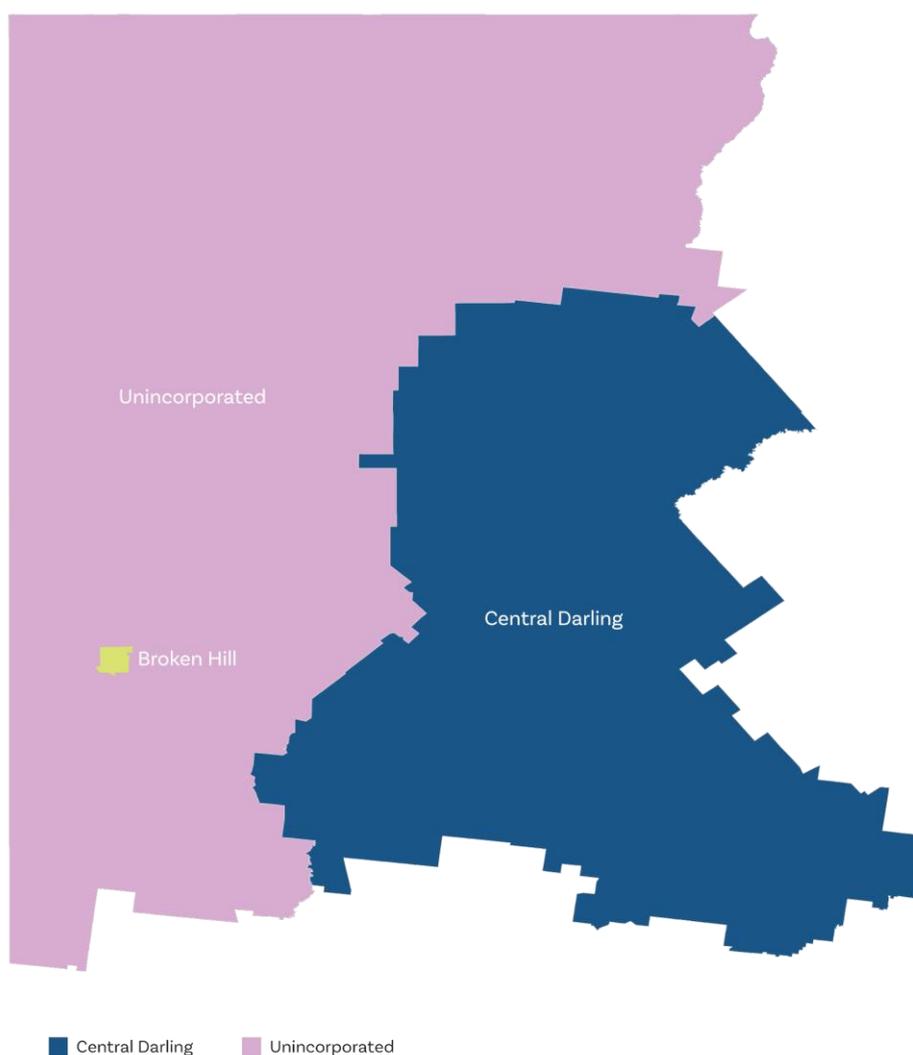
Major Industries (2024)



Community Profile



The Region



BROKEN HILL		CENTRAL DARLING SHIRE		UNINCORPORATED FAR WEST NSW	
POPULATION		POPULATION		POPULATION	
ESTIMATED RESIDENTIAL POPULATION	17,541	ESTIMATED RESIDENTIAL POPULATION	1,767	ESTIMATED RESIDENTIAL POPULATION	984
AVERAGE AGE	42.6	AVERAGE AGE	42.1	AVERAGE AGE	41.9
HOUSEHOLD AND DWELLINGS		HOUSEHOLD AND DWELLINGS		HOUSEHOLD AND DWELLINGS	
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE	2	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE	2	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE	2
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME (P/A)	\$82,908	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME (P/A)	\$83,414	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME (P/A)	\$97,363
EMPLOYMENT		EMPLOYMENT		EMPLOYMENT	
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT (PLACE OF WORK)	7,892	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT (PLACE OF WORK)	503	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT (PLACE OF WORK)	564
AVERAGE WORKER INCOME	\$68,690	AVERAGE WORKER INCOME	\$66,533	AVERAGE WORKER INCOME	\$60,964
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.70%	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.70%	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.30%
NUMBER OF BUSINESSES	949	NUMBER OF BUSINESSES	201	NUMBER OF BUSINESSES	205
TOURISM		TOURISM		TOURISM	
TOTAL VISITORS	250,000	TOTAL VISITORS	80,000	TOTAL VISITORS	34,000
INTERSTATE	47.1%	INTERSTATE	57.0%	INTERSTATE	0.0%
INTERNATIONAL	1.8%	INTERNATIONAL	1.8%	INTERNATIONAL	1.1%
INTRASTATE	45.3%	INTRASTATE	41.2%	INTRASTATE	98.9%
TOP 4 INDUSTRIES BY GRP		TOP 4 INDUSTRIES BY GRP		TOP 4 INDUSTRIES BY GRP	
HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	\$173.9M (23/24)	AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING	\$40.4M	AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING	\$70.5M
MINING	\$166.7M (23/24)	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY	\$4.1M	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY	\$16.0M
TOURISM	\$147.5M (23/24)	EDUCATION AND TRAINING	\$4.0M	ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES	\$15.9M
CONSTRUCTION	\$88.3M	ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES	\$16.6M	MINING	\$11.4M
GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT		GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT		GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT	
TOTAL GRP (\$m)	\$1,010	TOTAL GRP (\$M)	\$76	TOTAL GRP (\$M)	\$185

Demographic Profile of Responding Businesses



The Far West NSW region (RDA Far West region) incorporates Broken Hill City, Central Darling Shire and the Unincorporated Area of Far West NSW. To ensure a relevant cross section of employers the region was separated into Local Government Areas (LGA's). Figure 1 and 2 below, indicate the population spread in comparison to the survey respondents.

Figure 1. Far West NSW Population Spread

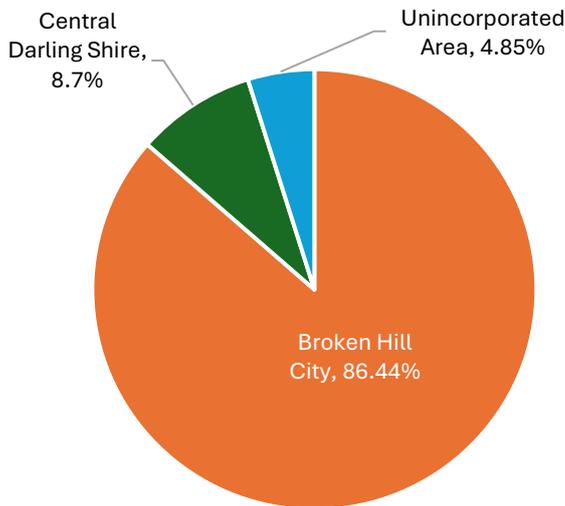
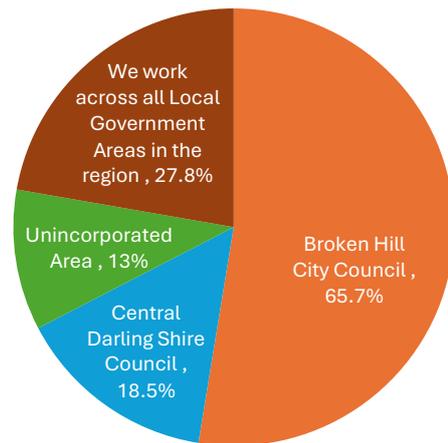
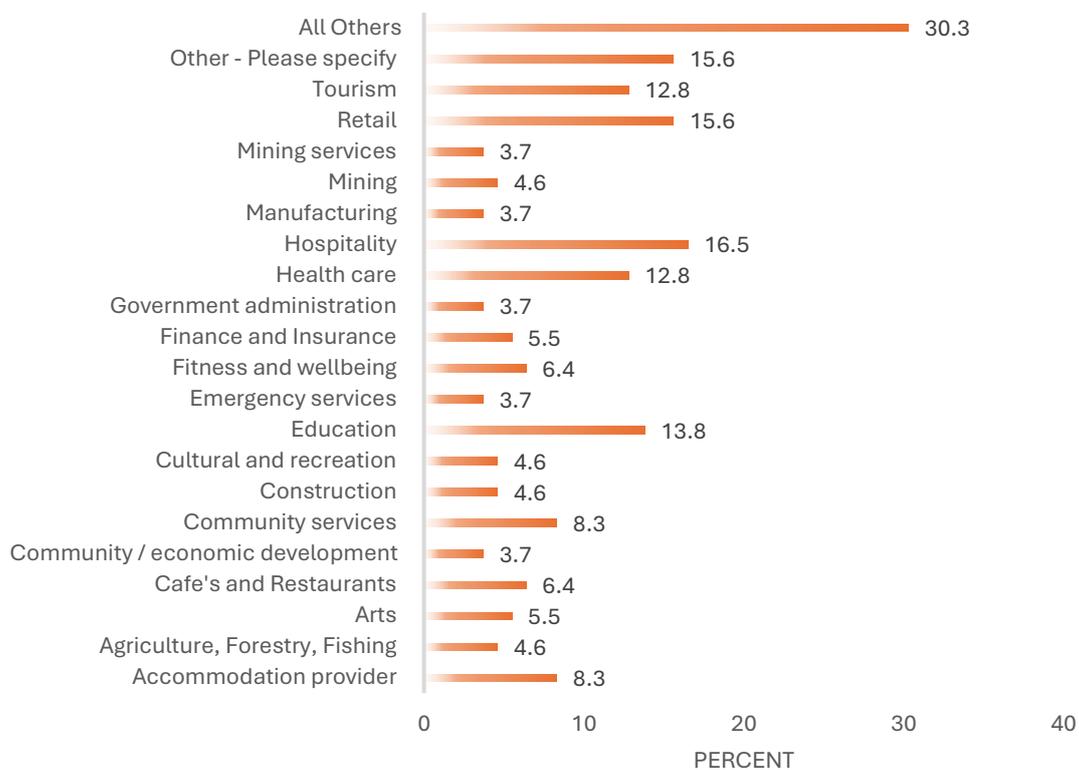


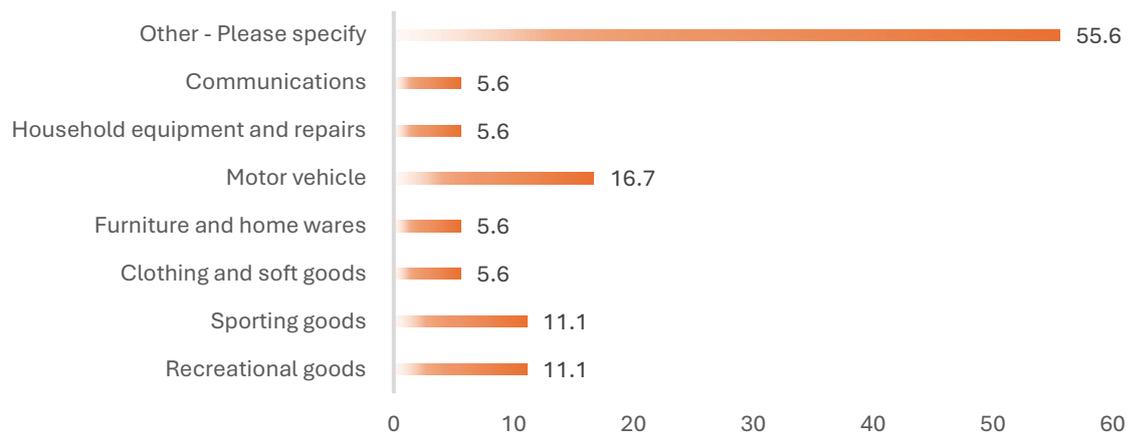
Figure 2. In which LGA do you operate. Survey respondents



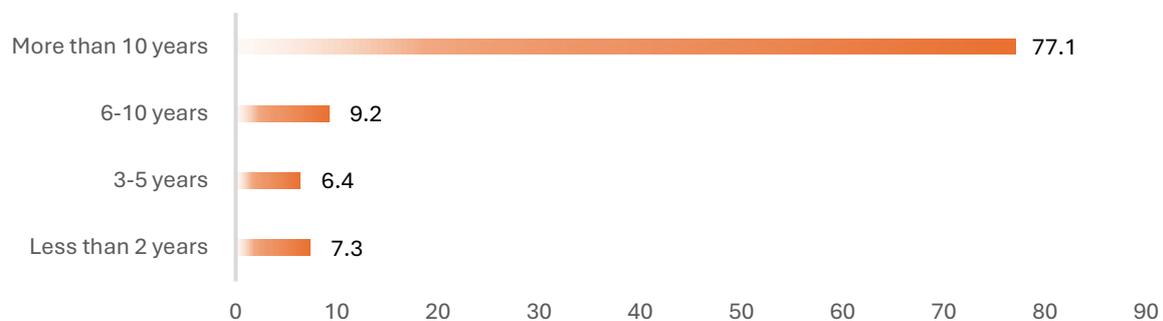
What is the primary industry area of your business.



If you identified as a retail organisation in the previous question, please specify.



How long has your organisation been operating?



The decline in the average business lifespan is a global trend, but it is one that is particularly pronounced in Australia. Over the past 50 years, the average lifespan of an Australian company has fallen from 65 years to just 10 years. (Kirstin schneider, hyfen)

If you are a small business owner, you are no doubt aware of the statistics surrounding small businesses and the high business failure rate in Australia. 60% of businesses will fail in the first three years, and of those who fail, 50% are profitable. The fact is that many small businesses do not survive for very long and definitely do not thrive in their industry. Sadly, business failure can happen even if you're profitable due to many other factors.

Digital Connectivity

Digital connectivity plays a vital role in workforce development, shaping how individuals access training, employment opportunities, and essential workplace tools. As the economy becomes increasingly digital, reliable internet access and digital infrastructure are no longer optional, they are fundamental to preparing a skilled and adaptable workforce. From online job applications to virtual training programs and remote work opportunities, digital connectivity ensures that workers can participate fully in today's labour market.

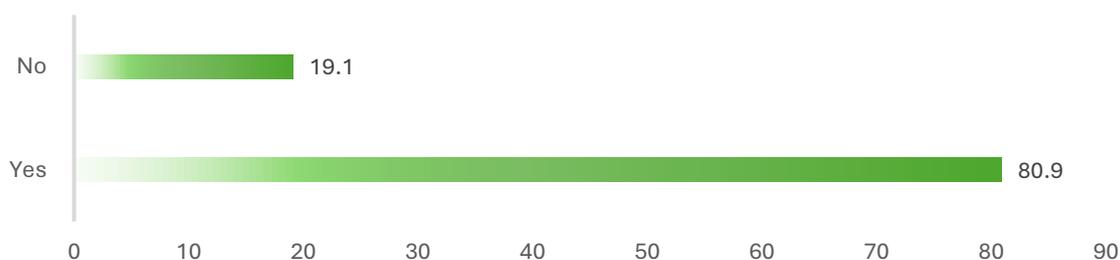
For employers, it enables the delivery of scalable training programs, continuous upskilling, and more efficient onboarding processes. It also opens pathways for collaboration and knowledge sharing across regions, helping businesses tap into a broader talent pool. For workers, particularly in rural or underserved areas, access to digital tools is key to overcoming barriers to employment and education. In workforce development efforts, bridging the digital divide is not just about technology access; it's about ensuring economic mobility, inclusion, and long-term employability in a rapidly evolving job market.

In the 2022 Report, 75.8 percent of respondents report having a website which has increased to 81 percent in 2025. Business reliance on electronic communication has also increased with only 1% of respondents reporting their business doesn't rely on electronic communication in 2025. More respondents also report being satisfied with the speed and quality of internet and telecommunication services in the region, with satisfaction growing from 38 to 52 percent over the past 3 years. Likewise the issues created through unsatisfactory telecommunication services has decreased with responses indicating a general improvement in all associated issues.

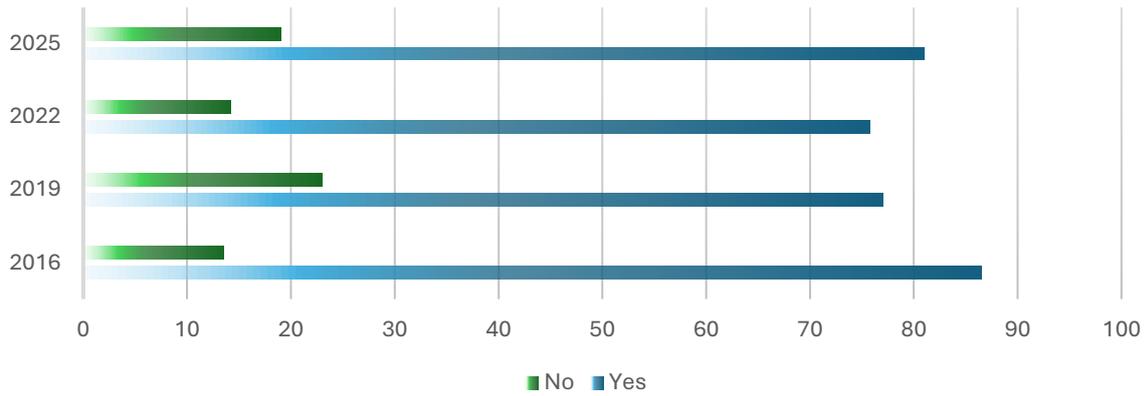
Digital communication services within the region remain unsatisfactory for 48% of respondents. Whilst services have improved and less businesses are suffering from unsatisfactory services the results indicate our telecommunications organisations still have work to do to ensure high quality, fast services support the aspirations of local businesses.

The responses below provide a snapshot of business digital connectivity and their satisfaction with that connectivity in Far West NSW.

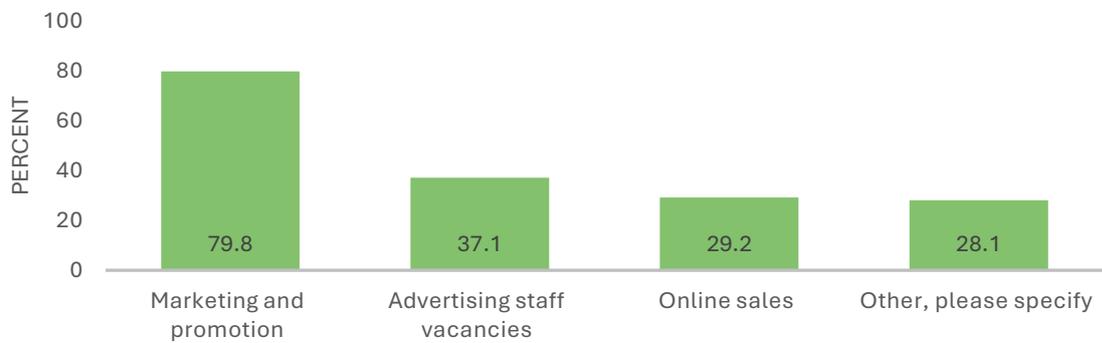
Does your organisation have a website?



Does your organisation have a website? 2016-2025



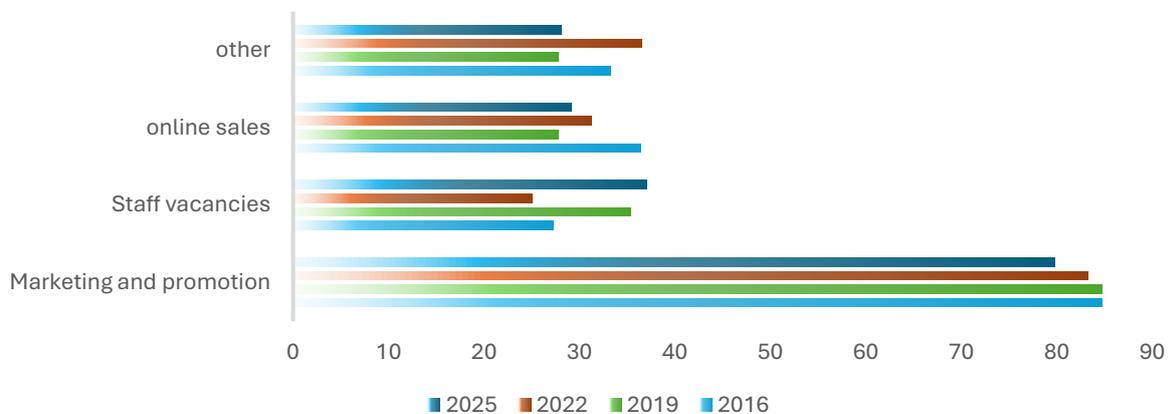
For what purpose does your organisation use its website? (tick all that are relevant)



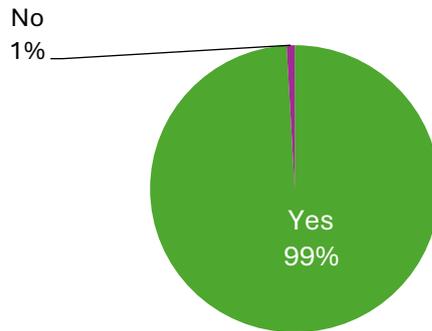
Other, please sepcify

- General information / community awareness
- Bookings / registrations
- Research
- Finance / banking

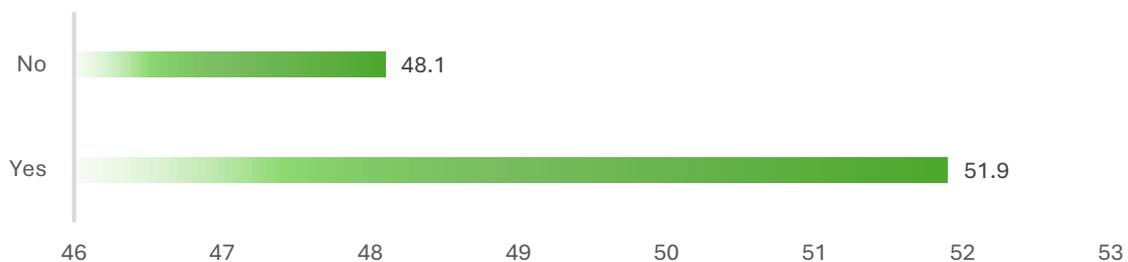
For what purpose does your organisation use its website 2016-2025



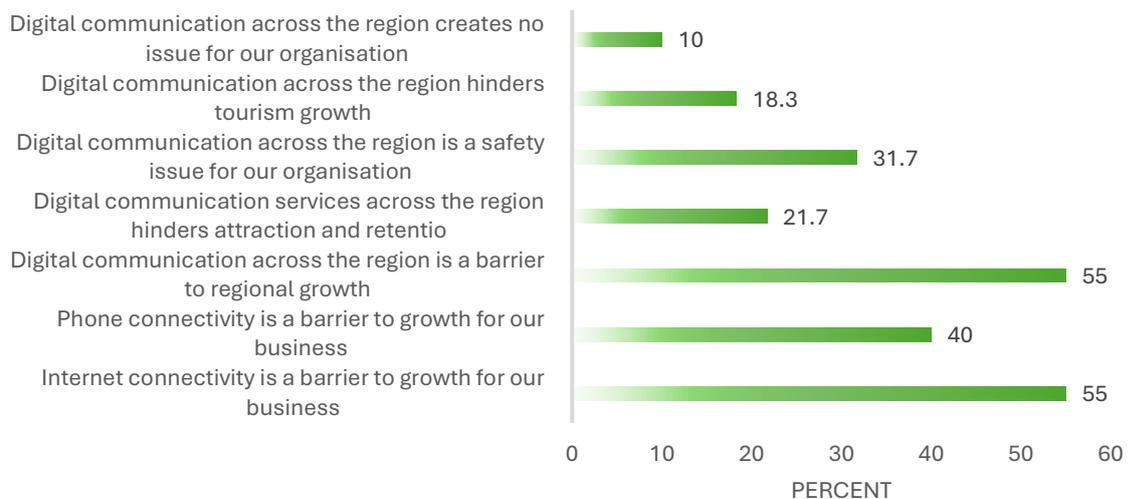
Does your organisation rely on electronic communications (e.g. email, mobile phones, smart devices)



Regardless of how your organisation utilises electronic communication, are you satisfied with the speed / quality of internet and telecommunication services?



If you are not satisfied with internet and telecommunication services in the region, please expand on the issues unsatisfactory telecommunications create for your business (tick all that are relevant)



Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming the way businesses operate across nearly every industry. From automating repetitive tasks to providing deep insights through data analysis. Reportedly, AI enables businesses to operate more efficiently, make better decisions, and deliver improved customer experiences.

One of the most common applications of AI in business is process automation. AI powered systems can handle routine tasks such as data entry, scheduling, and customer inquiries through chatbots, freeing up employees to focus on more strategic work. In areas like finance and HR, AI can streamline compliance checks, resume screening, and invoice processing.

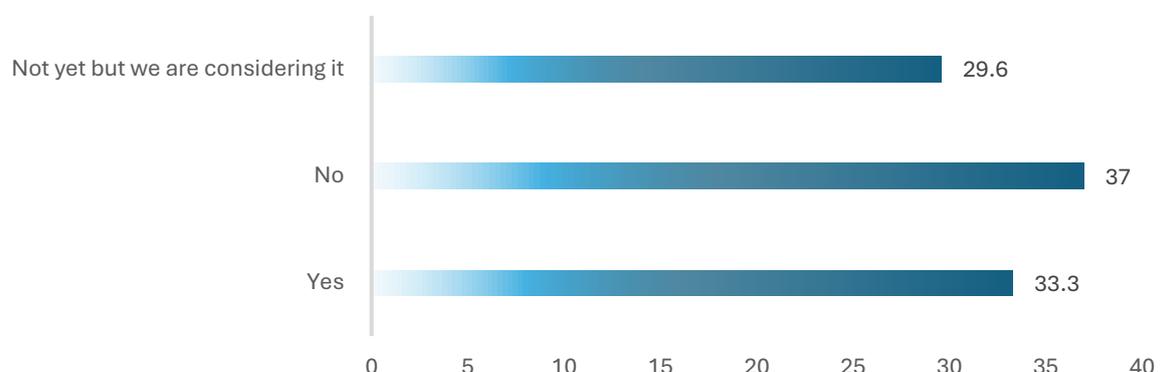
AI is also central to data analytics and decision-making. Businesses can use AI algorithms to analyse large volumes of data quickly, identify trends, and forecast future outcomes, helping leaders make smarter, evidence-based decisions. In retail, for example, AI helps predict consumer behaviour and optimise inventory. In agriculture or mining, AI can monitor equipment and environmental conditions to improve productivity and safety.

Customer service is another area where AI is making a major impact. Through tools like natural language processing, businesses can offer 24/7 support using virtual assistants, provide personalised recommendations, and improve user engagement. This not only enhances the customer experience but also reduces operational costs.

The 2025 Far West Workforce Development Survey asked business about the use of artificial technology for the first time. Current statistics based on global 2024-2025 reports suggest about 78% of companies worldwide report using AI in at least one business function, with roughly 40% actively using AI in day-to-day operations.

With the rapid growth of technology does your organisation use Artificial Intelligence (AI) software.

Note: this question is new in the 2025 survey



Social Media

Social media has become a powerful tool for businesses of all sizes, transforming how they communicate, market, and engage with customers. Platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, and X are now central to building brand awareness, reaching new audiences, and staying competitive in a digitally connected marketplace.

One of the primary uses of social media in business is marketing and promotion. Organisations use social media to advertise products and services, run campaigns, and share content that resonates with their target audience. It's an affordable and effective way to reach both local and global markets, especially for small businesses with limited marketing budgets.

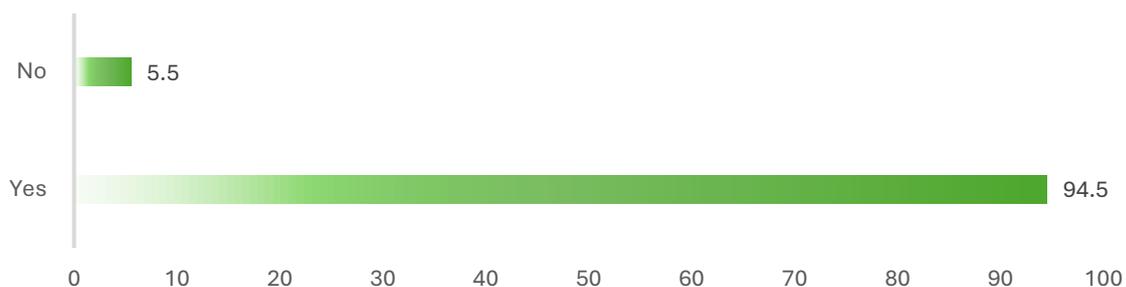
Social media also enables direct engagement with customers. Through comments, messages, and real-time feedback, businesses can build relationships, improve customer service, and strengthen loyalty. Many consumers now expect businesses to be responsive and available on social platforms and it's often their first point of contact.

Another major benefit is brand visibility and trust. Regular, authentic content helps establish a brand's identity and values. Platforms like LinkedIn are reportedly valuable for professional networking, talent recruitment, and B2B engagement, while platforms like Instagram and TikTok allow for more creative, visual storytelling.

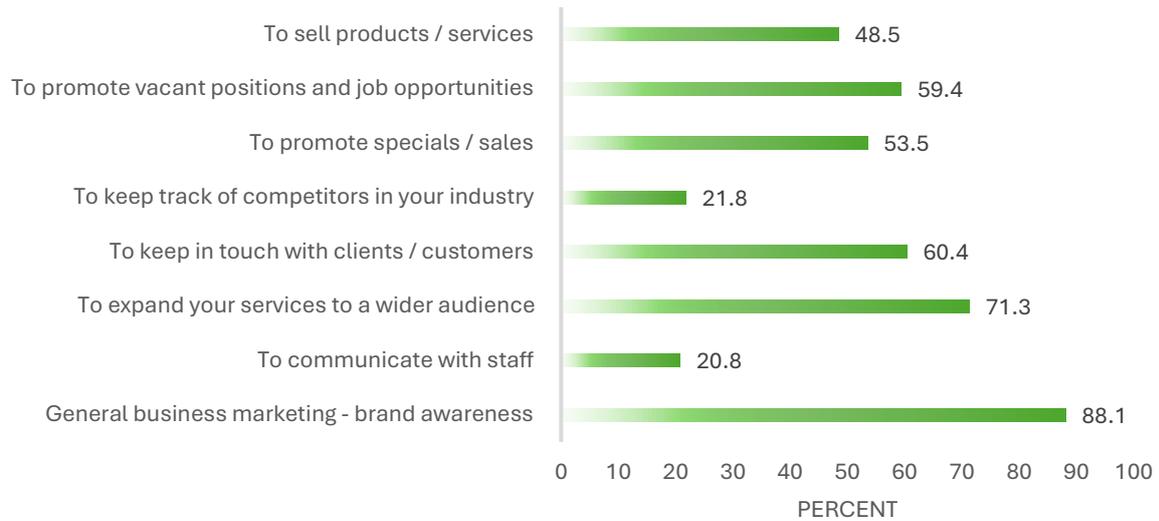
In addition, social media offers valuable insights through analytics. Businesses can track customer behaviour, engagement levels, demographics, and campaign performance in real time. These insights help refine strategies, improve products, and make informed business decisions.

The 2025 Survey also asked respondents about their use of social media for the first time, and not surprisingly 94.5 percent of respondents reported using social media in their business. Responses also suggest local businesses are making the most of the opportunities with regional businesses utilising social media for a range of purposes.

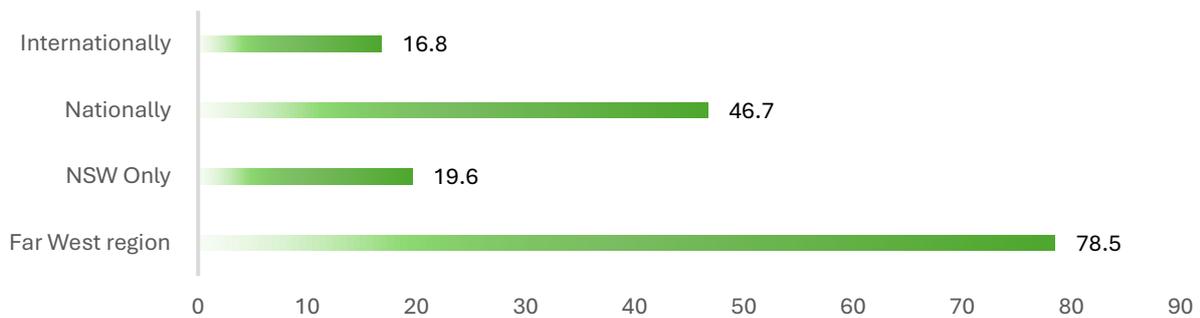
Does your organisation use social media?



If your organisation does use social media, how is it being used? (tick all that apply)

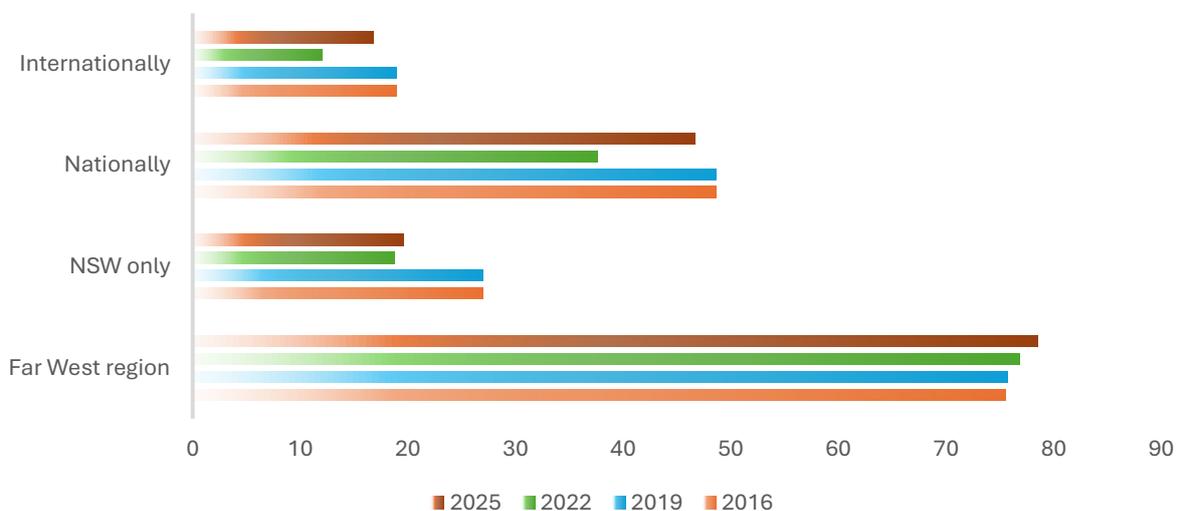


Where do you sell / market your goods and / or services? (tick as many as apply)



Local businesses are selling and marketing their goods and services to a wider audience over the past 3 years with international marketing / sales up from 12 percent in 2022 to 16.8 percent in 2025 and nationally up from 37.6 percent to 46.7 percent.

Where do you sell/market your goods / services 2016-2025



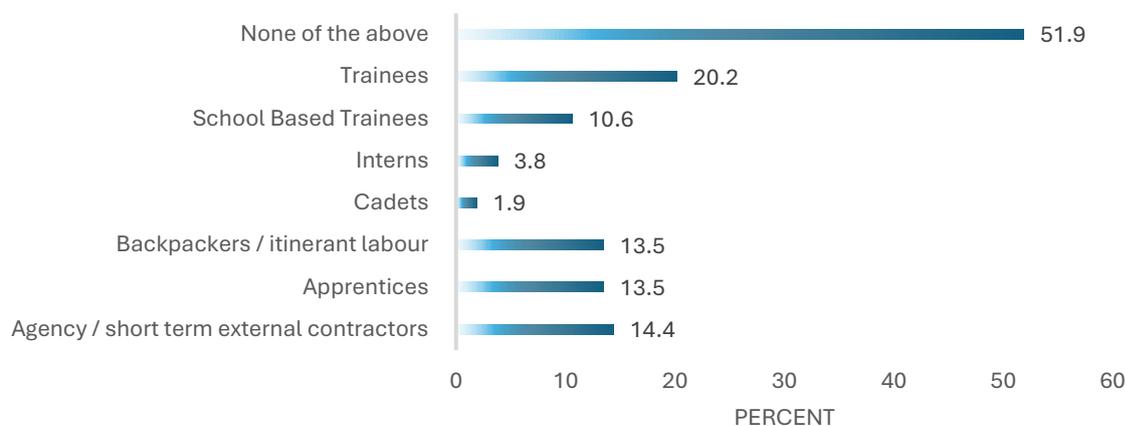
Our current workforce

To gain a clearer picture of our current workforce and assess whether we are fully leveraging local potential, respondents were asked to reflect on the makeup of their existing workforce. One of the most effective strategies to address workforce shortages and skill gaps is to invest in training and retraining our own people. This includes creating more on-the-job learning opportunities that not only build skills but also help retain local talent, particularly young people within the region.

However, meeting these workforce needs requires more than employer willingness alone. It involves a coordinated approach that includes strong, relevant, and locally delivered training pathways, accessible local assessment options, and sustained career development support. Employers must be active partners in workforce development, but they also need the backing of responsive training systems and supportive infrastructure to succeed.

To create meaningful, long-term employment outcomes, we must focus on making career pathways visible, viable, and valuable for local people. This means investing in systems that are responsive to local needs and ensuring that training leads to real, attractive employment opportunities within the region. A strong local workforce starts with strong local collaboration.

Do you currently employ any of the following (tick all that are relevant)



The 2025 survey identifies less respondents are employing apprentices, interns and cadets than in the 2022 survey, however trainees and school-based trainees have slightly increased from 19.7 percent to 20.2 percent for trainees and 8.5 percent to 10.6 percent for school-based trainees. Potentially reflecting the labour shortage, backpackers / itinerant labour has increased from 3.4 percent to 13.5 percent over the past 3 years. The survey has not previously asked about agency and short-term external contractors, however, with 14.4 percent of respondents reporting the use of agency and short-term contractors it appears they are becoming a critical aspect of the local workforce.



Miner's Memorial Broken Hill

Training and professional development

Training and professional development are critical components of a resilient, skilled, and future ready workforce. In today's rapidly changing economy, where technology, job roles, and industry needs are constantly evolving, ongoing learning is no longer optional, it is essential.

Effective training helps employees develop the specific skills and knowledge required to perform their jobs efficiently and safely. It also builds confidence, supports career progression, and boosts job satisfaction, which can lead to higher retention rates. For employers, a well-trained workforce leads to greater productivity, reduced errors, and improved service quality. It also allows businesses to remain competitive by adapting quickly to new technologies, regulations, and market demands.

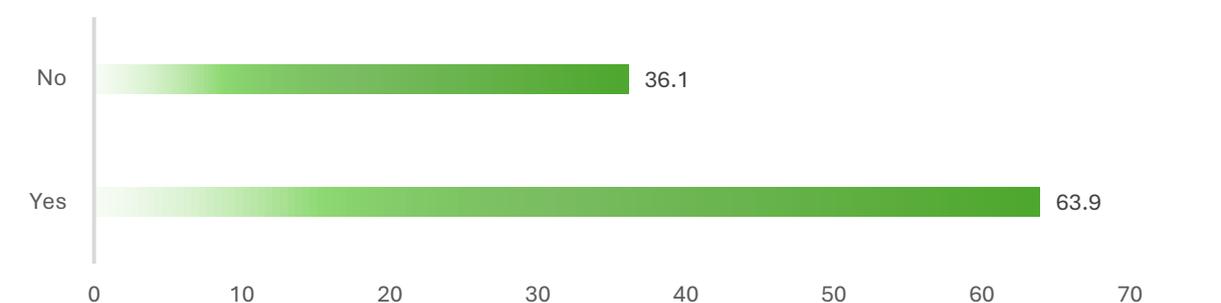
Professional development goes beyond immediate job skills. It encourages lifelong learning, fosters leadership capabilities, and equips workers to take on more complex responsibilities. In regional and remote areas, investing in local training and development is especially important as it helps build a pipeline of skilled workers from within the community, reducing reliance on fly-in-fly-out staff or external recruitment.

Importantly, training and development must be accessible, relevant, and aligned with both industry needs and local opportunities. When done well, it not only strengthens individual career paths but also supports broader regional economic growth and social wellbeing.

Regardless of why local employers seek training and professional development opportunities for their employees, the survey was interested in understanding their experiences and satisfaction with the opportunities available to them, and their assistance in identifying the gaps in the opportunities presented to them.

Unfortunately, nothing has changed over the past 3 years with 36 percent of respondents not satisfied with the local options in 2022 and 36 percent reporting being unsatisfied in 2025.

Are you satisfied with the training and professional development options available for your current workforce?



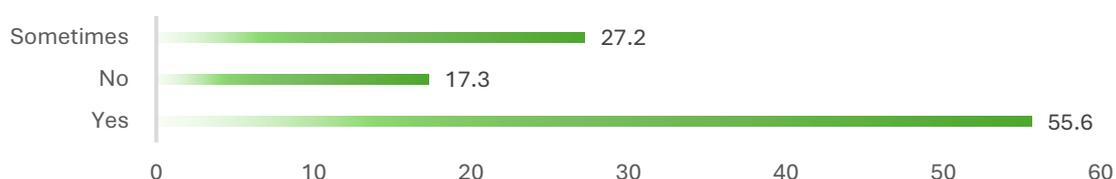
Respondents were asked to provide specific additional information about the training they require with several themes potentially providing the evidence and opportunity local training providers need to plan their delivery and/or marketing of training options and opportunities. Note; responses are exactly as received through the survey.

If you answered no to the above question, what training / professional development is required?

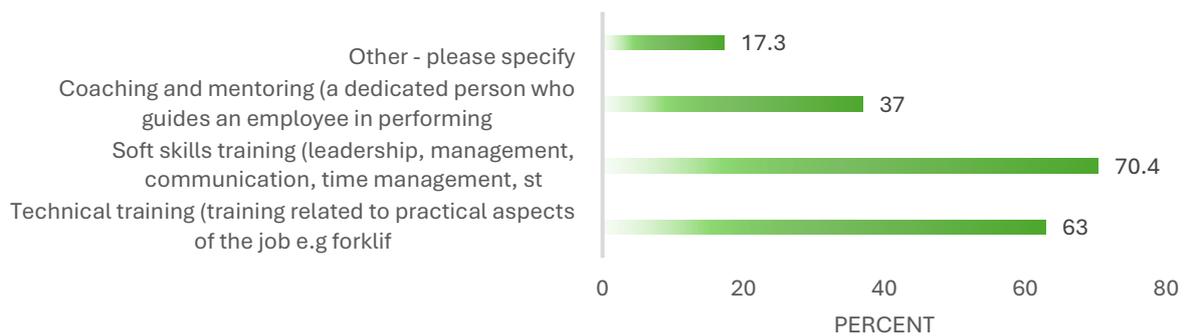
- All professional development and training for our employees wishing to update skills must be done by correspondence. (Either on-line or digital).
- There is no training / assistance for new businesses within the local area. A lot of development opportunities are big city based.
- Currently no option for Apprentice Chefs to train in Broken Hill.
- Procuring relevant training in the far west has traditionally been complicated.
- Professional training in education, children, and staff development.
- Currently allied health relies a lot on online/virtual training/education that is often not tailored to rural and remote health. Courses can be quite costly. Allied health professionals require ongoing professional development, with emphasis on more specialised caseloads to support some of the niche clinical areas for patients in the far west.
- Accessible soft skills
- Dental Assisting has now been removed from the priority list with the government. This means the practice is no longer able to offer full training to any new trainee and is an out-of-pocket cost for them. This has made it become extremely hard to find and retain employees.
- More high-level training should be available locally, not just TAFE.
- Based on the employees coming to us there appears to be limited training and/or standards in place.
- Face to face for Hospitality apprentices.
- Yes and no, while I am satisfied with options we currently have, none of our courses are offered locally, e.g. laundry operations, horticulture, chainsaw operations or irrigation system installation.
- There could be better training options for the civil construction industry and general on the job training facility.
- We must bring in training providers from outside the region to deliver training.
- We have to do all in-house training as there are no adequate/appropriate training/courses in our immediate area (300km plus drive) relevant to our staffing needs.
- No follow up on education enquiries limited scope of opportunities e.g. POCUS training for difficult cannulations.
- I don't know I've never been asked or offered any advice from this organisation.
- Tickets in safe work rolls. All types
- Trying to get trainers to come to our location as not all training is available online.

- Can not access relevant PD locally, roofing trade training, scaffolding, working at heights, medium rigid truck license.
- Difficult to locate compliance training close by that all staff can attend easily and without being away for days.
- We are generally satisfied with the training and professional development opportunities available, however there are areas where accessibility and delivery options could be improved. Our current workforce has benefited from programs such as First Aid training through Robinson College, light vehicle and machinery courses, and food safety training. We have also taken advantage of the TAFE NSW Leadership and Management course, which has been valuable for team growth and skill development. Moving forward, we would like to see greater accessibility to Food Safety Supervisor training, with options for both online delivery and in-person courses at Robinson College or TAFE NSW. Expanding the range and frequency of locally delivered courses would help reduce travel requirements and make it easier for our Broken Hill team to maintain and develop essential skills.
- We have CPD and licensing requirements, always changing and never available to do locally or nearby. Involves travel to attend and accommodation or online. Quite time consuming and this industry specific training is always changing and evolving and hard to keep up with.
- We really struggle to find any applicants with plumbing skills and qualifications in Broken Hill (regional NSW) due to the fact that we don't have a training facility that offers plumbing locally, so our apprentices need to travel 3 hours interstate to Victoria to meet their trade school obligations. This also means that qualified plumbers are not usually seeking jobs in Broken Hill unless they want to run their own business, which makes it impossible to attract qualified plumbers to regional Australia and Broken Hill. If we were part of the DAMA arrangements for regional Australia, we would be able to fill the position with an overseas skilled tradesman in exchange for a pathway to permanent residency. Alternatively, any government incentives for qualified skilled tradesmen to relocate to regional Australia such as tax incentives would hopefully attract Australians to work in remote locations, even for a limited time.
- Access to quality training in pharmacy areas is usually in major cities so access is a huge issue.
- Our industry has lots of options, but to attend an opportunity/course, there is at least 2 additional days off work for travel per opportunity.

When you think about the training and professional development for your organisation, is accredited training required? That is training that provides a recognised qualification upon completion.



What are the most important training needs for your organisation?



* *Soft skills training (leadership, management, communication, time management, stress management, customer service)*

** *Technical training (training related to practical aspects of the job e.g. forklift driving, computer training, buyer skills, planning)*

Other - please specify.

- Compliance training
- Clinical training - e.g. lymphoedema, hand therapy, tracheostomies, laryngectomies etc
- Continual professional development points
- Governance
- Legal (RSA, Food handling, OHS)
- Plumbing Trade Skills and Qualifications
- Professional Development
- Recurrency training
- Speaking to tourists
- Upskilling
- History of our area
- Industry specific courses to comply
- Manual handling, medication management

To enable local training providers to plan to better meet your needs please indicate the type of training you require, please be as specific as possible e.g. Technical skills like construction, automotive, hairdressing, business management, soft skills like teamwork, communication or problem solving, Specific coaching and mentoring outcomes.

Please list as many as required to help support your workforce needs.

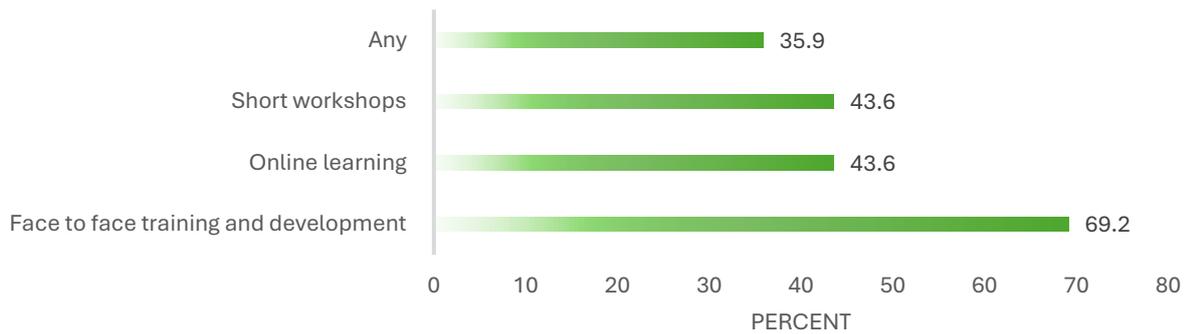
- RSA, OHS, first aid, food safety, chef apprentice
- Business management, marketing, financial
- Certificate IV Training and Assessment or teaching equivalent
- Chefs
- More scheduled technical training
- Keep them safe training, first aid, upskilling in the classroom - practical professional development with neurodiverse children, managing classroom environments
- Teamwork, communication, social media, marketing

- Not really applicable however we have had some great workshop opportunities through DNCO NSW
- Dental assisting, team management, mentoring, time management, stress management.
- White card
- Test and tagging
- Technical skills in Aged Care including the continuance of Cert III and above qualifications, intro courses to aged care and top up courses in personal care/wound care etc.
- Leadership, communication, some IT skills
- Really the full spectrum: from helping new staff to be work ready, to being able to mentor new grads and staff in higher roles such as new managers
- Most training is provided by the organisation at a statewide level
- Time management and communication
- Soft skills training - leadership, management
- Early childhood
- Therapeutic crisis intervention training, manual handling, medication administration training, person centred and crucial conversation training
- Commercial cookery
- Technical skills
- Technical skills - Horticulture and landscaping, chainsaw operations, irrigation systems installation & maintenance.
- Cert IV in optical dispensing - provided by Australasian College of Optical Dispensing
- Technical skills like childcare, construction, automotive, hairdressing, hospitality, etc
- History of our area
- Technical training onsite
- Customer relationships, rural training, forklift, dangerous goods
- I feel that there could be a place for job ready training in all aspects of the industry I'm in, safety, computer skills, business development and leadership for upcoming supervisors and managers. Our whole industry is changing.
- Land management, heavy plant, Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Teamwork, communication and maths
- Dangerous goods courses and heavy vehicle training
- Practical skills like multi-tasking, stress management, emotional regulation, teamwork & communication. Generally, in remote communities it would be helpful if trainers could be in-house to facilitate in particular short term seasonal training sessions. e.g. Bar course/hospitality/house keeping with hands on demonstration & instruction. Business management. Up to date education & support for all modern technologies, including social media & AI programs.
- Computers, communication skills, product knowledge along with a willingness to learn new skills.

- We partner with other community organisations to provide skilled and unskilled personnel such as Corrective Services, Schools, TAFE, Robinson Centre
- Soft skills training like teamwork, building resilience, managing your own mental health, communication, etc.
- The use of up-to-date technologies and AI.
- Horticulture.
- Accounting.
- Computer skills, project management, leadership as in board group management
- Availability of volunteers.
- Individual support – ageing.
- Business management, POS and accounting software use, marketing and promotion, tourism, IT.
- Hydro blasting (hp water), dogging, rigging, forklift, confined space, EWP, test and tag working at heights, skid steer, excavator, first polly welding, Ind spray painting.
- Resilience, conflict resolution, problem solving.
- Business management, basic accounting, basic computer skills / training, communication skills, dealing with difficult customers, compliance training for the Club industry.
- Soft training face to face skills and customer service, teamwork.
- Sales training, first aid training, problem solving, building a strong team.
- Professional development for legal services.
- Roofing trade, scaffolding.
- Arts and Crafts, dance.
- Genuine training in customer service, business planning and merchandising would be of an advantage for any potential staff and or new business owners.
- Teamwork, communication, cooking, conflict resolution.
- First Aid, food safety, responsible service of alcohol, forklift certificate, chemical handling.
- Sales and marketing, business management, finance.
- Anti money laundering - yearly advance, RSA / RCG training and any other training deemed relevant by either the Minster, Liquor & Gaming etc.
- We require a mix of technical, compliance, and soft skills training to support the diverse needs of our workforce across tourism, accommodation, and regional infrastructure services. Technical skills, light vehicle and machinery operation and maintenance, food safety and food safety supervisor courses.
- General construction and maintenance skills including carpentry, tiling, and painting
- Electrical and plumbing awareness (non-trade operational level)
- Workplace Health and Safety including manual handling, safe chemical use, and working at heights.
- Landscaping and grounds maintenance.
- Digital skills for reservation systems, inventory management, and compliance reporting.

- Soft skills, leadership and management training.
- Customer service excellence for tourism and accommodation.
- Communication, problem-solving, and conflict resolution.
- Time management and prioritisation skills in high-demand periods.
- Coaching and mentoring, development of new supervisors and team leaders through structured mentoring.
- Cross-skilling to allow flexibility across departments (guest services, housekeeping, maintenance).
- Ongoing coaching in workplace culture, adaptability, and guest experience improvement.
- Where possible, we would prefer local delivery of these courses through providers such as Robinson College or TAFE NSW, with flexible scheduling and online options to reduce downtime and travel requirements.
- Construction, Building, Electrical, Mechanic, Boilermaker, Plumbing, Mason, Business, Customer Service, HR, finance operations, horticulture, plant operations, white card, first aid, IT, records management.
- Conflict handling skills, communication and customer service real estate CPD and licensing training wellness/mental health/stress handling.
- Community services related training.
- Certificate IV in Workplace Assessment & Training. Unable to engage qualified trainers in the region to deliver Nationally Recognised Qualifications to our participants.
- Plumbing Trade Skills and Qualifications Backflow and TMV Qualifications.
- Technical skills, Electrical trade skills (installation, fault finding, compliance).
- Fire protection and security systems. Equipment operation and maintenance, business management and HR systems.
- Refrigeration mechanics (currently requires travel to Adelaide for apprenticeship training).
- Soft skills, leadership and supervision, teamwork and communication, problem solving and conflict resolution, coaching / mentoring, Apprentice coaching (skills and professionalism), Supervisor mentoring (WHS and people management.)
- Leadership and communication training would be great. Time management too.
- Business management. Soft skills for administration staff, e.g., communication, how to meet and greet clients, answer the phone, and take a message. Maximise the use of excel, Microsoft Office/Teams. Technical skills in allied health.

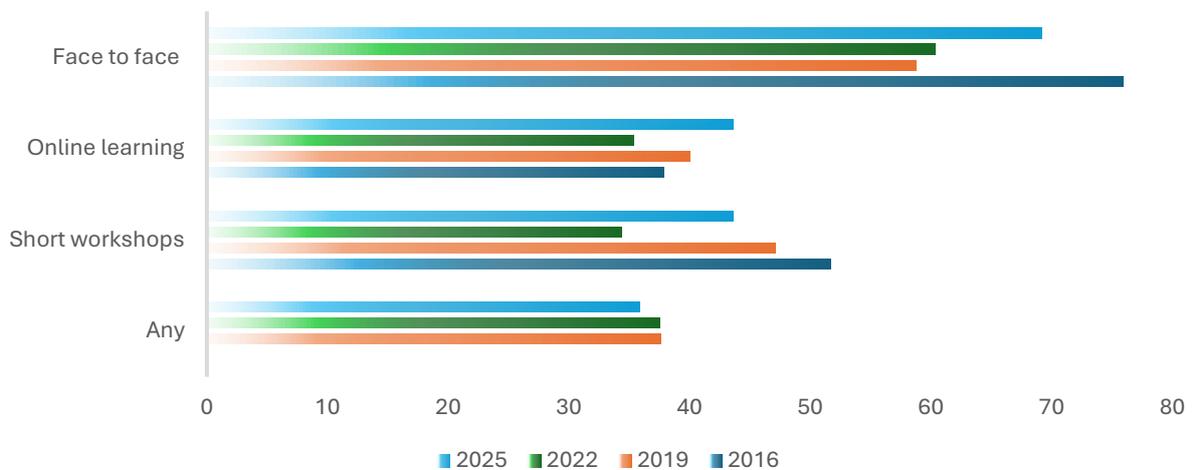
What training options would suit your organisation?



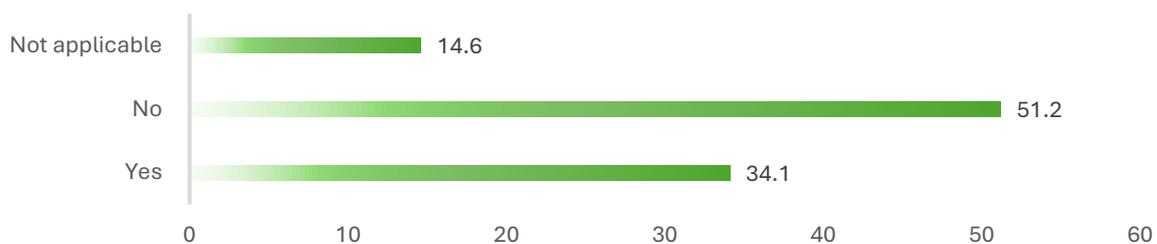
Whilst the list of required training opportunities above is fully informed by respondents it must be noted that some of this required training is accessible locally, possibly reflecting many business owners are time poor and do not have the time to fully research the training options available to them locally. Regardless of the reason respondents may not be aware of local training options the fact remains that they are not aware and strategies to better inform employers would be valuable.

Clearly, the majority of respondents seek face-to-face training options that provide the outcomes required with the least disruption to the business.

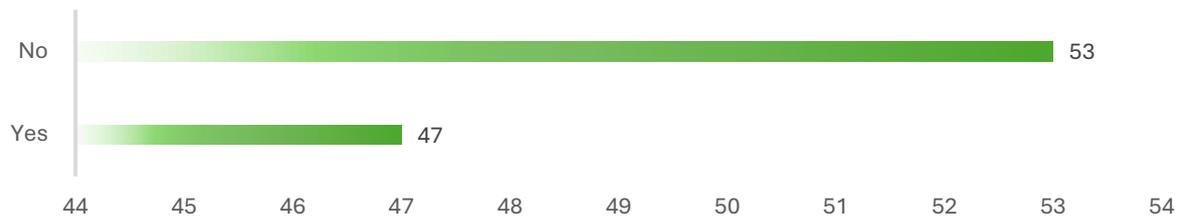
What training options would suit your organisation 2016-2025



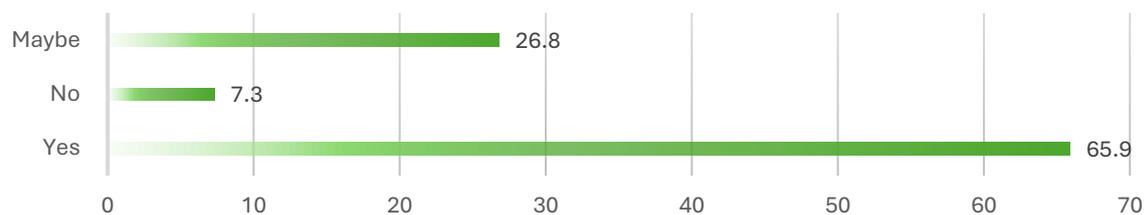
Does your organisation currently interact / negotiate / have a defined partnership with any training providers to develop suitable training programs for your staff?



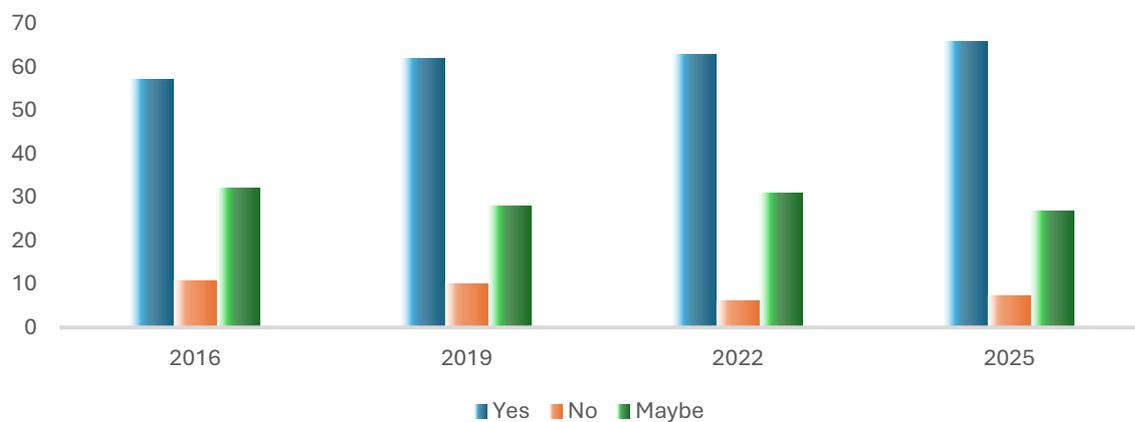
Are you aware that you can access funded training through registered training providers by working directly with them?



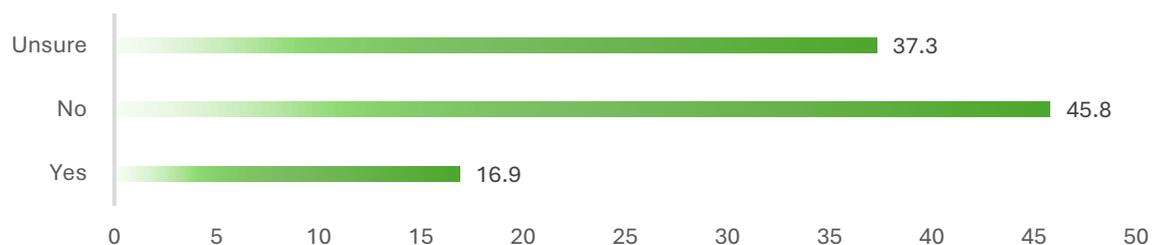
Are you prepared to pay for training and professional development for your staff?



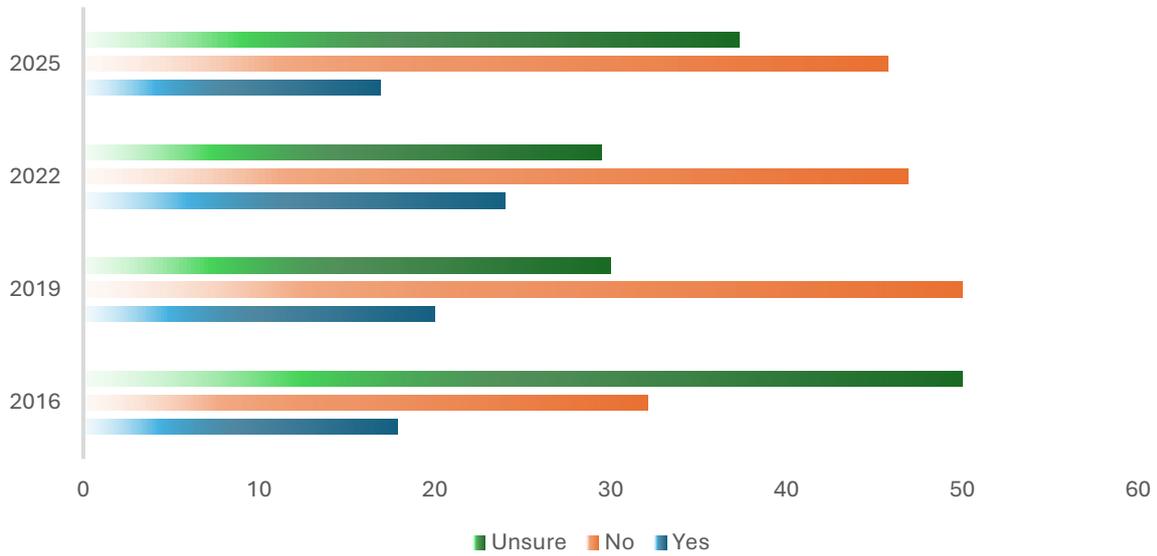
Are you prepared to pay for training and professional development for your staff 2016-2025



Thinking of the current education, training and professional development opportunities within the region do you feel the training / opportunities provided aligns with the required skills in your organisation?



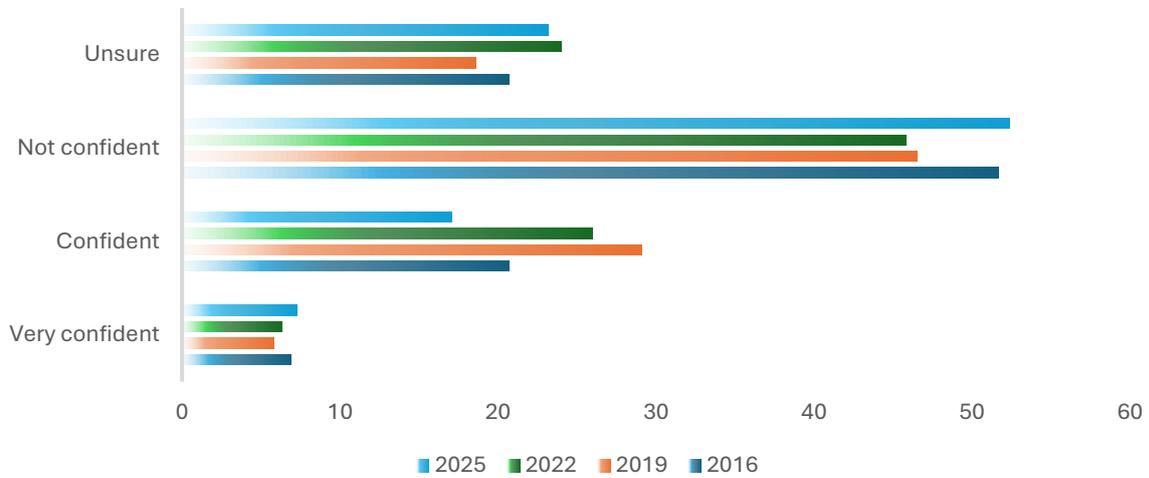
Thinking of the current education, training and professional development opportunities within the region do you feel the training/opportunities provided aligns with the required skills in your organisation. 2016-2025



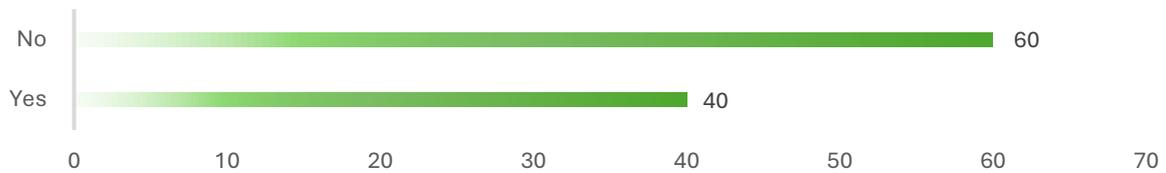
How confident do you feel that your organisations education and training needs over the next 5 years will be met within the Far West region?



How confident do you feel that your organisations education and training needs over the next 5 years will be met within the far west region 2016-2025

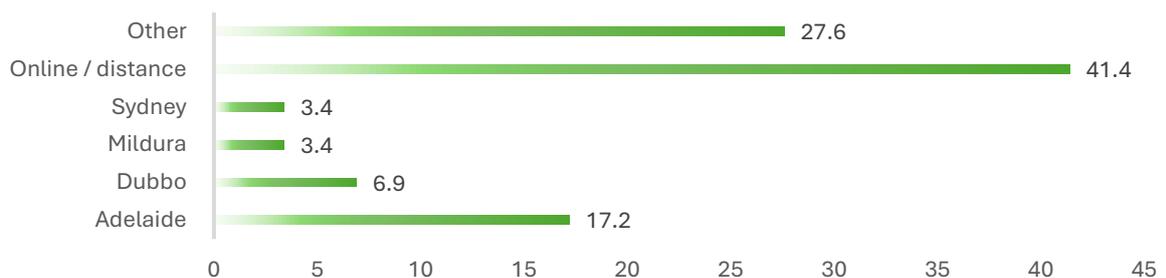


If you employ trainees or apprentices, are you able to access the required off the job training locally?

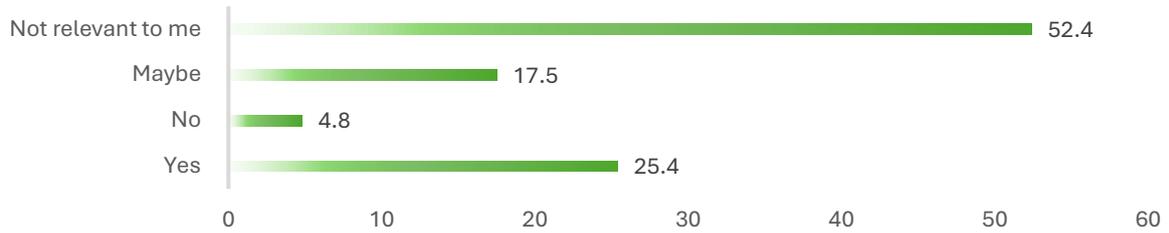


The fact that 60 percent of respondents report being unable to access training for their apprentices locally is not a situation that supports local training and retention of our young people. As identified below a significant number of apprentices are required to travel to access their training, which supports the economy of other communities. Furthermore, this requirement impacts the motivation / retention of a large percentage of young people and the capacity / motivation of employers to offer apprenticeships to young people. It is potentially unrealistic to expect every pathway to be delivered and assessed locally, however a more coordinated and structured approach as a region may enable far greater access to local training opportunities.

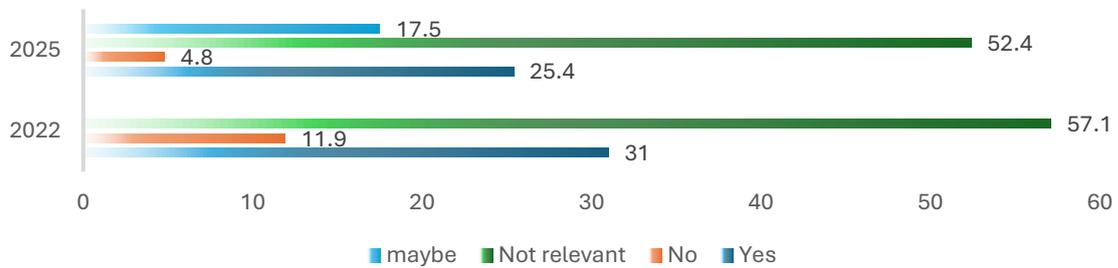
If you answered no to the above question, please tell us where/how your apprentices or trainees access their off the job training.



If your apprentices / trainees are required to travel for their off the job training, from your experience, do you believe this impacts their motivation and/or retention?



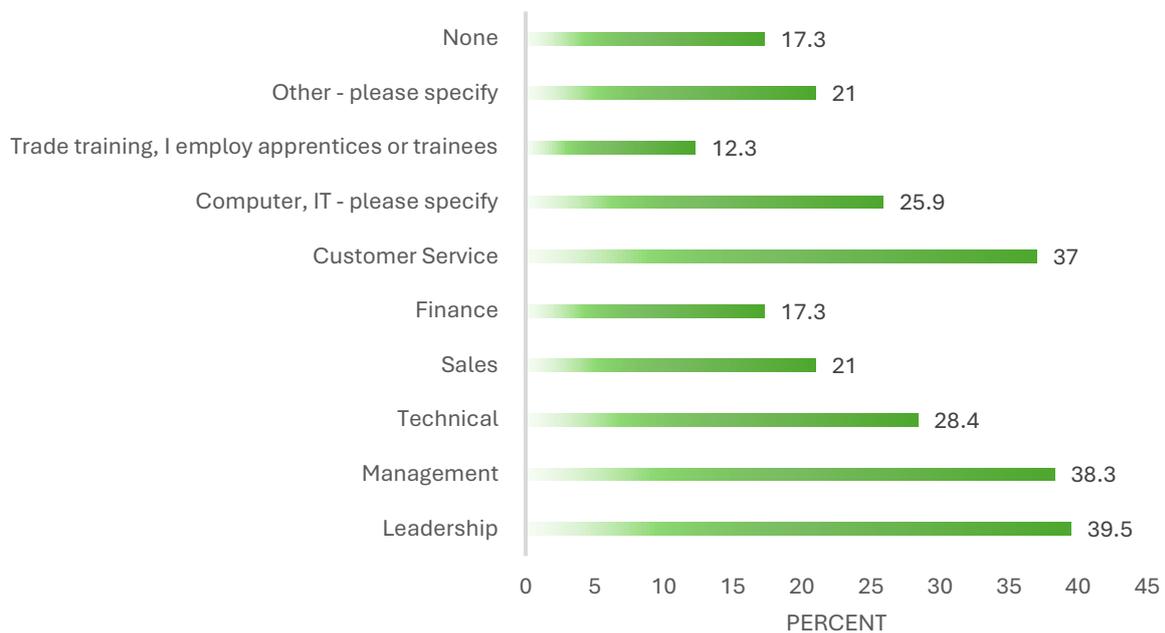
**If your apprentices are required to travel for their off the job training, from your perspective, do you believe this impacts thier motivation and/or retention
2022-2025**



If your apprentices / trainees are required to travel for their off the job training does this impact your ability / motivation / capacity to employ further apprentices?



What training / professional development is currently offered by your organisation? (tick all that are relevant)

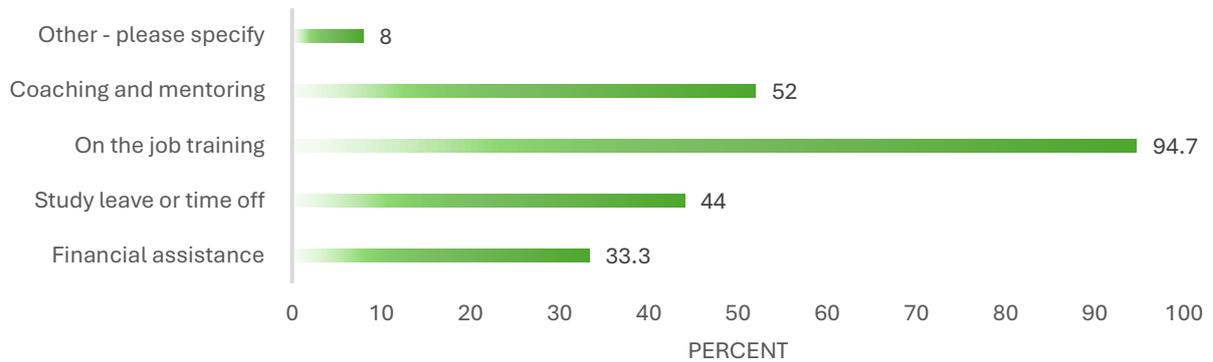


Other, please specify

- Computer, IT - please specify
- AMSED online training
- Basic training of sales system
- Basic Excel skills
- Cyber Security/AI
- Digital Literacy
- Hospitality Reservation Software Training - Newbook and Training with Xero Accounting Program
- PMS training
- Software training
- Systems and database training
- Training is ongoing
- How to use/navigate CRM systems
- Internal systems
- Microsoft courses
- Community services related training
- Educator specific
- Educational
- First aid
- In house Training
- Soft skills
- Understanding our native plants and our native fauna
- Upskill and type training
- VOC's equipment operation
- Volunteers NSW online training
- Webinars and seminars offered locally that staff express interest in
- Firefighting
- On the job & online compliance training when able
- On the job farm management
- Online training platforms

Investment in training has incredible returns. Not only does training support developing skills, but it also shows employees that they are valuable.

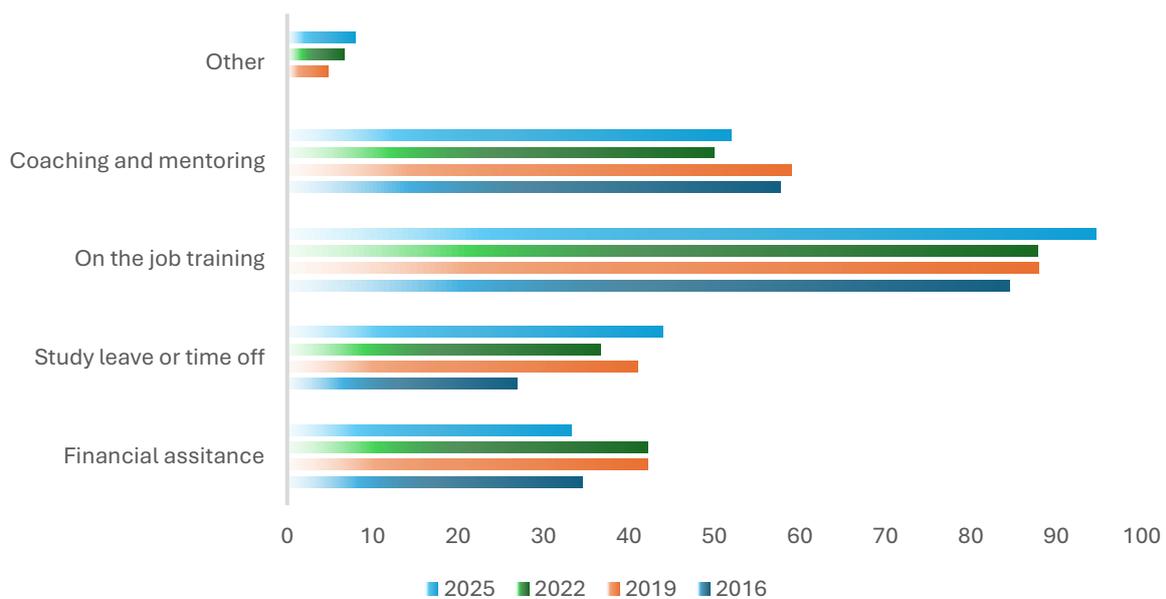
What type of assistance does your organisation offer staff for professional development / training?



Other, please specify

- Ability to join one off online training from work.
- Access to online learning modules.
- Landcare Enabling program is providing a lot of professional support and training.
- Convincing volunteers.
- Travel.
- We don't but we could if suitable training was an option - i.e. horticulture.

What type of assistance does your organisation offer staff for professional development / training? 2016-2025



Career advice and guidance for the community

Career guidance is not just for choosing a job, it's about building a fulfilling life. It helps individuals understand themselves, explore options, and make informed decisions that align with both current realities and future aspirations.

Community Careers Advisory Services (or community-based career guidance/advice) can be extremely valuable, perhaps surprisingly, so for many people. The value comes in different dimensions: individual, community, economic and social. Many people, especially those well beyond school age may not have accessed a Careers Advisory Service for many years, if ever.

Australia faces several unique social, economic, and geographic challenges that make local, community-based career guidance especially important and highly valuable, and regional Australians face even greater challenges.

Each year, thousands of Australian students:

- Leave school without clear career goals.
- Enter university or TAFE without knowing what suits them.
- Drop out or switch courses (costing time, money, and confidence).
- Drop out and lose confidence, often resulting in long periods of inactivity or disillusionment.

As already explored in this report over 60% of Australians state they are somewhat or more than likely looking to change employment in the near future, however, if we are not providing Community Careers Advice, are these people actually looking for the career that suits them, do they know what's available and what opportunities could be available today and tomorrow, do they know their value in the workplace and are they exploring every opportunity?

The National Career Education Strategy acknowledges that career guidance is essential for helping students transition effectively into further education, training or work.

Community career centres (run by councils, non-profits, or local employment services) can:

- Provide early, personalised career advice.
- Help link young people with local employers, apprenticeships, or further study pathways.
- Support parents, educators, and students in understanding options.

Australia continues to experience skills shortages in key sectors like:

- Aged care and disability support
- Health and nursing
- Trades and construction
- Agriculture and logistics
- Green jobs (e.g. renewables, environmental management)

Community career advisors can play a strategic role by:

- Promoting in-demand careers

- Connecting locals with reskilling or upskilling opportunities
- Helping match untapped talent (e.g. women returning to work, older workers) to local labour market needs.

Community careers services also contribute to national workforce goals and local economic resilience.

Career services in capital cities are more accessible, but many Australians live outside major centres. In rural and remote communities:

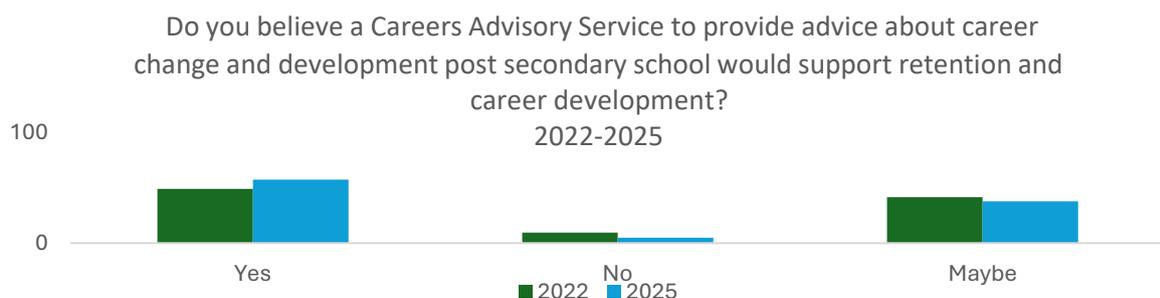
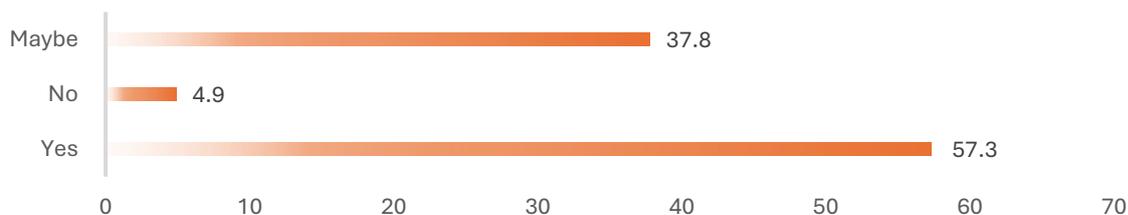
- Job opportunities are fewer.
- TAFE/university options are limited.
- People often lack access to guidance or mentoring.

Community careers advisory services offer an opportunity to fill a major gap:

- Helping young people explore realistic paths (including online training, relocation, or local apprenticeships).
- Supporting adults to reskill for remote work or digital roles.
- Supporting adults to aspire to a career of their choice.
- Supporting adults to better understand the options available to them within their local community.
- Linking communities with relevant regional programs or grants.

Community career advisory services are not just nice to have, they are a strategic part of building a fairer, more productive and more adaptable Australia. The evidence is strong; they deliver significant individual and social returns when done well.

Our children have access to dedicated and skilled Career Advisors in school. Do you believe a careers advisory / support service to provide advice about career changes and development post-secondary school would support retention and career development?



Customer Service

Great customer service is one of the most powerful tools a business can use to succeed. It goes beyond simply meeting customer needs, it's about creating positive experiences that make people feel valued and respected. When customers are treated well, they're more likely to return, make repeat purchases, and recommend the business to others. This builds long-term loyalty, which is often more valuable than one-time sales.

In today's competitive market, good service can set a business apart. Customers will often choose a company with better service, even if the prices are higher. A friendly, helpful attitude and a willingness to solve problems quickly can turn an unhappy customer into a loyal customer and reduce complaints and negative reviews.

Great customer service also improves a business's reputation. Positive word-of-mouth, both online and offline, attracts new customers and builds trust in the brand. Internally, it creates a better work environment, as staff who work in a respectful, customer-focused culture tend to be more motivated and engaged.

More than just customers!

Great customer service has a powerful and positive impact on staff. When employees are part of a workplace that values and delivers excellent service, they often feel more confident, motivated, and appreciated. Seeing satisfied customers can give staff a sense of pride and purpose in their work, which boosts overall job satisfaction. It also creates a more positive work environment, with less conflict and stress, as happy customers are easier to work with. In turn, this can lead to better teamwork, stronger communication, and higher staff morale. When employees feel supported and valued, they are more likely to stay with the company, reducing staff turnover and building a stronger, more committed team.

In short, great customer service is not just about keeping customers happy it's about growing the business, building strong relationships, and creating a positive brand image that lasts.

On average, almost 80% of consumers share their customer experiences with others.

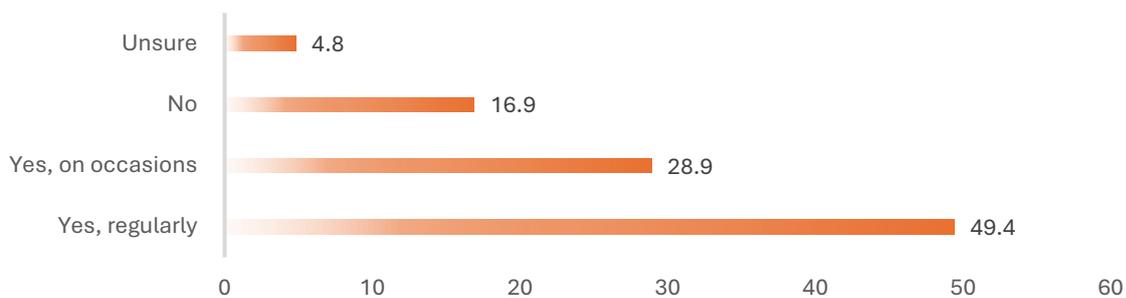
Australians are a vocal bunch with the majority of us likely to leave reviews about the customer experience they receive. One in five Australians always or often leave a review for service they've received.

In your organisation whose role is it to set and maintain customer service standards?



* *Operational staff - the people that deal with our customers*

In your organisation are customer service standards / principles measured and monitored?



Monitoring customer service is a vital part of running a successful business. It involves regularly checking how well staff are meeting customer expectations and identifying areas where improvements can be made. This process helps maintain high service standards, ensures consistency across teams, and supports ongoing staff development. One common way to monitor service is through customer feedback, using surveys, reviews, and suggestion boxes to understand how customers feel about their experience. Businesses may also observe staff directly through mystery shoppers, recorded calls, or by reviewing interactions in person or online.

Another important part of monitoring is tracking key performance indicators, such as how quickly issues are resolved, the number of complaints received, or customer satisfaction scores. These measures help managers spot trends, reward good performance, and address problems early before they affect the business's reputation. Most importantly, monitoring should focus on improvement, ensuring customers are happy, and building a stronger, more reliable service culture. When done well, it leads to better customer retention, improved staff morale, and a more professional and responsive business overall.

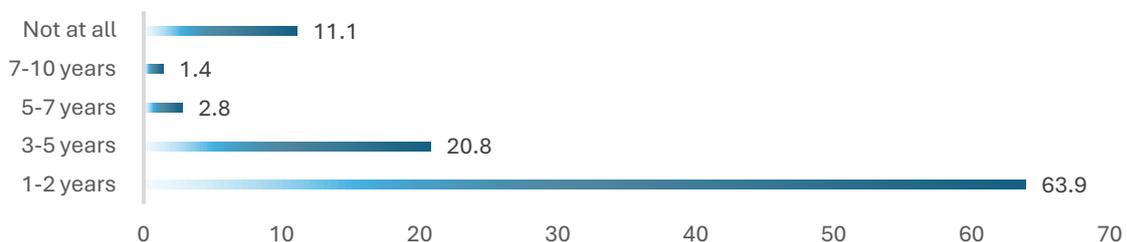
Growth

Business growth refers to the process of a company expanding its operations, increasing sales, gaining more customers, or improving its market position. This can happen in various ways, such as launching new products, opening new locations, entering different markets, or improving internal systems and processes. Growth shows that a business is moving forward, meeting customer needs, and adapting to change.

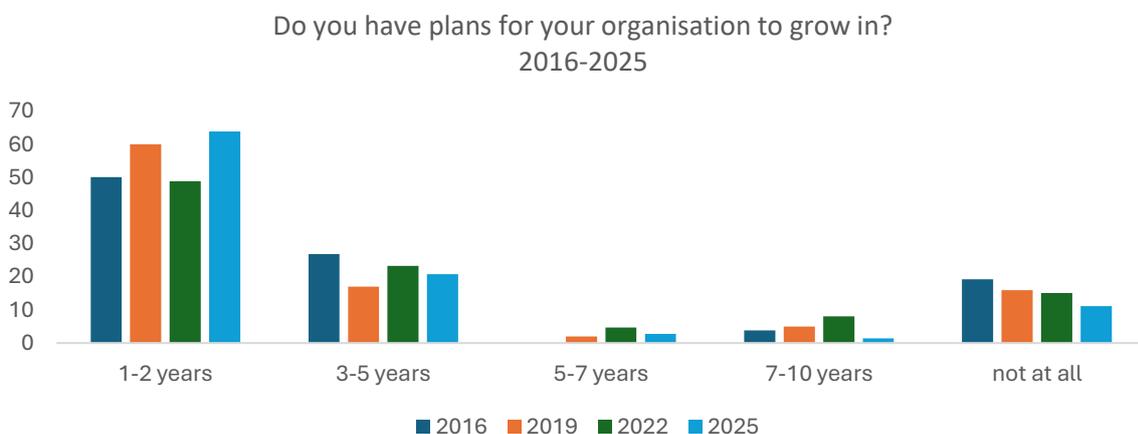
There are different types of business growth. Organic growth happens through internal efforts like better marketing or customer service, while inorganic growth involves external actions like mergers or acquisitions. Businesses can also grow by investing in staff training, technology, or forming partnerships. Each type of growth helps a business become stronger, more efficient, and more competitive.

Business growth is important because it leads to increased profits, job creation, and long-term success. A growing business often gains more attention from customers, investors, and the broader market. It also encourages innovation and helps a company stay relevant in a competitive environment. In short, business growth is not just a goal, it's a key part of building a stable and successful future.

Do you have plans for your organisation to grow in?



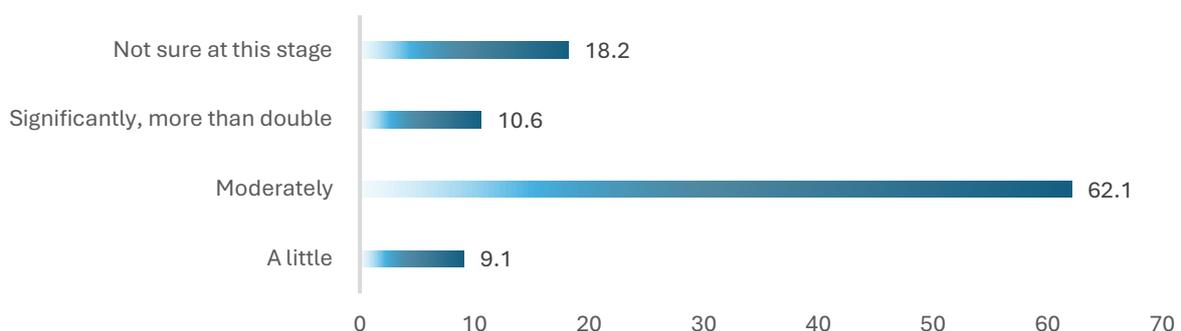
In Far West NSW, almost 64 percent of respondents are planning for growth over the next 12 -24 months. Overall, almost 90 percent are planning for growth, slightly up on the 2022 report when 85 percent were planning for growth.



If you don't plan for growth within your organisation, why not?

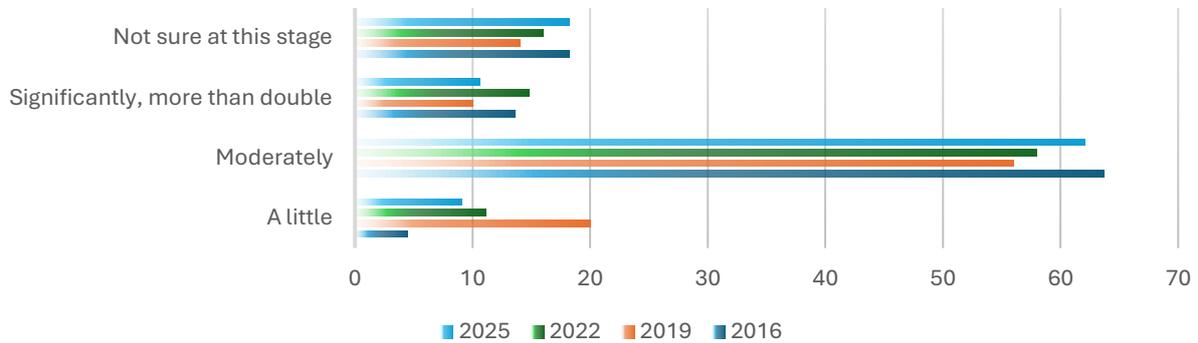
- Quite happy at this size.
- Govt funding determines the size of our business.
- Dependent on govt priorities and funding.
- I am close to retirement.
- We do not have capacity to increase on this site.
- If wages and utilities keep going up, I will have to walk.
- At a comfortable capacity as is. No need for growth.
- Dictated by Government of the day.
- As an owner operated business, after 23 years we are nearing the end of our cycle and are looking at downsizing or selling. Retail has really bottomed out due to the influx of online technology options of digital banking/retail, making our days and weeks harder to see a positive future with little return v's hours applied. Sad, I know, but the current generation are very tech savvy and somewhat ignorant to the value of those who work in frontline stores. We are losing our much loved and loyal older generation that are not so (tech savvy) and rely on the friendly face to face service we supply on a daily basis not just when it suits them.
- Due to location, community size and what is known to be happening in the area over the next couple of years.
- Unfortunately, I tend to be more reactive than proactive in this area due to time constraints. Also depends on market trends.
- I don't have much confidence in the civic leadership of the community, great opportunities go past every day and as a community we focus on the little things a few of us are vocal about, not the strategic growth opportunities that often present.

If you are planning for your organisation to grow to what degree are you planning to grow?

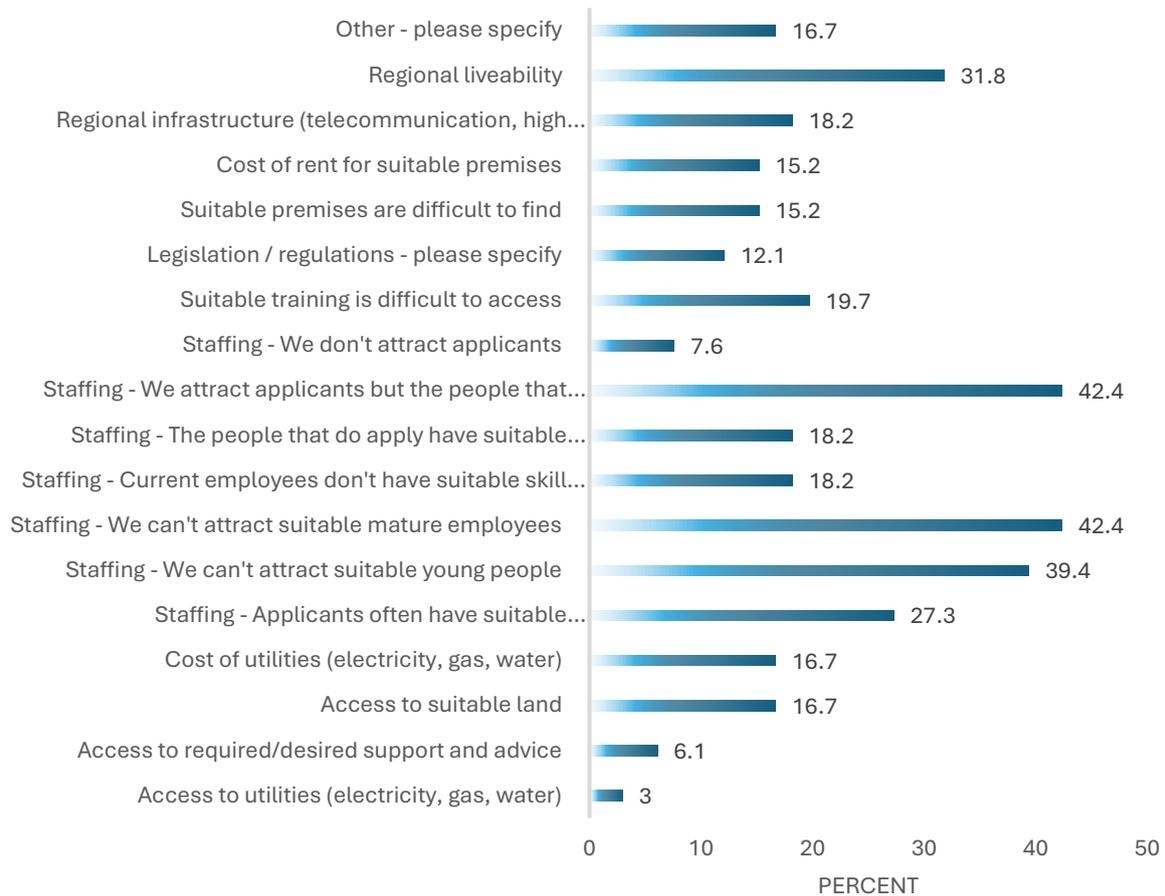


Whilst almost 90 percent of respondents are planning for growth, 62 percent are planning for moderate growth in comparison 58 percent that were planning for moderate growth in 2022.

**If you are planning for your organisation to grow, to what degree are you planning to grow?
2016-2025**



If you envision your organisation growing are there any fundamental barriers? (tick as many as are relevant)



**Staffing – We attract applicants but the people that do apply don't have suitable skills.*

*** Staffing – The people that do apply have suitable technical skills but very few employability skills, that is they are not job ready.*

**** Staffing – Current employees don't have suitable skill sets to meet growth plans.*

***** Staffing – Applicants often have suitable qualifications but very little experience.*

****** Regional infrastructure (telecommunication, high speed broadband, transport etc)*

Regional infrastructure appears to be less of an issue with 26 percent of respondents reporting regional infrastructure as a barrier in 2022 compared to 18 percent in 2025. However, regional liveability has increased from 28.4 percent to 31.8 percent over the past 3 years.

In 2022, 27 percent of respondents reported they attract applicants but the people that do apply don't have the required skills. In 2025, 42 percent of respondents report this as a barrier to growth. Positively, attracting suitable young people appears to have improved with almost 52 percent unable to attract suitable young people in 2022, however, in 2025 that figure has reduced to 40 percent.

Whilst much is written about legislation and the barriers it can create for business growth, locally the number of respondents that report legislation and regulations as barriers to growth has doubled over the past 3 years with 6.2 percent in 2022, up to 12.1 percent in 2025.

The following comments reflect the thoughts of respondents that answered other.

Other, please specify

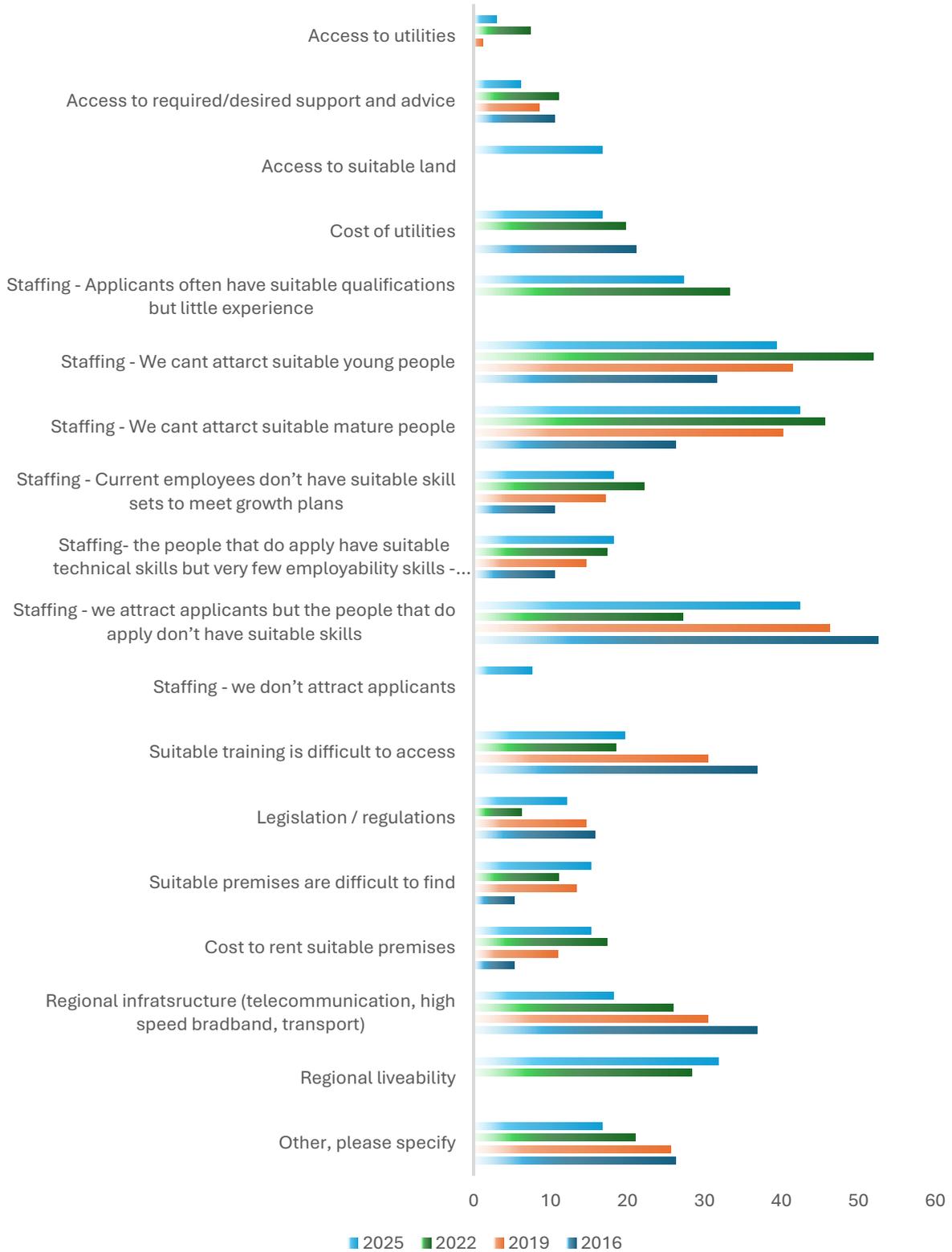
Legislation / regulations - please specify

- Compliance.
- Native Title.
- Planning approvals for Development Application and wait times. For instance, a Bush Fire Report to be completed because there is a bush fire overlay zone around Broken Hill.
- Children's services award.
- Compliance training.

Other - please specify

- Accessibility to affordable air travel with Rex and Qantas to and from Melbourne and Adelaide.
- Business demand.
- Demand for more accommodation and access to trades to complete construction.
- Funding.
- Many roles are hard to recruit e.g. midwives, C&F Nurses, early childhood educators.
- Staff turnover because we can't compete with the wages offered by Government entities.
- Increasing costs overall are a challenge.
- Budgets.
- Childcare. (this comment was repeated many times)
- Currently volunteer run looking to employ someone. Money /funds an issue.
- Renovation and upgrade funding for our location.
- Suitable childcare is a major issue for us; the lack of childcare options means our staff have restricted availability.

**If you envision your organisation growing are there any fundamental barriers
2016-2025**



* Staffing - The people that do apply have suitable technical skills but very few employability skills - that is they are not job ready



Camel and Cameleer Sculpture Tibooburra

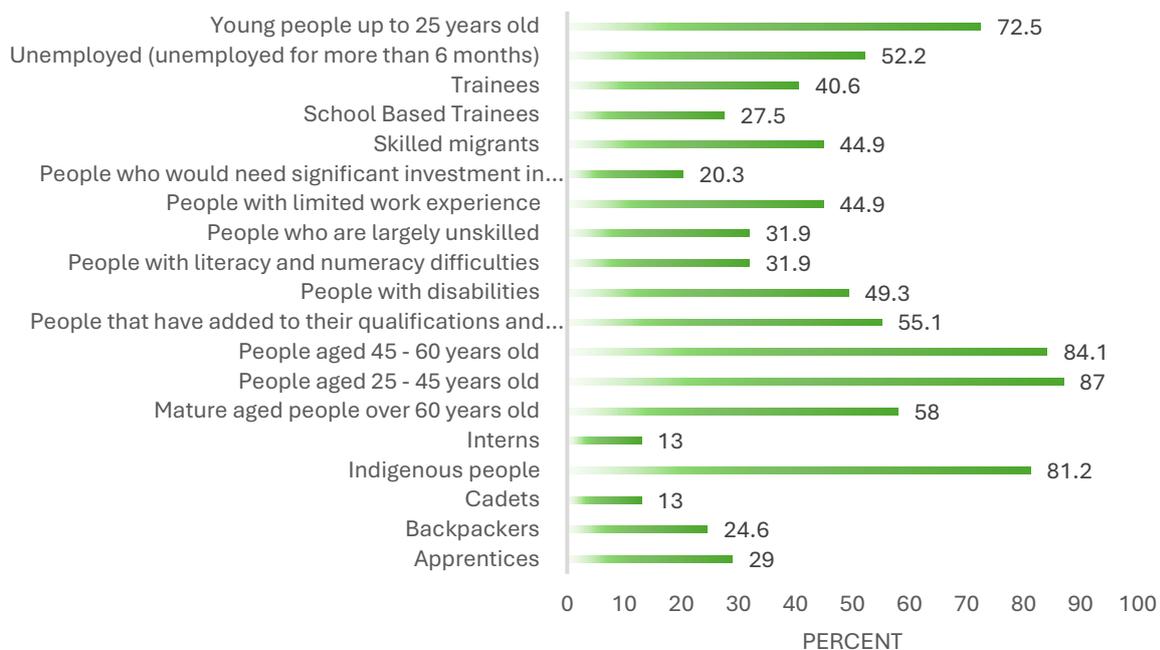
Staffing

Almost 90 percent of respondents are planning for growth and attracting the right people to enable that has improved over the past 3 years. In 2022, 64 percent of respondents reported advertising a position it the past 12 months they were unable to fill, in 2025, that figure has dropped to 51 percent, still a significant issue but an improvement on the previous reporting period. Also highlighting the issues local employers face, but again a slight improvement on previous years is the responses to settling for an employee that didn't meet expectations during the interview with respondents reporting a slight improvement from 61 percent in 2022 down to 55 percent in 2025.

Locally, the number of respondents reporting they would employ trainees has declined from 53 percent in 2022 to 40 percent in 2025, as has apprentices, down from 40 percent to 29 percent. Given the responses to access to local training one must question whether this has impacted on the number of trainee and apprenticeship opportunities. Respondents report a greater willingness to employ indigenous people, 81 percent up from 70 percent in 2022. The region may be utilising backpackers more with respondents reporting a willingness to employ backpackers, up 8 percent on 2022 responses.

Local employers are investigating every opportunity to meet their workforce needs with the number of respondents that have investigated opportunities for recruitment though skilled migration increased from 14.8 percent in 2022 to 31.5 percent in 2025.

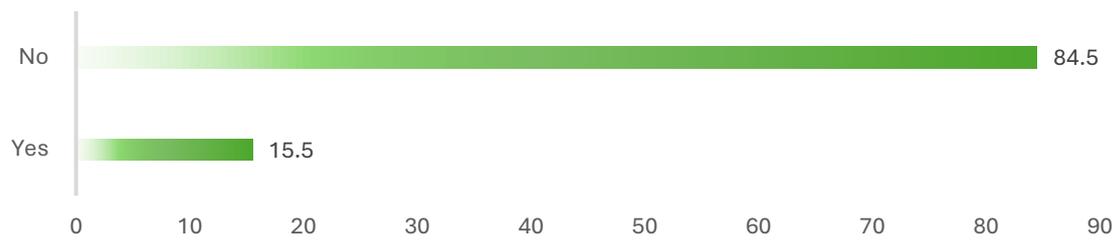
When looking for new staff would you employ? (tick all that are relevant)



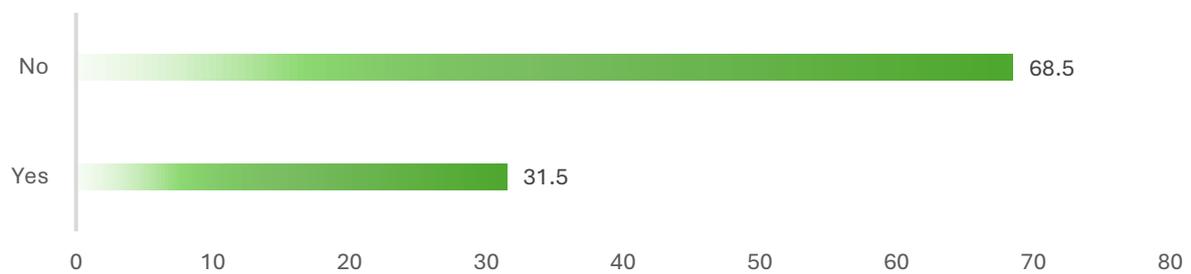
* People who would need significant investment in training and development to reach the required skill level

* People that have added to their qualifications and skills over time even if those skills/qualifications are not relevant to your organisation

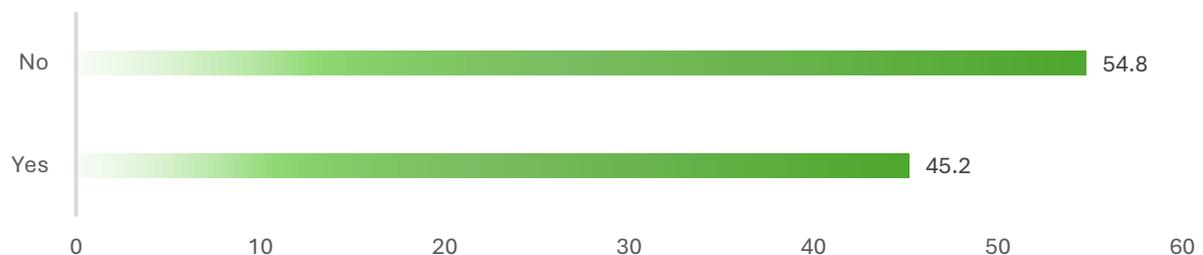
Does your organisation employ interns and/or cadets as a strategy to address your workforce needs and provide opportunities for potential candidates to gain experience?



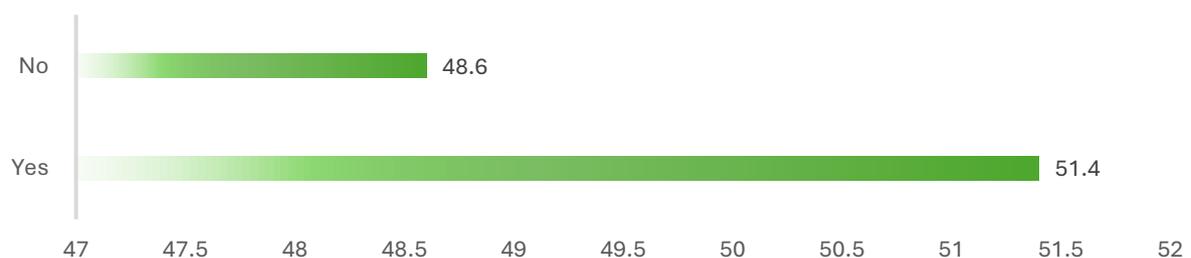
Have you, in the past 3 years, investigated opportunities for recruitment through skilled migrants?



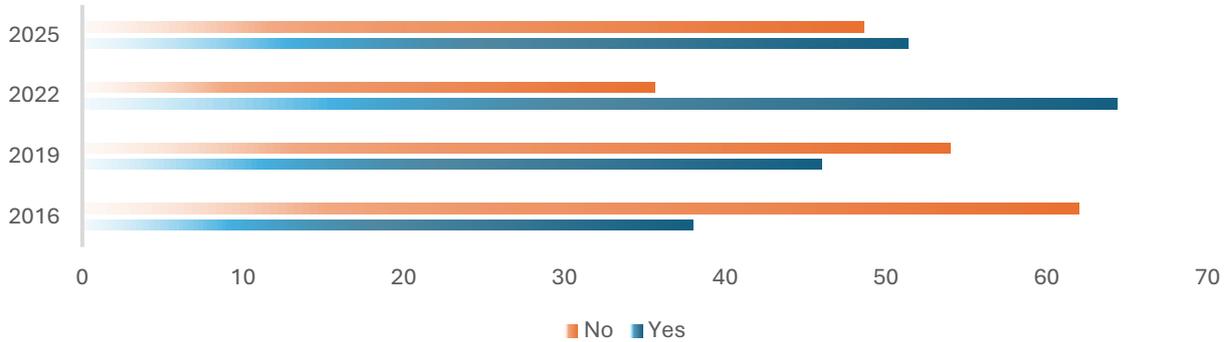
Are you interested in understanding more about opportunities through skilled migrants?



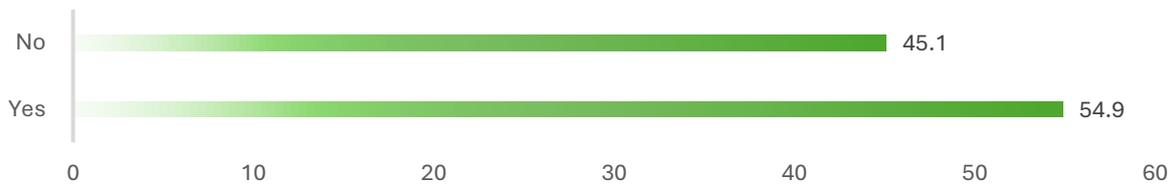
Have you advertised / promoted vacancies over the past 12 months and not been able to fill the position?



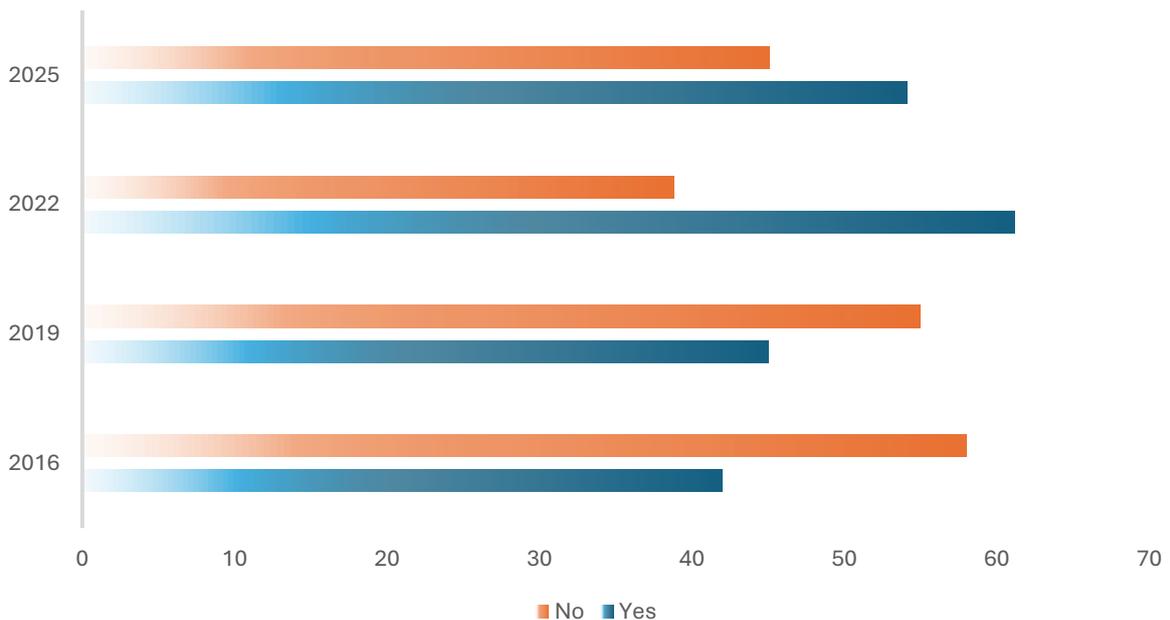
**Have you advertised / promoted vacancies over the past 12 months and not been able to fill the position?
2016-2025**



Have you advertised / promoted vacancies over the past 12 months and settled for an employee that didn't really meet your expectations during the interview, i.e. the best of the applicants.



**Have you advertised / promoted vacancies over the past 12 months and settled for an employee that didnt meet your expectations during the interview?
2016-2025**



Please indicate the level of difficulty your organisation has faced over the past 12 months in attracting suitable staff in the following areas.

	Year	Easy	Not easy but still attracted suitable staff	Difficult	Tried but couldn't attract
Accounting and finance	2025	14.3%	18.4%	4.1%	2.0%
	2022	0%	14.1%	14.1%	1.6%
	2019	7.0%	12.3%	15.8%	8.0%
	2016	4.8%	14.3%	19.0%	9.5%
Administration and support staff	2025	13.7%	27.5%	15.7%	5.9%
	2022	3.0%	25.4%	20.9%	6.0%
	2019	13.8%	15.5%	21.4%	0.0%
	2016	4.8%	23.8%	14.3%	4.8%
Apprentices and trainees	2025	8.3%	10.4%	14.6%	2.1%
	2022	3.2%	21.0%	21.0%	1.6%
	2019	10.2%	11.9%	16.9%	3.4%
	2016	14.3%	14.3%	4.8%	0.0%
Chefs and other hospitality professionals	2025	0.0 %	2.4%	9.8%	7.3%
	2022	0.0%	11.9%	5.1%	8.25%
	2016	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Customer services	2025	2.0%	28.0%	22.0%	6.0%
	2022	0.0%	18.2%	21.2%	10.6%
	2016	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Disability support workers	2025	0.0%	2.5%	10.0%	0.0%
	2022	0.0%	1.8%	3.6%	0.0%
Education workers, teachers, assistants etc.	2025	4.5%	2.3%	11.4%	4.5%
	2022	0.0%	3.4%	6.9%	5.2%
	2019	0.0%	4.0%	6.0%	2.0%
	2016	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Environmental professionals	2025	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	0.0%
	2022	0.0%	3.6%	5.5%	1.8%
Health professionals	2025	0.0%	7.5%	10.0%	7.5%
	2022	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%	8.9%
	2019	1.9%	3.8%	13.2%	2.9%
	2016	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Information technology professionals	2025	0.0%	5.0%	2.5%	0.0%
	2022	3.6%	3.6%	7.1%	0.0%

	2019	2.0%	7.8%	9.8%	5.3%
	2016	0.0%	5.3%	5.3%	
Labourers	2025	2.2%	11.1%	6.7%	6.7%
	2022	3.4%	13.6%	16.9%	1.7%
	2019	7.1%	14.3%	16.3%	1.8%
	2016	15.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Machinery operators and drivers	2025	2.3%	9.3%	4.7%	2.3%
	2022	1.7%	8.6%	3.4%	5.2%
	2019	1.9%	13.0%	7.4%	0.0%
	2016	0.0%	15.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Managers and other professionals	2025	2.4%	14.6%	14.6%	12.2%
	2022	0.0%	8.6%	15.5%	20.7%
	2019	1.9%	9.4%	20.8%	3.8%
	2016	4.8%	14.3%	28.6%	0.0%
Mechanical and engineering	2025	2.3%	2.3%	4.5%	6.8%
	2022	0.0%	1.8%	5.5%	3.6%
	2019	0.0%	5.6%	7.3%	3.6%
	2016	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%
Mining specific No responses 2016, 2025	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2022	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	1.8%
	2019	0.0%	1.9%	3.8%	0.0%
	2016	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Retail assistants	2025	0.0%	8.7%	8.7%	0.0%
	2022	1.6%	6.3%	14.3%	3.2%
Sales and marketing	2025	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%	2.4%
	2022	0.0%	3.3%	15.0%	3.3%
	2019	8.8%	7.0%	12.3%	3.5%
	2016	10.0%	20.0%	20.0%	5.0%
Tour guides and other tourism industry professionals	2025	0.0%	2.5%	10.0%	0.0%
	2022	0.0%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%
	2016	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Trades	2025	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%	3.0%
	2022	1.9%	5.7%	11.3%	7.5%
	2019	0.0%	2.1%	8.3%	10.4%
	2016	5.3%	0.0%	10.5%	0.0%
Aged Care Workers	2025	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2016	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Boilermaker	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Builder	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	2022	0.0%	33.0%	33.0%	33.0%

	Year	Easy	Not easy but still attracted suitable staff	Difficult	Tried but couldn't attract
C&F Nurses	2025 2022	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 100.0%	100.0% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%
Case Managers	2025	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dentists	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Early Intervention Professional	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
GPs	2025 2022	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%	100.0% 100.0%	0.0% 0.0%
Ground staff - qualified	2025	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Housekeeping Team Members	2025	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	75.0%
Hygienists	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Managers	2025 2016	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 100.0%	100.0% 0.0%
Midwives	2025	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Occupational Therapist	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Physiotherapist	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Qualified Plumbers	2025 2022	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 100.0%	0.0% 0.0%	100.0% 0.0%
Qualified Roofing Plumbers	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Skilled machine operators	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Supervisors trade qualified	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Volunteers	2025	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Bar staff	2025	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Cleaners	2025	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Electrician	2025 2022	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 33.0%	0.0% 33.0%	100.0% 33.0%
Groundskeeper	2025	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Psychologist	2025	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Legal	2016	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements. Unfilled vacancies within our organisation over the past 12 months are caused by.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A lack of succession planning from within the organisation	2025	0.0%	8.3%	31.3%	35.4%	25.0%
	2022	4.9%	11.5%	42.6%	24.6%	16.4%
	2016	0.0%	17.6%	41.0%	29.1%	11.8%
Applicants lacked technical and specific skill sets	2025	10.0%	60.0%	24.0%	4.0%	2.0%
	2022	16.7%	45.5%	25.8%	6.1%	4.5%
	2016	21.1%	47.4%	21.1%	10.4%	0.0%
Applicants lacked sufficient experience	2025	15.4%	57.7%	23.1%	3.8%	0.0%
	2022	18.2%	45.5%	39.1%	7.8%	4.5%
	2016	25.0%	30.0%	25.0%	5.0%	15.0%
Applicants were not job ready	2025	12.2%	53.1%	26.5%	6.1%	2.0%
	2022	12.5%	34.4%	39.1%	7.8%	6.3%
	2016	11.8%	29.4%	35.3%	5.9%	17.6%
Competition from other employers	2025	8.5%	27.7%	46.8%	12.8%	4.3%
	2022	22.7%	36.4%	30.3%	4.5%	6.1%
	2016	0.0%	27.8%	27.8%	22.2%	22.2%
Location - remoteness / isolation	2025	32.7%	36.5%	25.0%	1.9%	3.8%
	2022	34.8%	28.8%	28.8%	4.5%	3.0%
	2016	25.0%	20.0%	40.0%	5.0%	10.0%
Negative perception of the region	2025	20.4%	28.6%	34.7%	14.3%	2.0%
	2022	14.5%	24.2%	45.2%	12.9%	3.2%
	2016	16.7%	16.7%	44.4%	5.6%	16.7%
Remuneration rates are not attractive enough	2025	8.5%	21.3%	42.6%	8.5%	19.1%
	2022	11.5%	32.8%	27.9%	21.3%	60.6%
	2016	6.3%	6.3%	43.8%	25.0%	18.8%
Perception of or lack of services in the region	2025	16.3%	30.6%	42.9%	8.2%	2.0%
	2022	16.1%	29.0%	41.9%	8.1%	4.8%
	2016	5.3%	31.6%	36.8%	10.5%	15.8%

Regional connectivity	2025	11.1%	31.1%	53.3%	2.2%	2.2%
	2022	10.2%	23.7%	55.9%	6.8%	3.4%
Shortage of qualified applicants	2025	26.9%	46.2%	26.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	2022	42.0%	40.6%	55.9%	0.0%	1.4%
	2016	34.8%	30.4%	26.1%	0.0%	8.7%
Type of work is not seen as desirable	2025	11.8%	25.5%	54.9%	3.9%	3.9%
	2022	21.9%	28.1%	29.7%	15.6%	4.7%
Survey informed in 2025						
We have advertised roles but received no or limited applications	2025	17.3%	42.3%	34.6%	3.8%	1.9%
Expected pay rates and rostered work availability:	2025	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Have had consistent staffing over the past 12 months	2025	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Housing	2025	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Lack of qualified tradesmen	2025	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
We have an overseas applicant who is a qualified plumber willing to migrate, however he is 45 and there is no DAMA arrangement for Broken Hill in regional NSW.	2025	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Young Team Members not willing to work weekend shifts	2025	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements. Unfilled vacancies within our organisation over the past 12 months are caused by; - comments.

- We are not growing nor wish to grow but are susceptible to staff shortages.
- I have noticed a slight increase in applicants for advertised roles; however, our main area of concern is housekeeping which is desirable because of school hours, but we often find applicants do not realise how labour intensive the role is and often become unreliable, don't arrive for shifts and eventually move on.
- Housing shortages & Native Title issues severely impact our town/region's ability to encourage & retain staff.
- While we don't have any unfilled vacancies, we have found that when advertising a fulltime position, we often get requests from suitable applicants who only wish to work part time which doesn't meet our business' needs. The (Industry) Award can also often impact our ability to fill a position, with Government jobs paying significantly higher. Candidates who value the money over the perks we offer means we sometimes can't compete.
- We are volunteers only pay casuals for projects.
- More incentive to train apprentices, less red tape with compliance and financial assistance with compliance, abolish payroll tax, abolished land tax.
- It will come down to good communication and advertising to the right sectors.
- If you use the term "Regional Australia" to describe DAMA agreements, then Broken Hill should absolutely be included.

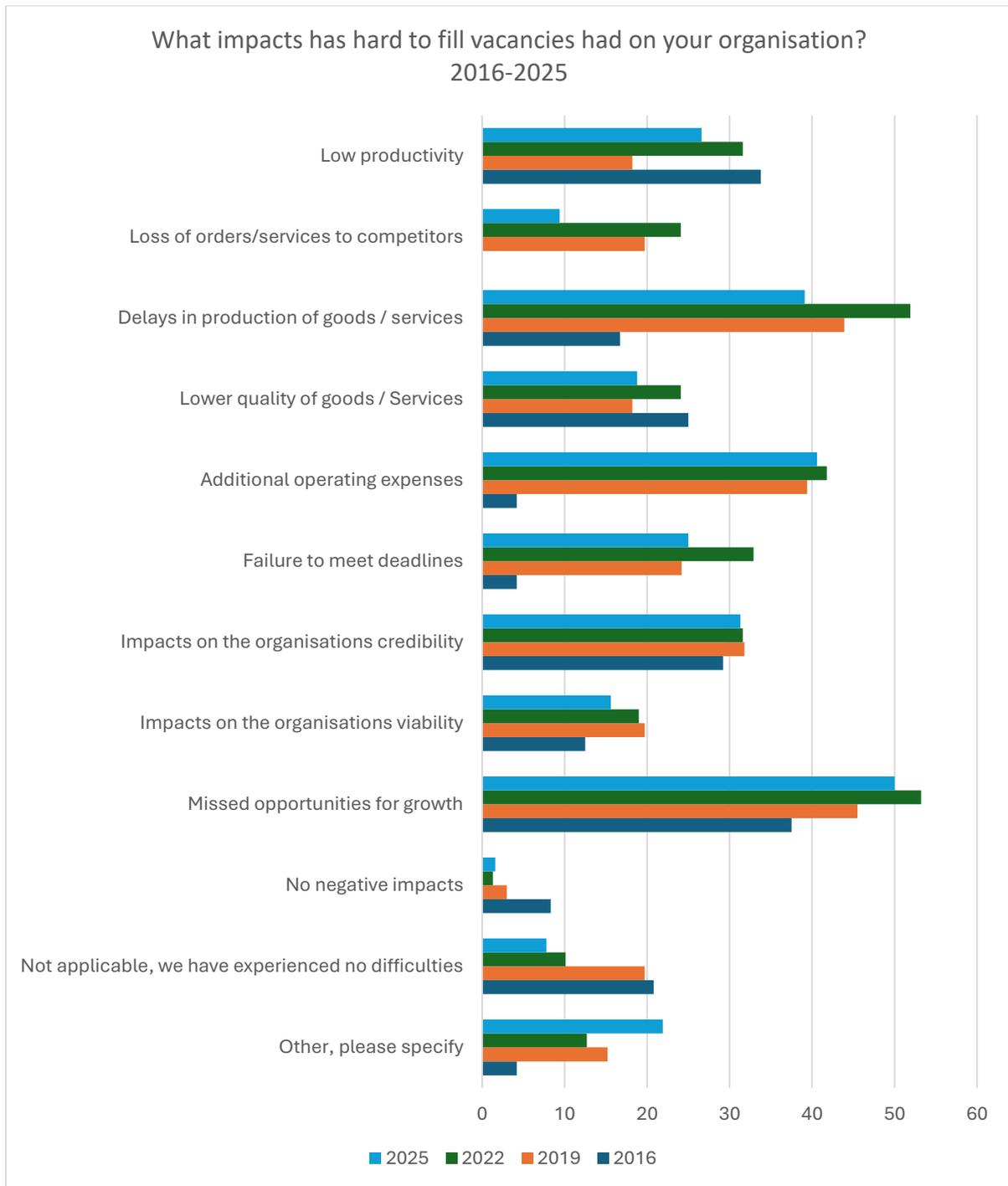
The Impact

What impact has hard to fill vacancies had on your organisation? (tick as many as relevant)



Other - please specify

- Added pressure to existing team members, added stress and increased workload.
- Burn out of staff covering vacant position.
- Director working longer hours.
- Increased pressure on current staff.
- Increased workload on existing staff.
- Owner has been taking a hands-on role to try and meet contract obligations.
- Short term agency staff who do not build rapport with clients.
- Additional work hours for existing staff.
- Cost of groceries and limited housing in the area.
- Extra load on current staff, more pressure to perform.
- Loss of revenue.
- Not able to operate at capacity with ratio requirements.
- Owners being over worked/burn out.
- Stress and increased workload on management.



Almost 90 percent of respondents report they are planning for growth; however, 50 percent also report missed opportunities for growth as an impact for hard to fill vacancies. Delays in production of goods and services and additional operating expenses are the next highest reported impacts. In the 2025 survey only 1.6 percent of respondents reported that hard to fill vacancies had no impact on their business, clearly demonstrating the current situation is impacting the region as a whole and almost every business in it.

Retention

Staff retention refers to a company's ability to keep its employees over time. High staff retention is generally seen as a positive sign, showing that employees are happy, engaged, and loyal. However, while retaining staff has many benefits, it can also have drawbacks if not managed well. Understanding both sides helps businesses find the right balance between keeping valuable employees and encouraging growth and innovation.

One of the biggest advantages of staff retention is the experience and knowledge that long-term employees bring to the business. They understand how the company works, know the customers well, and are often more efficient at their tasks. This consistency helps improve overall productivity and service quality. Staff retention also reduces the high costs of recruitment and training. Hiring new employees takes time and money, especially if the business has a high turnover rate. Keeping trained, experienced employees saves these resources and ensures smoother operations.

Another benefit is stronger teamwork and morale. When employees work together over time, they build trust and better communication. A stable team leads to a more positive work environment, which in turn helps reduce stress and conflict. It also improves customer service, as experienced staff are more confident and usually better at handling customer needs. Furthermore, companies that retain their employees tend to have a better reputation, making it easier to attract top talent when new roles do become available.

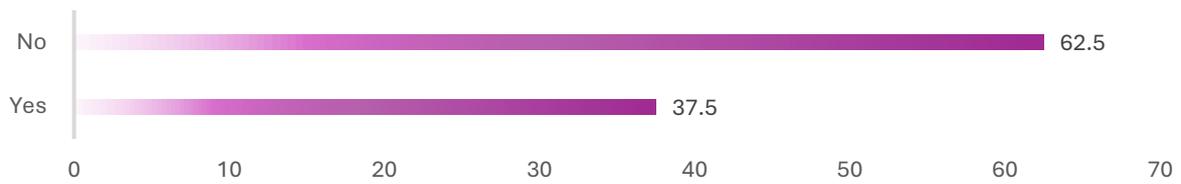
While staff retention is generally a positive thing, it can occasionally present some challenges. For instance, when people remain in the same roles for extended periods, there may be fewer opportunities for fresh ideas or new perspectives to emerge. New team members often bring different experiences and energy that can help an organisation evolve and adapt, so it's important to maintain a healthy balance.

Over time, there is also a possibility that routines become very comfortable. In some cases, long-serving employees may be less open to change, particularly if they feel secure in their roles. While this is not always the case, it can sometimes slow innovation or make it harder to implement new approaches.

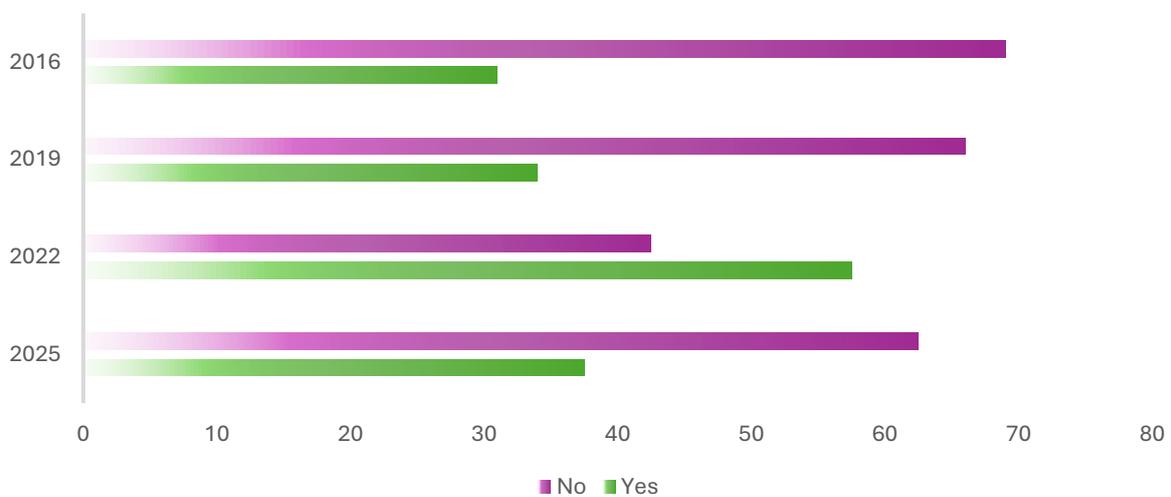
High retention can also unintentionally limit progression opportunities for others. When senior roles are occupied for many years, newer or younger employees may find it more difficult to see a clear pathway for advancement. This can lead to frustration if not managed thoughtfully. With careful leadership and ongoing professional development, however, these challenges can be addressed while still enjoying the many benefits of strong staff retention.

Staff retention is mostly a positive factor for businesses, contributing to stability, cost savings, and strong customer service. However, it must be managed carefully. Businesses need to support long-term employees with ongoing training and challenges to keep them engaged, while also making room for new talent and fresh perspectives. A healthy workplace is one where staff are happy to stay, but the organisation remains open to growth, change, and improvement.

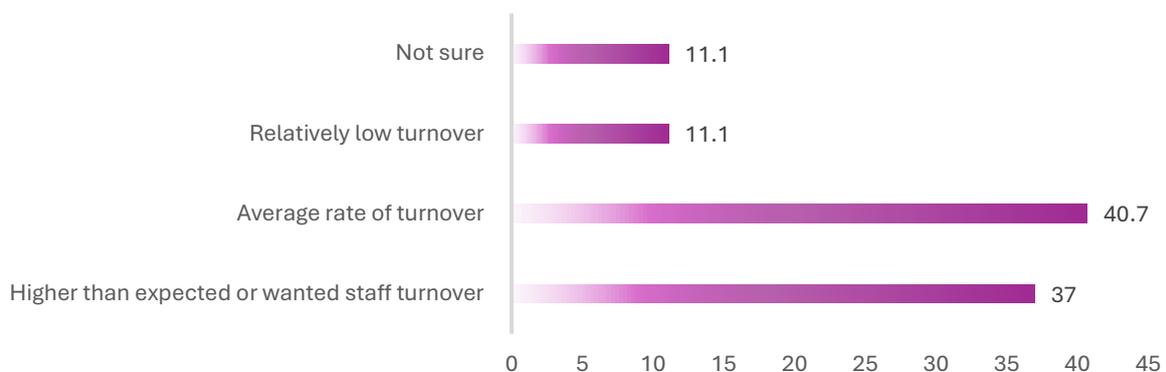
In the past 12 months have you experienced difficulty in retaining staff?



**In the past 12 months have you experienced difficulties in retaining staff?
2016-2025**

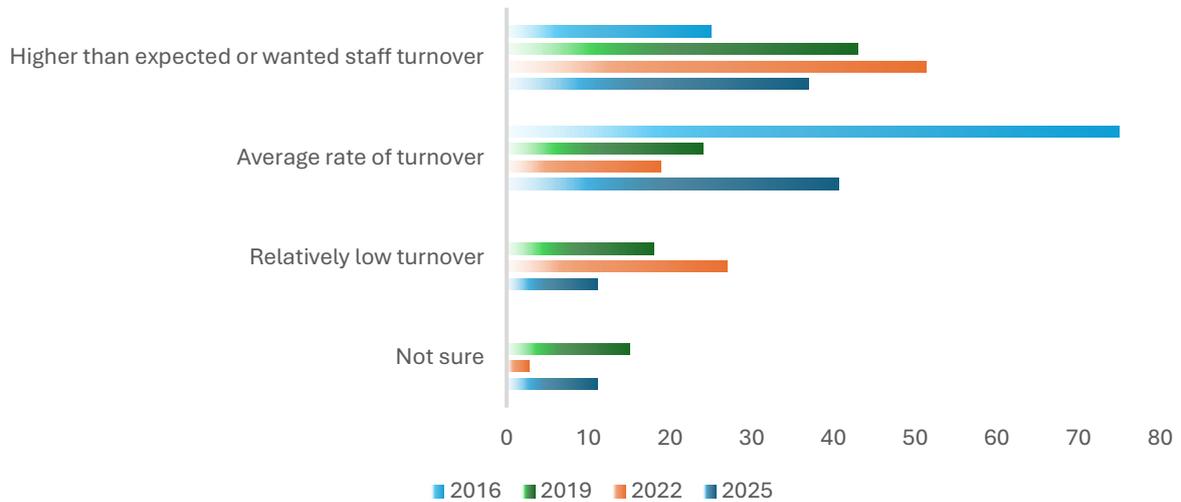


If you answered yes to the question above, to what extent has your organisation experienced difficulty in retaining appropriately skilled staff in the past 12 months? Are you experiencing what you consider to be:



If you answered yes to the question above, to what extent has your organisation experienced difficulty in retaining skilled staff in the past 12 months, are you experiencing what you consider to be?

2016-2025



What do you believe are the main reasons for staff voluntary leaving your organisation? (tick as many as relevant)



* Not applicable, we haven't experienced staff leaving our organisation

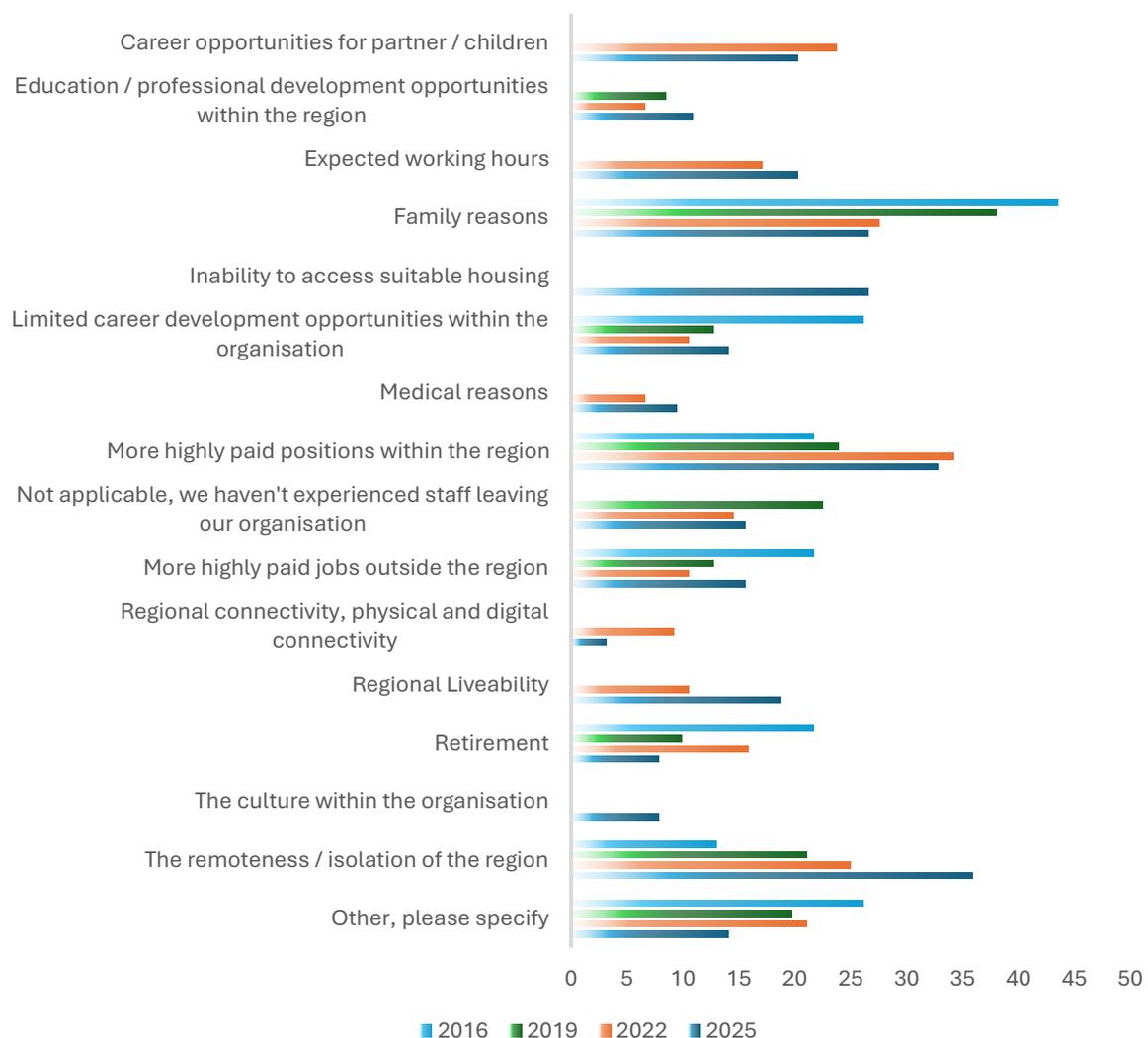
** Limited career development opportunities within the organisation

*** Education/ professional development opportunities in the region

Other, please specify

- Back packers completing 88 days regional work.
- Not wanting to do as asked.
- Seeing an increase in, predominantly younger people, being challenged by mental health issues, making them less resilient and reliable. Often leading them to exhaust personal leave and then making the decision to leave the organisation.
- To move into a different role elsewhere.
- Young staff, perception of value over ability. Mines pay better.
- Culture within workforce that you don't stay in the same job for long.
- Locals who have left town or found other jobs in town who are paid more.
- Refrigerated community transport so that isolated people can have access to fresh foods. Transport so that fresh food can be regularly.
- The complete lack of mental health support, especially for young people in the community is negatively impacting the workforce. They can't find the support they need and eventually leave.

What do you believe are the main reasons for staff voluntary leaving your organisation?



Note: The 2016 Survey did not include: The culture within the organisation, regional liveability, regional connectivity, physical and digital connectivity, medical reasons, inability to access suitable housing, expected work hours, education and professional development opportunities within the region, not applicable we haven't experienced staff leaving our organisation or career opportunities for partners and children.

The 2019 Survey did not include: The culture within the organisation, regional liveability, regional connectivity, physical and digital connectivity, medical reasons, inability to access suitable housing, expected work hours, or career opportunities for partners and children.

“In Australia, a report by the Australian HR Institute found that the average cost of hiring a new employee is estimated to range from \$10,000 to \$25,000, depending on the role and industry. This includes recruitment expenses, onboarding, and training, all of which are added to the employee’s base salary. The onboarding process, which involves everything from orientation to job-specific training, is another significant financial requirement that is not present when retraining and upskilling current employees.

If that new employee doesn’t work out – double the cost when you start again.”

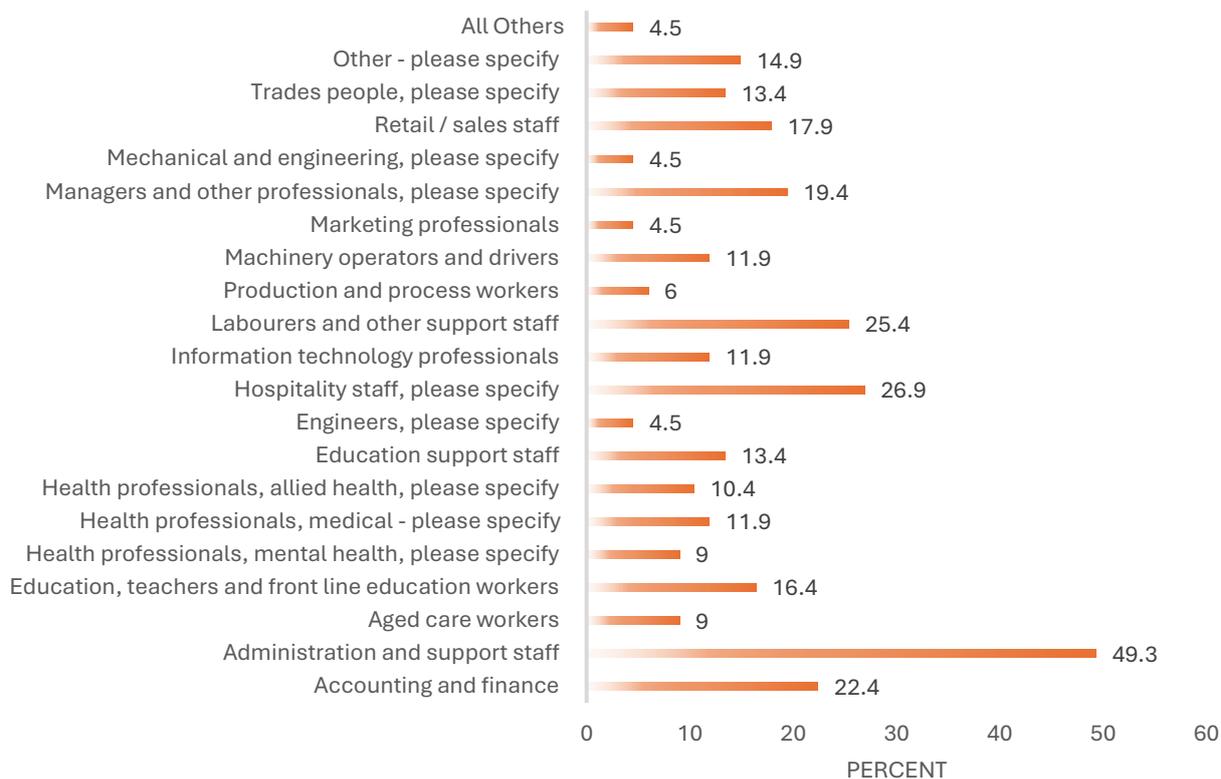
Australian HR Institute

Future Skill needs

Managing future skill shortages involves a multi-faceted approach focusing on skills-based hiring, internal development, and strategic partnerships.

Key strategies include adopting a skills-first approach by redefining job roles around core competencies, investing in reskilling and upskilling current employees, and strengthening collaboration with educational institutions and government bodies to align training with workforce needs. Organisations should also focus on creating flexible and inclusive workplaces to attract and retain a diverse talent pool and improve the overall employee experience.

What skills and positions do you envision being required in the next 5 years? (tick as many as relevant)



Health professionals, mental health, please specify

- Virtual Care options
- Councillors
- Psychologists
- C&A psychologists,
- MH/AOD workers
- Counsellors

Health professionals, medical - please specify

- Dentists,
- Dental Hygienists
- Doctors of pursuits
- GP
- GP's
- Nurses

Health professionals, allied health, please specify

- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Pharmacists
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Dietitians
- Speech Pathologists
- Exercise Physiologists
- Social Workers
- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Pathology

Engineers, please specify

- Civil
- Structural and mechanical

Hospitality staff, please specify

- Bar staff
- Bar, room service, cleaners, chef, maintenance worker
- Cooks, Bar Attendants
- Customer Service Team Members, Housekeepers and Caravan Park and Motel Operations Manager
- Housekeepers
- Managers - Duty Managers & the like
- Seasonal work
- Skill in quality customer service
- Chef, bar tender, cleaners, allrounders, cooks and kitchen hands
- Floor staff
- Grounds person's and housekeepers

- Housekeeping and groundskeeping
- Kitchen and cleaning
- Kitchen and functions

Managers and other professionals, please specify

- Account Managers
- Exec level managers
- Operations Manager and Team Supervisors
- Qualified or Experienced people
- Social Workers
- Workshop manager
- Manager and duty manager

Media professionals, please specify

- Social & AI

Trades people, please specify

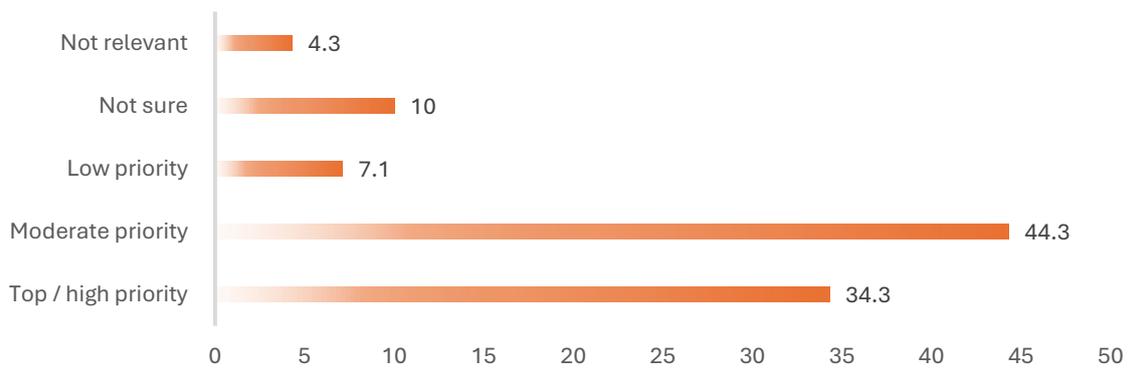
- Boilermakers
- Building trades
- Electricians, Security and Fire Technicians
- Electrician
- Plumbers and roof plumbers
- Roof Plumber
- Builders

Other - please specify

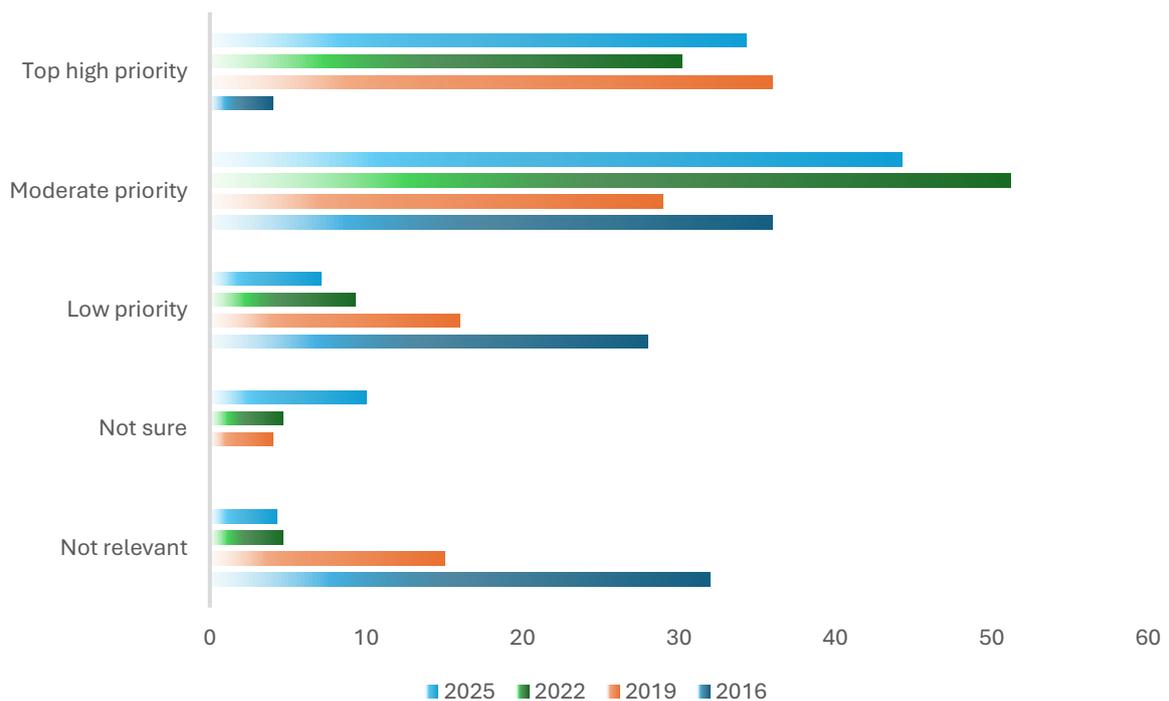
- Dental Assistants
- Drivers
- Golf Course Superintendent
- Holistic Mental Health
- Qualified yearly childhood teachers
- Sales/Customer Support
- Artists
- Disability support workers
- Pilots

** Responses are recorded exactly as received through the survey, if responses are repeated it indicates the same response from several respondents.*

What priority is your organisation currently giving to managing skills shortages and workforce needs in the future?



**What priority is your organisation currently giving to managing skills shortages and workforce needs in the future?
2016-2025**

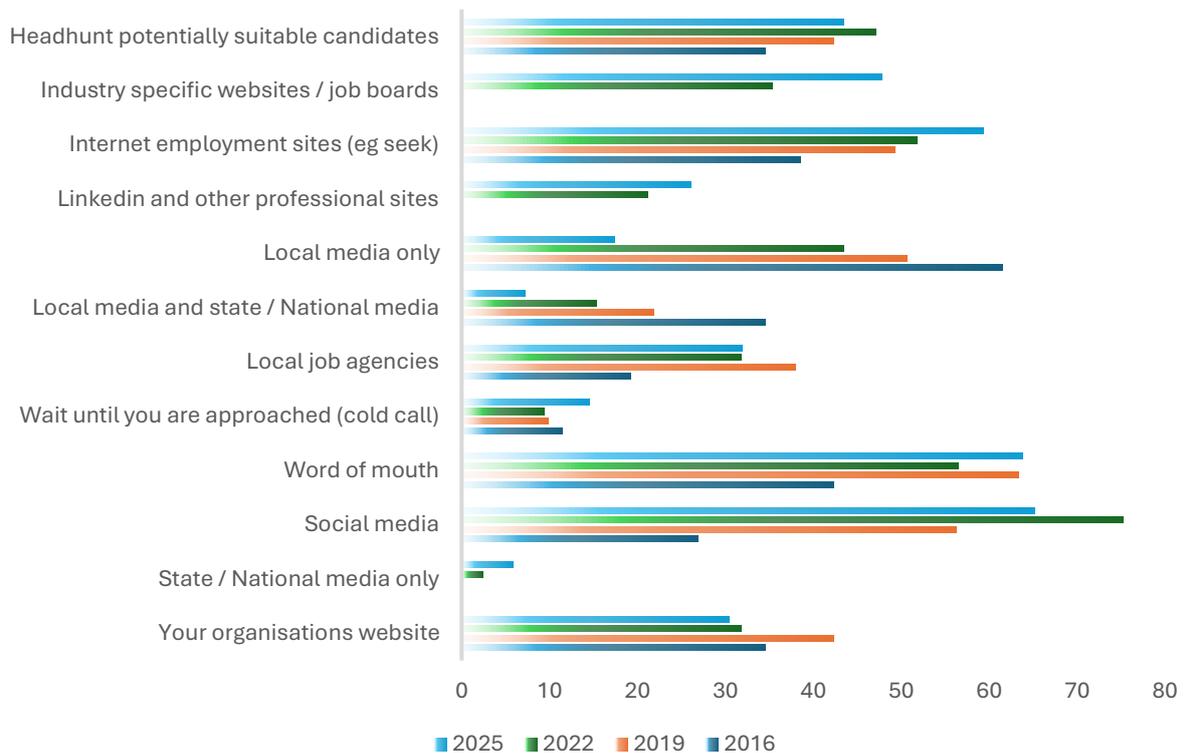


Promoting vacancies

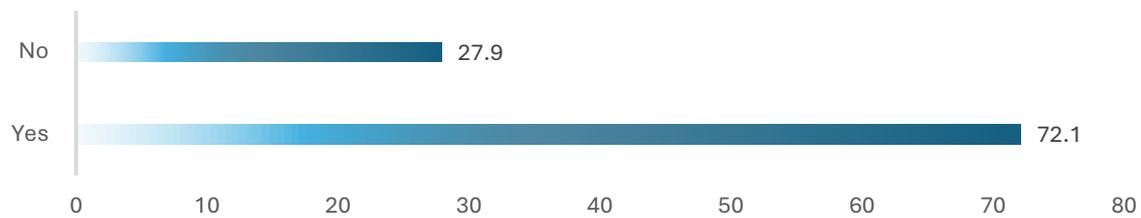
When you require new staff, how do you advertise staff vacancies for your organisation or attract new staff members? (tick as many as relevant)



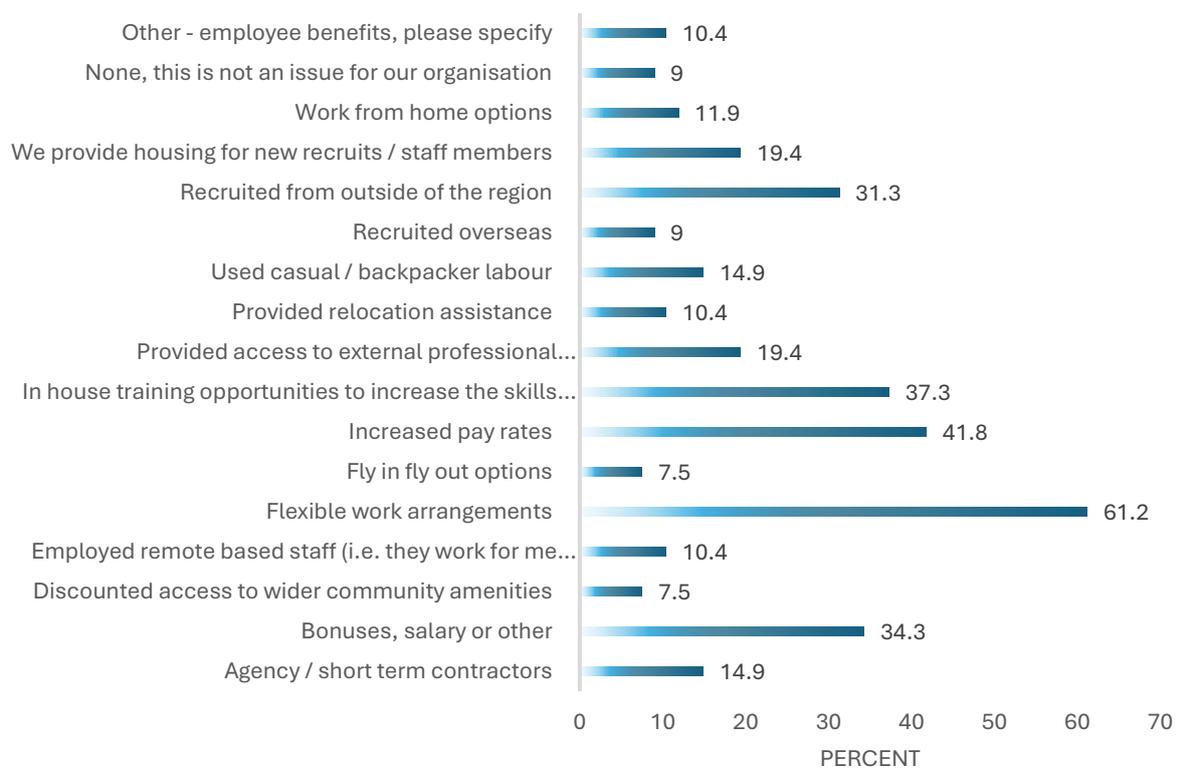
When you require new staff, how do you advertise staff vacancies for your organisation or attract new staff members?
2016-2025



Do you believe the current options for marketing job vacancies meets your organisations needs?



What adjustments / strategies have you introduced to assist with attracting/retaining staff. (tick as many as relevant)

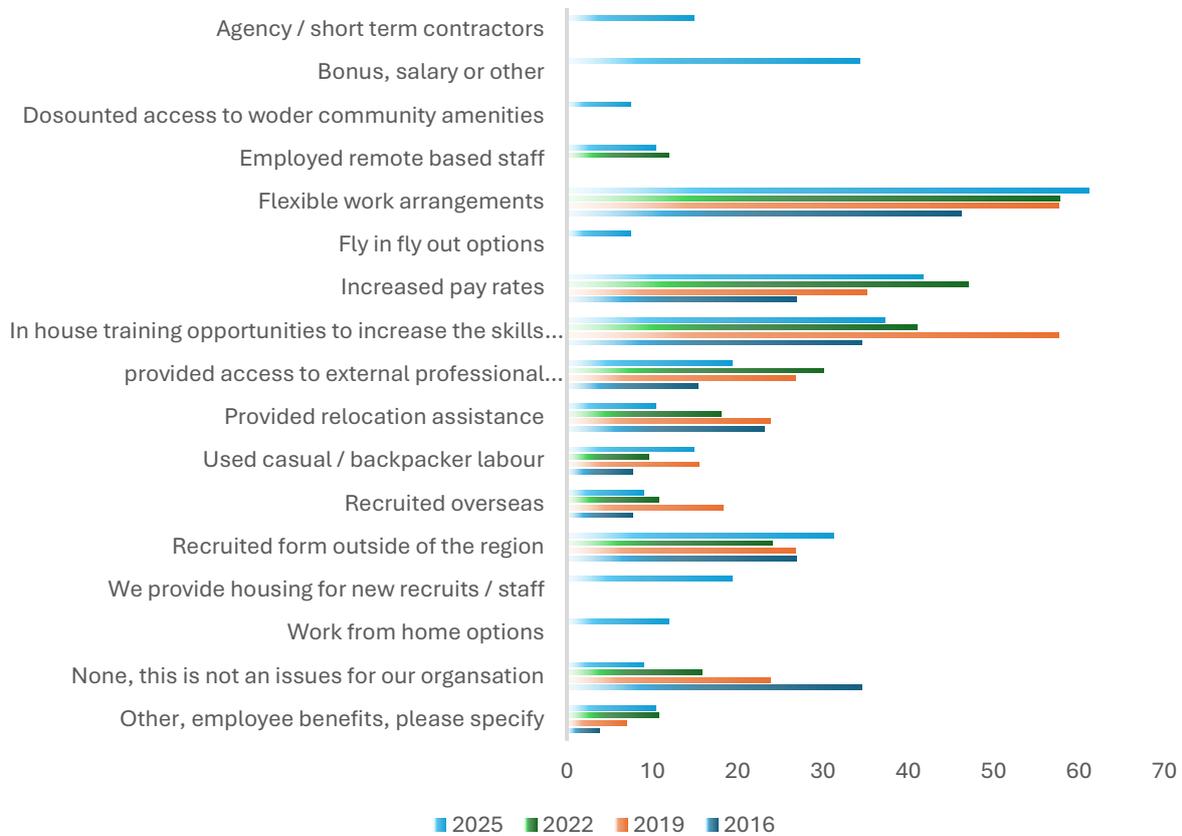


- * Provided access to external professional development opportunities
- ** In house training opportunities to increase the skills of existing staff
- *** Employed remote based staff (i.e they work for me but don't live here)

Other, please specify

- Additional leave above the Award, health programs (i.e.: flu shots, and paid time off for health care reasons)
- Meals are supplied.
- Provide staff with mobile allowance and work vehicle.
- Supply vehicle to get to and from work.

What adjustments / strategies have you introduced to assist with attracting / retaining staff?
2016-2025



* In-house training opportunities to increase the skills of existing staff
** Provided access to external professional development opportunities

Thinking about some of the challenges you may face over the next 5 years in attracting and retaining suitable staff, would you like information or assistance with any of the following? (tick as many as are relevant).

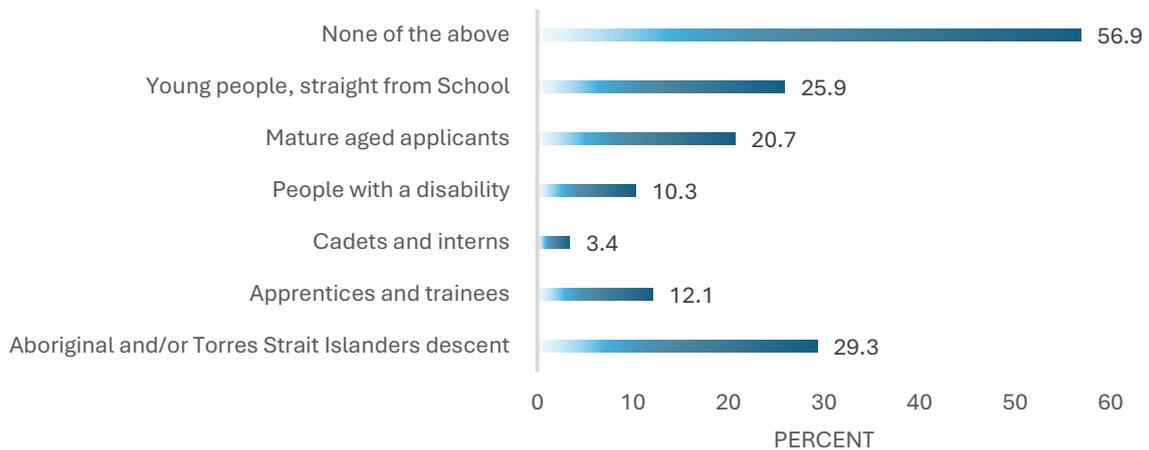


* Working with employment providers/recruitment agencies

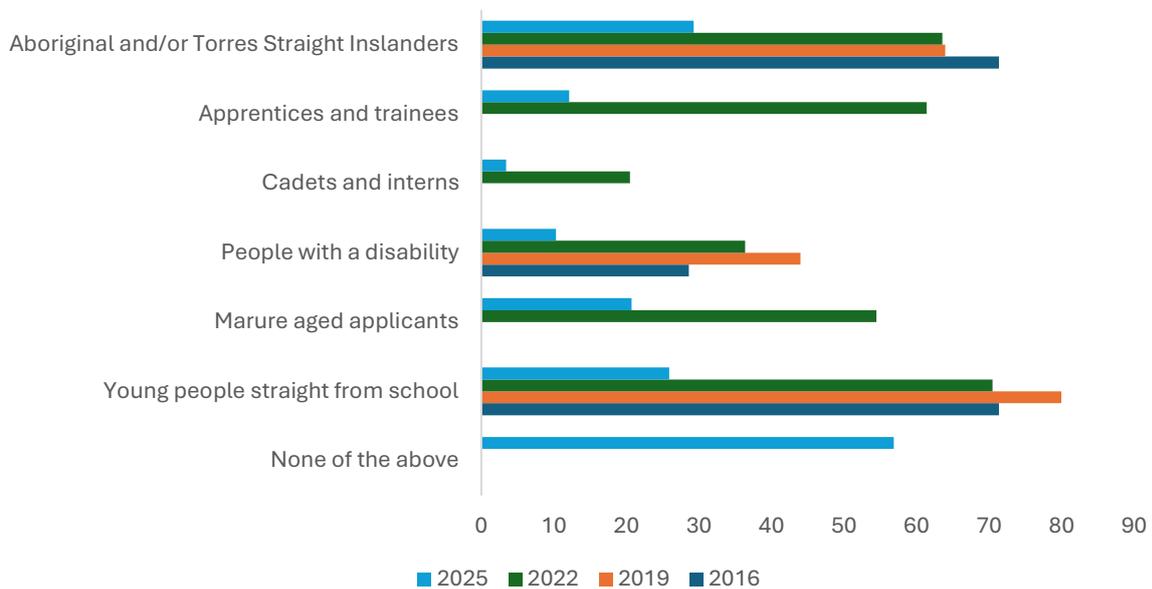
Thinking about the challenges you may face over the next 5 years would you like information or assistance with any of the following?
2016-2025



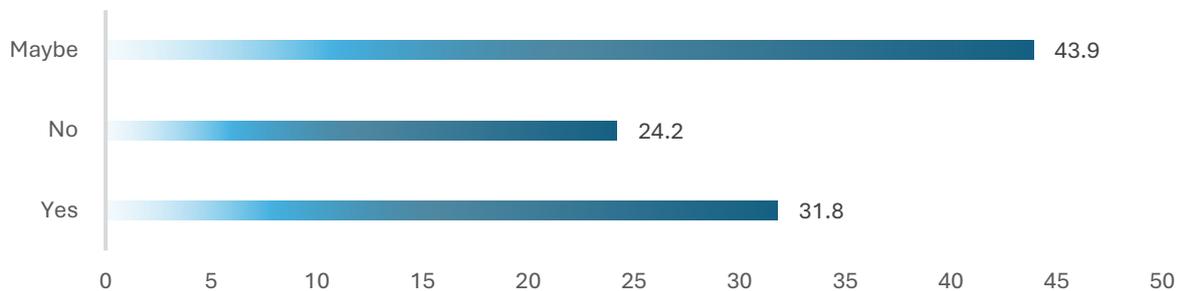
Would your organisation be interested in getting information or advice on how to recruit and retain any of the following groups of people? (tick as many as relevant)



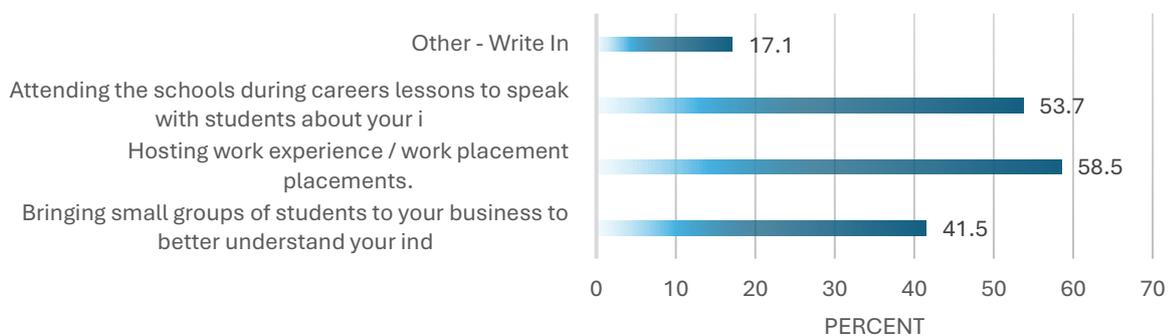
Would your organisation be interested in getting information or advice on how to recruit and retain any of the following groups of people?
2016-2025



Would your organisation be interested in opportunities to interact with young people in schools to support the development of their career aspirations, promote opportunities in your industry / organisation and help retain our young people?



If you answered yes, to the above question, how would you prefer to interact with schools / students? (tick all that are relevant)



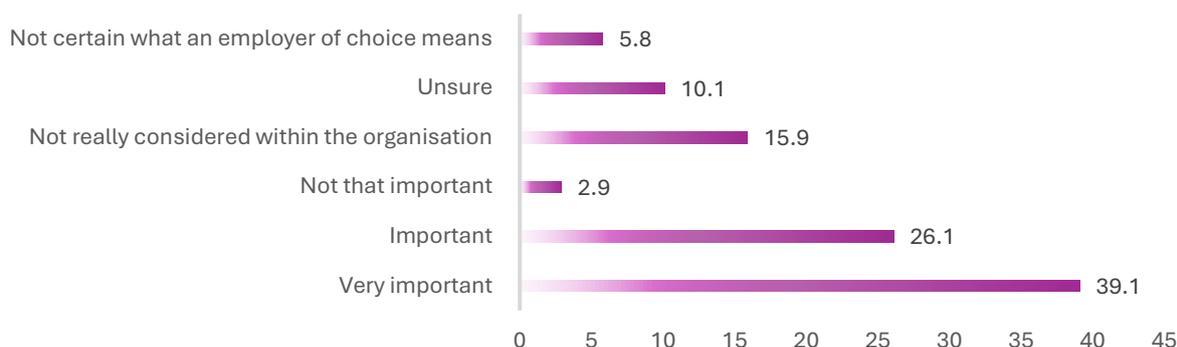
* Attending the schools during careers lessons to speak with students about your industry / business.

Employer of Choice

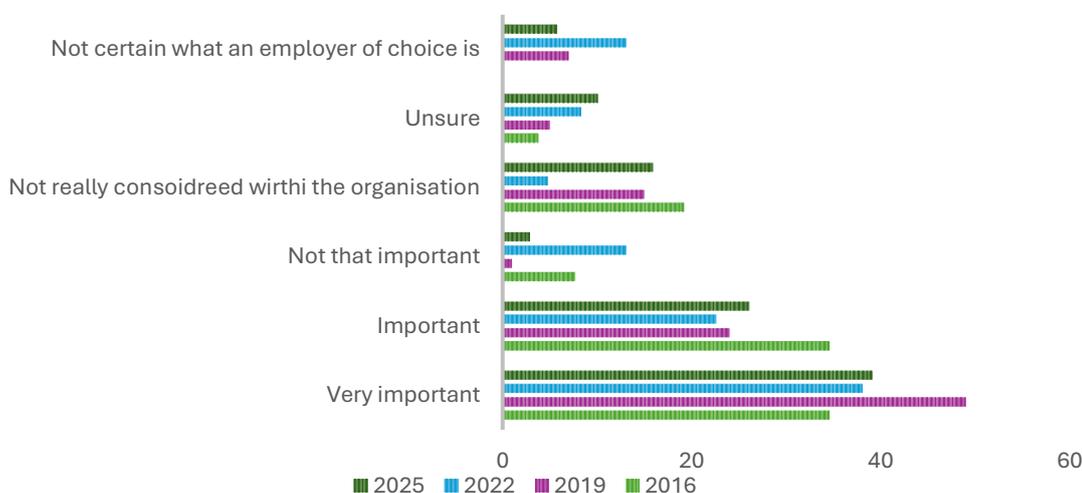
An "Employer of Choice" is a company that is highly sought after by job seekers due to its positive culture, strong values, and benefits, which helps it attract and retain top talent. It is a company that people want to work for more than others, stemming from an excellent employee experience, opportunities for growth, and a reputation as a great place to work. Becoming an Employer of Choice involves building a strong company culture through employee well-being initiatives, fair treatment, work-life balance, and opportunities for professional development.

Given many of the region's employers report ongoing issues attracting and retaining the workforce required to meet their growth aspirations it is not surprising that more respondents report placing a greater importance on being an Employer of Choice.

What importance does your organisation place on being an Employer of Choice?



What importance does your organisation place on being an employer of choice
2016-2025



Work Life Balance

Work-life balance is the ability to manage work responsibilities alongside personal life, including time for family, health, relaxation, and hobbies. It plays a critical role in both individual wellbeing and workplace productivity. In today's fast-paced environment, maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life is essential for long-term success and overall quality of life.

Benefits of Work-Life Balance

Improved Health and Wellbeing

A healthy work-life balance helps reduce stress, anxiety, and burnout. Employees who have time to rest and recharge are more likely to stay mentally and physically well, which reduces the risk of illness and absenteeism.

Higher Job Satisfaction and Productivity

Employees who feel supported in balancing their personal and work lives are generally more engaged and productive. They are more focused, motivated, and take pride in their work, which benefits both themselves and their employer.

Stronger Staff Retention

Workplaces that encourage a healthy balance tend to retain employees for longer. Staff are less likely to seek new jobs when they feel their employer respects their time and wellbeing. This saves the business time and money in recruitment and training.

Consequences of Poor Work-Life Balance

Without proper balance, employees may experience chronic stress, fatigue, and health problems. Relationships outside of work can suffer, and employees may become disengaged, less productive, or more prone to making mistakes. In the long term, this can lead to higher turnover, low morale, and negative workplace culture.

Business Responsibility and Strategies

Employers play a key role in supporting work-life balance by:

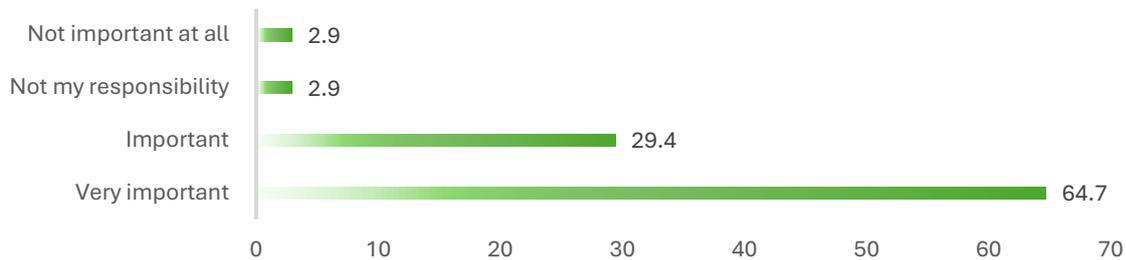
- Offering flexible working hours or remote work options.
- Encouraging staff to take breaks and holidays.
- Promoting mental health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Creating realistic workloads and expectations.

These strategies not only support employee health but also contribute to a more efficient, loyal, and high-performing team.

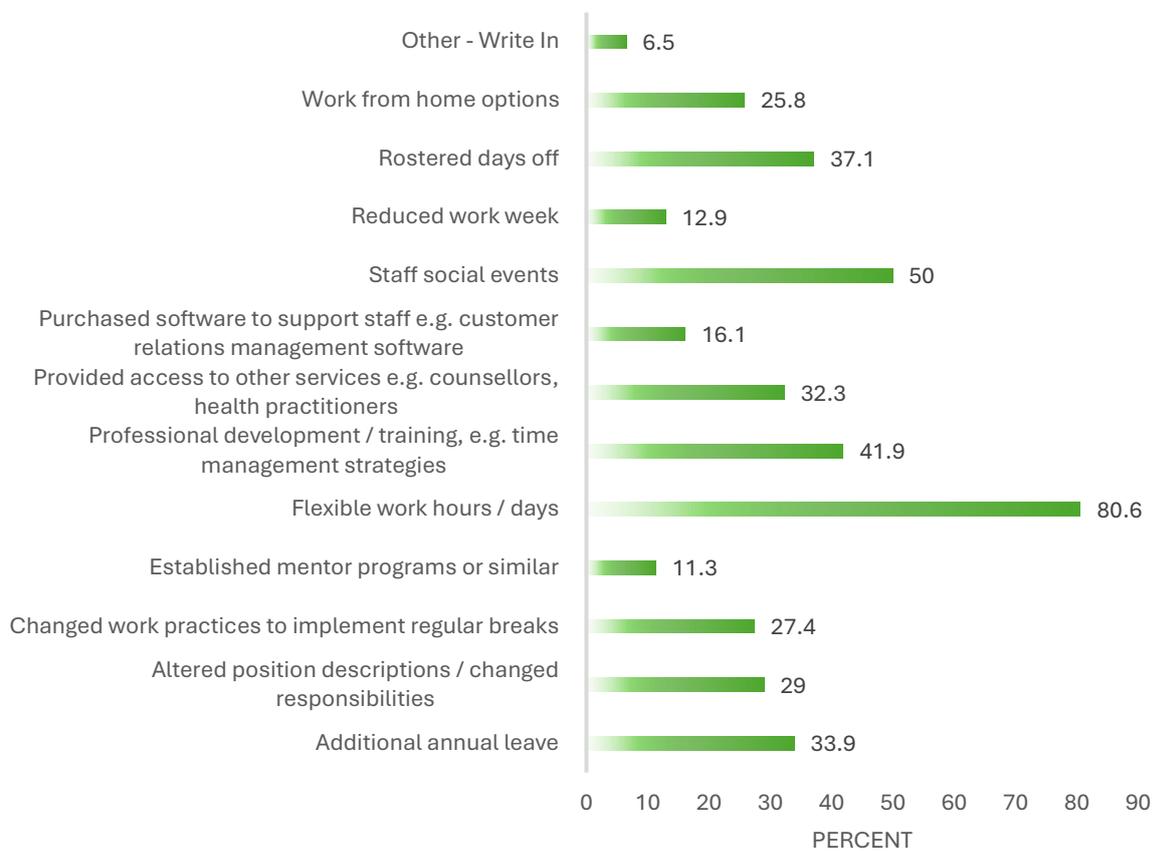
Work-life balance is not just a personal matter, it is a key factor in building a healthy, productive, and sustainable workforce. When employees are able to manage their work and personal responsibilities effectively, both the individual and the business benefit. Promoting work-life balance should be a priority for any organisation aiming to create a positive and successful work environment.

How important is creating a work / life balance for your staff?

Note: This question was new in the 2025 survey.



If enhancing the work / life balance of your staff is important, please tell us what changes your organisation has made to try and improve the balance. (tick as many as relevant)



Other - Write In

- A lot of our staff are mothers, we try to be as flexible as possible to ensure they can take breaks to attend school events, assemblies, etc.
- Birthday leave gets paid to have the Friday off of your birthday week, giving a long weekend.
- Enforced 'right to disconnect', no overtime unless absolutely essential.
- Being amenable to changes in work hours to accommodate staff needs.
- Ensuring our team can attend school events when their children are participating.

If you have implemented strategies to enhance work / life balance for your staff, please tell us about the impact of these changes. Have they worked, what worked and why?

- We have always practiced work life balance for our staff. We always let our staff take time off when they want. Our staff are aware of what needs to be done, when our busy times are, and work as a team. We do not have a set strategy of work life balance; we cater for our staff on what hours they can/wish to work. This works well with a diverse pool of employees.
- We have had to allow staff to work reduced hours for personal/ family reasons. This has been quite successful in keeping those employees involved and productive.
- We have found that flexible and work from home options have helped some staff - but most of our staff are unable to work flexibly.
- Ongoing flexibility with engaged staff is positive.
- Flexible work arrangements have been very popular and attracted candidates that would not have otherwise applied.
- (employer) ensure staff have rostered days off as per the award and request staff to complete an availability within their app to ensure they are able to complete the things in their personal life that want to do.
- Allowing our staff to work flexible hours and days within reason has been extremely successful in maintaining productivity. There is nothing worse than staff that don't want to be at work.
- Yes. Flexible workplace policy is a great benefit.
- The level of appreciation for these strategies depends on the demographic of employee. For older employees, or those with families, there is definitely a positive response to them. Younger employees can come across as a little entitled and not see these strategies as perks but rather as rights.
- Flexibility in the workplace and additional annual leave offered - our staff appreciate that option, plus small bonus/gifts of appreciation.
- Increased number of volunteers.
- They foster trust and loyalty. Staff can approach management with concerns regarding their work life balance and possible solutions can be easily and openly discussed.
- Flexible working arrangements have led to an increase in job satisfaction.
- Women need flexibility and backup people or job-sharing opportunities to make it work and run a home and family.
- Social events work for our staff 25-35 years old. All like birthday leave. ROD 25–35-year-old, 18–22-year-olds like having a flexible work week less than 38 hours, early finish on a Friday afternoon.
- We would like to know what others have done, its ok to be flexible but our industry doesn't enable work from home and offers limited flexibility options.



Generic employability skills

Employers across all industries look for more than just job-specific knowledge. They also value a set of general, transferable skills known as generic employability skills or soft skills. These skills help individuals perform effectively in any job and contribute positively to a workplace.

Generic employability skills are essential for success in the workplace, regardless of the industry or position. They make workers more adaptable, productive, and valuable to employers. Developing these skills not only helps individuals find jobs but also supports long-term career growth and job satisfaction.

Better understanding one's generic employability skills and articulating them may help some job seekers and those wishing to change careers, it may also help employers looking to hire new staff that may not possess all the technical skills they seek.

Key Generic Employability Skills

Communication

The ability to speak clearly, listen actively, and write effectively is essential in almost every role. Good communication improves teamwork, reduces misunderstandings, and helps build strong working relationships.

Teamwork

Most jobs require collaboration. Being able to work cooperatively with others, respect different opinions, and contribute to group tasks is a key employability skill.

Problem-Solving

Employers value workers who can think critically, identify issues, and find practical solutions. This skill is useful in daily tasks and in handling unexpected challenges.

Time Management

Managing time well means meeting deadlines, prioritising work, and staying organised. It shows reliability and professionalism.

Adaptability

Workplaces often face change. Being flexible and open to new ideas, tasks, or technologies is vital to long-term success.

Self-Management

Employees who take responsibility for their work, stay motivated, and act professionally need less supervision and can be trusted with more responsibility.

Digital Literacy

Most modern jobs require basic digital skills, such as using email, software programs, and online platforms. Digital literacy also includes staying safe online and adapting to new technology.

Numeracy

Understanding numbers, measurements, and basic calculations is useful in many jobs, from budgeting to stock control.

Initiative

Taking action without being told, showing enthusiasm, and offering new ideas are traits that make employees stand out and contribute more to the business.

The responses below demonstrate the importance local employers place on generic employability skills, regardless of the industry sector employers place a high importance on these skills.

Communication that contributes to productive and harmonious relations across employees and customers.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Listening & understanding	96.6%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Speaking clearly & directly	91.4%	8.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Writing to the needs of the audience	63.6%	27.3%	5.5%	3.6%
Negotiating responsively	66.1%	26.8%	1.8%	5.4%
Understanding the needs of internal & external customers	94.5%	5.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Persuading effectively	60.4%	28.3%	5.7%	5.7%
Establishing & using networks	67.3%	23.1%	7.7%	1.9%
Sharing information	83.6%	12.7%	3.6%	0.0%
Reading independently	61.1%	37.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Using numeracy effectively	76.8%	23.2%	0.0%	0.0%

Teamwork that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Working as an individual & as a member of a team	98.3%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Working across different ages, irrespective of gender, race, religion or political persuasion	91.2%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Knowing how to define a role as part of the team	78.9%	19.3%	1.8%	0.0%
Applying teamwork to a range of situations	91.1%	5.4%	3.6%	0.0%
Coaching & mentoring skills including giving feedback	78.9%	19.3%	1.8%	0.0%
Identifying the strengths of team members	80.0%	18.2%	1.8%	0.0%

Problem-solving that contributes to productive outcomes.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Developing creative, innovative and practical solutions	82.8%	17.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Showing independence and innovation to solve problems	83.9%	16.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Solving problems in teams	78.9%	19.3%	1.8%	0.0%
Applying a range of strategies to problem solving	78.6%	21.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Applying problem solving strategies across a range of areas	77.2%	22.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Using mathematics including budgeting and financial management to solve problems	49.1%	43.4%	5.7%	1.9%
Resolving customer concerns in relation to complex projects issues	74.5%	20.0%	3.6%	1.8%

Personal and social responsibility.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Knowledge of codes of conduct	91.4%	5.2%	3.4%	0.0%
High standard of manners	91.1%	7.1%	1.8%	0.0%
Showing interest and respect for the opinions of others	94.7%	3.5%	0.0%	1.8%
A respect for ethical practice and social responsibility	94.7%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
An appreciation of, and respect for, diversity	91.2%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%

Initiative and enterprise that contributes to innovative outcomes.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Adapting to new situations	94.7%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Developing a strategic, creative and long-term vision	57.1%	37.5%	1.8%	3.6%
Being creative	64.9%	31.6%	0.0%	3.5%

Identifying opportunities not obvious to others	58.9%	37.5%	1.8%	1.8%
Translating ideas into action	69.6%	26.8%	1.8%	1.8%

Planning and organising that contributes to long- and short-term strategic planning.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Managing time and priorities – setting timelines, coordinating tasks for self and with others	92.7%	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Being resourceful	89.1%	10.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Taking initiative and making decisions	83.3%	14.8%	1.9%	0.0%
Adapting resource allocations to cope with contingencies	67.9%	28.6%	3.6%	0.0%
Establishing clear project goals and deliverables	61.8%	34.5%	1.8%	1.8%
Allocating people and other resources to tasks	66.7%	27.5%	3.9%	2.0%
Planning the use of resources, including time management	90.9%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%

Participating in continuous improvement and planning processes	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Developing a vision and a proactive plan to accompany it	66.0%	28.3%	3.8%	1.9%
Predicting – weighing up risk, evaluating alternatives and applying evaluation criteria	61.1%	35.2%	1.9%	1.9%
Collecting, analysing and organising information	58.5%	35.8%	3.8%	1.9%
Understanding basic business systems and their relationships	63.6%	30.9%	5.5%	0.0%

Self-management that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Having a personal vision and goals	88.9%	9.3%	1.9%	0.0%
Evaluating and monitoring own performance	86.8%	13.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Having knowledge and confidence in own ideas and visions	78.8%	21.2%	0.0%	0.0%

Articulating own ideas and visions	81.5%	18.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Taking responsibility	98.1%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%

Learning that contributes to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and organisational operations and outcomes.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Managing own learning	80.4%	19.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Contributing to the learning community at the workplace	75.5%	24.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Using a range of mediums to learn – mentoring, peer support and networking, IT and courses	64.6%	33.3%	0.0%	2.1%
Applying learning to technical issues (e.g. learning about products) and people issues (ego interpersonal and cultural aspects of work)	71.4%	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Having enthusiasm for ongoing learning	82.0%	16.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Being willing to learn in any setting – on and off the job	79.6%	20.4%	0.0%	0.0%

Being open to new ideas and techniques	98.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills	89.6%	10.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate change	85.4%	14.6%	0.0%	0.0%

Technology that contributes to effective carrying out of tasks.

	Important	Nice to have but not really important	Not so important	Not relevant
Having a range of basic IT skills	70.9%	23.6%	1.8%	3.6%
Applying IT as a management tool	45.3%	45.3%	5.7%	3.8%
Using IT to organise data	53.8%	32.7%	7.7%	5.8%
Being willing to learn new IT skills	75.5%	18.9%	1.9%	3.8%
Having the WHS knowledge to apply technology	64.7%	27.5%	7.8%	0.0%
Having the appropriate physical capacity	67.3%	26.9%	5.8%	0.0%

Thinking of the employability skills above are you satisfied the majority of your employees and new job seekers have these skills?

	Yes	No	Sometimes	Not relevant
Young people seeking employment (18-25 years old)	13.0%	16.7%	59.3%	11.1%
People seeking employment (25-45 years old)	22.6%	5.7%	66.0%	5.7%
Mature aged people seeking employment (over 45 years old)	33.3%	9.3%	51.9%	5.6%
Unemployed	1.9%	26.4%	54.7%	17.0%
Current employees	59.6%	3.8%	30.8%	5.8%

Job Seekers

A solid resume is crucial because it's the first impression and a marketing tool that showcases skills and experience to potential employers, with the goal of securing an interview. It acts as a concise summary of qualifications, helping recruiters quickly assess suitability for a role and understand someone's professional journey. A strong resume is clear, tailored to the specific job, and effectively communicates your value to demonstrate you can succeed in the position.

Respondents that report not being at all satisfied with the resumes they receive has slowly declined over the years, and general satisfaction has increased. The number of respondents that report being very satisfied with resumes remains very small at only 1.8 percent and has declined over the years.

Understanding what's relevant to include in a resume still appears to be a challenge for many job seekers with almost 43 percent of respondents reporting resumes are an acceptable standard but contain irrelevant information. However, that figure has significantly improved since 2022 when 65 percent of respondents reported resumes contain irrelevant information.

As a general rule, how satisfied are you with the quality and relevance of resumes and applications you receive? (tick as many as relevant)



* *Resumes are generally of an acceptable quality but often contain irrelevant information*

As a general rule, how satisfied are you with the quality and relevance of resumes and applications you receive?
2016-2025



As an employer within the region what advice would you provide to potential employees and job seekers regarding their resume and applications?

- Keep it up to date and have relevant referees.
- Focus your job applications and resumes on the role you will be doing - tailoring to your audience is important.
- Be concise, address criteria, read instructions.
- Learn more about the business you are applying to or have an interest in finding out more. a lot of applications/interviews we conduct are just applying for the sake of applying for a job, we very rarely get applications that are wanting to work in the field.
- Make sure that the resume is current and up to date and to include date of birth.
- If using a cover letter, ensure its up to date and accurate for the role you are applying for. Ensure your contact details and employment history is correct and up to date. List some core duties in your role to understand the scope of your experience.
- Be honest.
- Understand govt requirements when applying for a job - ring and ask if unsure. ring and speak to the contact before applying for a job to make sure it's what you think it is and just make contact with the organisation.
- Ensure all relevant information and training is included.
- Address the criteria in the position description.
- Seek professional advice if unsure.
- Relevant cover letter addressing specifics in job advertisement.
- Study up on the position and the company that you are hoping to work for. And ensure that you meet their criteria.
- Be honest about your actual ability, and willingness to learn new tasks. Don't expect the top job unless you have the ability to do it (pay rate included).

- Apply where you want to work, even if no jobs advertised, drop off resume.
- Make it targeted.
- Handing them in in person is always appreciated and if that is not possible then a small email message or cover letter expressing their interest in a more personalised way is something we look out for. We often have applicants who appear to just be ticking a box.
- To focus on the position specific information and include references.
- Update them every 6-12 months. Use modern formats. Include any regional/remote experience even if its travel in the area to demonstrate some understanding of what a remote town is like. Add a photo, & Social media link, today it's all about connection.
- Learn about the business you are applying to, so you have an understanding of what will be expected of you.
- Adapt the resume to the role you are applying for. Make sure it is checked for spelling a grammar. Try to be concise as you only have a few minutes to impress the reader.
- Read the advertisement and address what is actually being asked or requested i.e. essential and desirable criteria, be honest with answers.
- When creating your application, please ensure the skills you list address the needs of the position, and keep it contained to as few pages as possible. When submitting your resume or application, please do so in person unless otherwise specified and your appearance should reflect how you intend to dress when at work.
- Participate in online information session. Understand the job criteria and develop knowledge of Government Sector Employment requirements.
- To actually address the qualifications that they have that fit the advertised position.
- Be honest, make it relevant.
- Keep it short, relevant and research the job and the company you are applying to. A photo of yourself is always a winner.
- Keep them straight to the point, while a 5-page resume may look good however an employer wants to know exactly what you have done and if it is relevant to the business and the position available.
- Keep it to one page, relevant to the position you are applying for. Be honest in your abilities and qualifications. Let your referees know you are applying for a job.
- When applying for roles in our region, we recommend that applicants: Tailor Your Resume – Clearly outline relevant skills and experience that match the role. If you have transferable skills from other industries, highlight how they apply to tourism, hospitality, construction, or regional operations. Be Specific About Availability – Clearly state your availability, willingness to work weekends or public holidays if required, and any flexibility for seasonal or peak periods. Include Local or Regional Experience – Employers in the Far West value candidates who understand the challenges and opportunities of living and working in regional areas. Mention any prior local work or community involvement. Highlight Practical Skills – Even if you have not completed formal training, list practical skills such as machinery operation, customer service, maintenance, or technology use. Show Commitment and Reliability – In small regional teams, reliability is essential. Demonstrate this through examples from past roles, volunteer work, or study. Present a Clear and Professional Application – Use a simple, easy-to-read format, check spelling and grammar, and ensure contact details are up to date. Cover Letter Counts – Even a short cover letter can help you stand out by showing why you want to work in the Far West and how you will contribute to the team. Employers in this region value people who are adaptable, hands-on,

and willing to learn. A well-prepared application that shows these qualities can make a strong impression.

- Keep it relevant to the job that they are applying for.
- Do some research about the job, workplace you are applying at, proof for spelling, mistakes etc practice interview skills, back yourself, we can teach skills, but we can't teach personality, general attitude. You may not have the skills we need but if you have personality and the desire to learn and apply yourself, we can do the rest together.
- Ensure the resume looks professional, get to the point and tailor resumes for individual job applications.
- We are seeking qualified skilled plumbers, so unfortunately this question is not applicable as we are not receiving applications from qualified applicants.
- Advice for Job Seekers when applying for roles, keep resumes clear and relevant to the position. Highlight practical skills, tickets, and licences alongside your work experience. Employers in the region value reliability, good communication, and a willingness to learn just as much as formal qualifications. Keep applications short (2–3 pages), free of errors, and make sure you follow the instructions in the job ad. A brief cover letter showing enthusiasm and connection to the local community can make you stand out.
- Ask for feedback on your resume! Always.
- Keep it brief.
- Make them relevant and address the essential criteria.

Pre employment testing

To what extent has the following been an issue for you with attracting or retaining employees?

	Year	Major problem	Moderate problem	No problem at all	Not relevant
Pre employment medical test	2025	5.5%	10.9%	21.8%	61.8%
	2022	4.3%	15.7%	22.9%	57.1%
	2019	5.1%	1.7%	33.9%	59.3%
	2016	4.8%	4.8%	23.8%	66.7%
Drug and alcohol testing	2025	5.5%	7.3%	21.8%	65.5%
	2022	5.5%	15.1%	28.8%	50.7%
	2019	1.7%	15.9%	23.3%	53.4%
	2016	19.0%	9.5%	19.0%	52.4%
Pre employment aptitude testing	2025	1.9%	15.1%	24.5%	58.5%
	2022	1.4%	19.4%	19.4%	59.7%
	2019	1.7%	13.8%	29.3%	55.2%
	2016	4.8%	19.0%	19.0%	57.1%

Barriers to attraction and retention

Imagine you're running relay race, and your star runner decides to drop the baton mid-race. No warning, no explanation, just a quick exit off the track. That's exactly what it feels like when a key employee leaves unexpectedly. The rest of the team scrambles to fill the gap, momentum slows, and you're left wondering what went wrong.

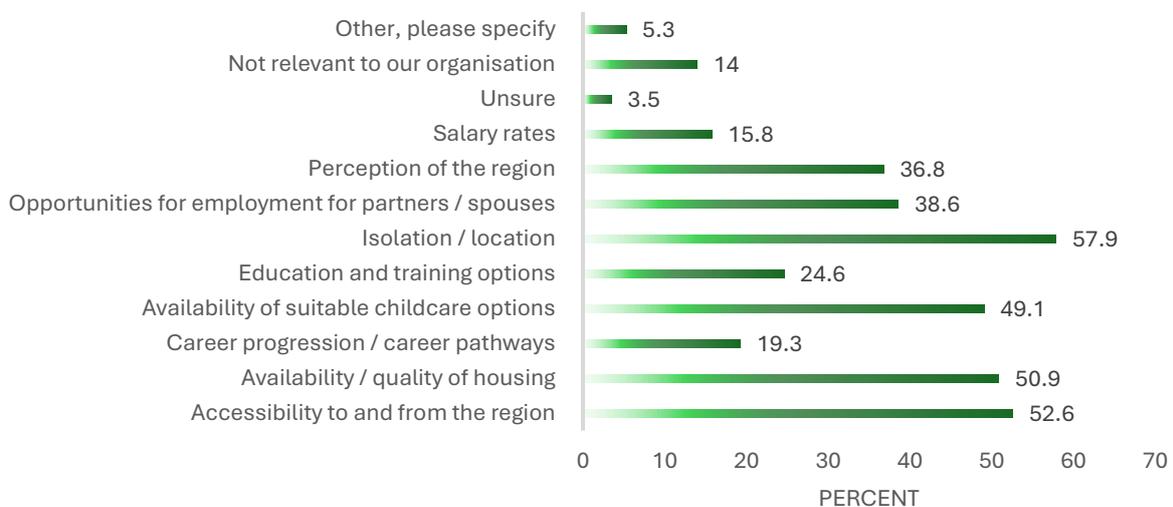
In today's workplace, employee retention feels like that relay race. With rising competition and shifting workforce expectations, businesses are losing talent at an alarming rate. But unlike a race, where you can't rewind the clock, organisations have the chance to pause, reflect, and fix what's broken.

Understanding the barriers to attraction and retention regionally may help to develop region wide strategies to support greater attraction and retention of employees and enable local business to reach their potential.

Isolation and location again appear the greatest barrier from an employer's perspective with almost 58 percent reporting the isolation and location to be the greatest barrier in attraction and retention of staff. Isolation has consistently been recorded as the greatest barrier attracting and retaining staff, however in 2025 accessibility to and from the region, availability / quality of housing and childcare also present as major barriers.

With the region's obvious struggle to attract and retain a suitable workforce, surprisingly, opportunities for employment for partners and children still present as a significant barrier, raising the question about a more collaborative approach to marketing of the region and the opportunities available.

From your experience what are the major barriers to attracting suitable staff from outside of the region? (tick as many as relevant)



Other, please specify

- Industry demands - Hospitality Industry seven days per week, team members required to work on Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays. Although they are paid penalty rates, some in Broken Hill are not motivated by financial incentives to work outside of Monday to Friday.
- We have spoken to several locum (position) over the years when we were unable to secure someone local, trying to organise relief contract for up to a month at times. Payment was no object travel distance was the factor.
- Housing

From your experience, what are the major barriers to attracting staff from outside of the region? 2016 - 2025

	2016	2019	2022	2025
Other, please specify	9.10%	9.20%	4.30%	5.30%
Not relevant to our organisation	22.70%	24.60%	18.60%	14%
Unsure	9.10%	3.10%	7.10%	3.50%
Salary rates	18.50%	24.60%	17.10%	15.80%
Perception of the region	50.00%	47.40%	48.60%	36.80%
Opportunities for employment for partners	40.90%	41.50%	45.70%	38.60%
Isolation / location	63.60%	60.00%	58.60%	57.90%
Education and training options	13.60%	27.70%	20.00%	24.60%
Availability of suitable childcare options				49.10%
Career progression / career pathways	22.70%	27.70%	21.40%	19.30%
Availability / quality of housing			47.10%	50.90%
Accessibility to and from the region			47.10%	52.60%

**From your experience what are the issues that impact retention of staff in the region?
(tick as many as relevant)**



**Education, training or other professional development*

*** Suitable career opportunities for partners and/or children*

Other, please specify

- Family issues where someone has to return home.
- Health/Doctors/services
- Lack of professional progression opportunities means a lack of opportunity for remuneration increases.
- Not my personal experience but from others is the lack of larger department retail stores and reasonable cost-effective daily transportation to and from our region.
- Fresh food/availability transport.
- Wages.

Welcoming our new residents

Welcoming new residents is crucial for fostering social cohesion and a thriving community, leading to economic growth, cultural enrichment, and a stronger sense of belonging for everyone involved. When newcomers feel included and supported, they are more likely to invest in their new community, participate in local life, and become long-term residents, which strengthens the overall social fabric and prevents population decline.

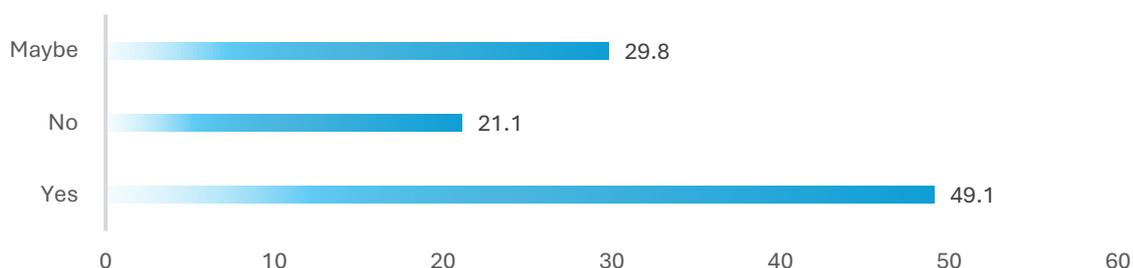
We all know that attracting and retaining workers in regional NSW takes more than just a job offer. Helping new employees and their families settle in, feel connected, and thrive in their new community is critical to long-term success.

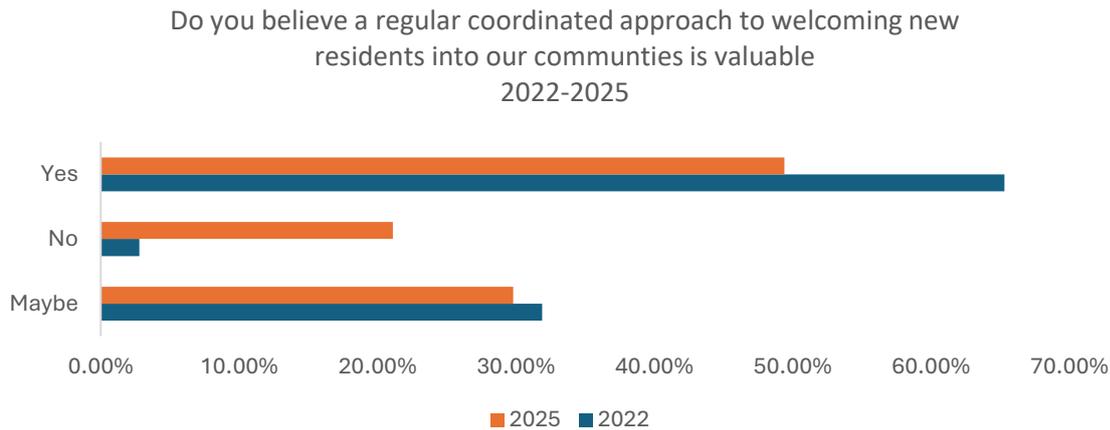
You know the feeling when you walk into a room where everyone already knows each other? Small cities often function like big families; friendly, but sometimes a little hard to break into. For newcomers, this can mean struggling to find their place, feeling like an outsider, having a tough time navigating local services and job markets. Without a warm welcome, even the most eager newcomers might pack their bags and leave, undoing all the hard work put into attracting them in the first place.

But integration challenges go beyond just awkward introductions and social discomfort. It often impacts our entire communities.

The Welcome Experience Service is making a real difference for critical workers and the survey sought to better understand the potential of a more holistic service across the entire region to support new residents and their families in every employment sector.

Do you believe a regular coordinated approach to welcoming new residents into our region is valuable? E.g. An opportunity to facilitate connections with local groups / organisations and other likeminded people.





Please provide any further ideas / information about attraction and retention of skilled staff in the region and how these issues could be overcome.

- The use of local morning teas to engage with key community members and businesses, engagement with childcare providers to meet the needs of part time workers.
- Cost of transport and airport facilities.
- We need a higher turnover of bums on seats in Government Agencies, people from other regions that have experience in change and growth of regions, people who get out and talk to the community, so we don't have to give this sort of feedback.
- When an organisation needs to attract new staff to the area, the information package included could have detailed information about the positive aspects of the area and what they could reasonably expect if they chose to relocate here. It could be a standard information pack that all employers and potential employees could access to save each organisation having to develop something from scratch when needed.
- People just need to be steered in the direction of where like-minded people are in the community for them to meet and mingle and socialise with. A buddy system would be good to initiate. Make a form for people to tick their social likes and dislikes then marry them with someone to go out with. NOT a dating service!!!
- Give them a tax break for working in remote rural regions
- Attraction and Retention of Skilled Staff in the Far West. A key priority for attracting skilled staff is lobbying the Federal Government to include hospitality roles in the Working Holiday Maker program for postcode 2880 and the Far West NSW region. This would allow hospitality workers to complete their second year (88 days) or third year (six months) visa requirements here, addressing the shortage of seasonal staff from March to October. The tourism and hospitality sector in Broken Hill relies heavily on seasonal demand. Without access to Working Holiday Maker visa holders, we face significant restrictions in filling casual and contract roles. Including our region in the program would provide a steady supply of motivated workers, reduce

recruitment pressure, and support consistent service delivery during peak visitor periods.

- Childcare is a big issue for existing staff retention and new staff attraction, attitude of job seekers - want high pay, flexibility, promotion and to be at the top, without starting at the bottom or hanging around long enough to earn it.
- Expanding social opportunities within the community is recommended, particularly for young and early teen children who currently have limited options for engagement. Additionally, further training in delivering professional customer service and the introduction of enhanced food options would be beneficial.
- Inclusion in DAMA geographical region to attract qualified plumbers from overseas, or at least have that as an option. Tax incentives for Australian qualified trades to work in regional locations for up to 5 years which would benefit remote communities by beefing up the local infrastructure and quality of work.
- Childcare is a major issue for us.

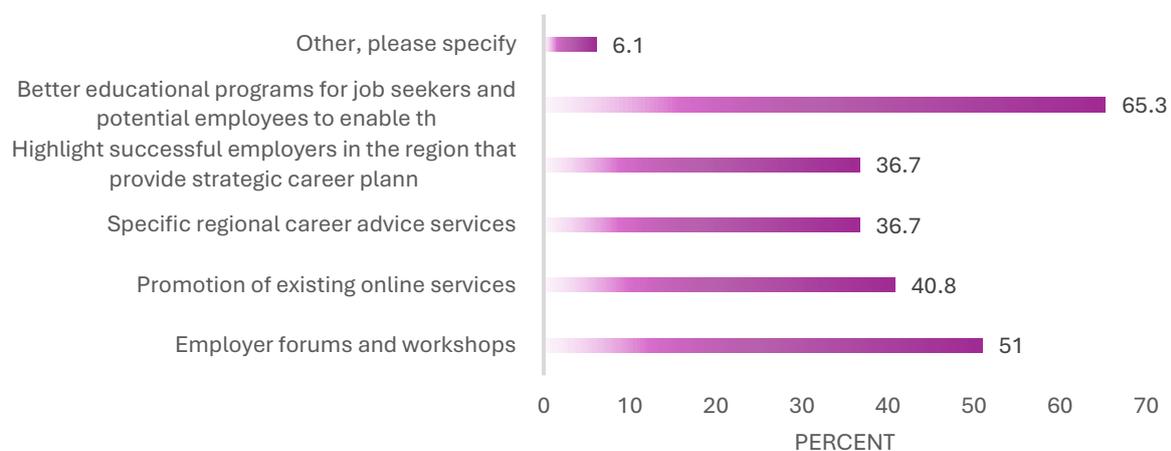
Transferable skills

Transferable skills are abilities and qualities applicable across various jobs, industries, and life situations, including communication, problem-solving, and leadership. These "portable skills" are developed through education, work, and personal experiences and are highly valued by employers because they demonstrate a candidate's adaptability and potential to succeed in new roles with minimal additional training.

Many transferable skills align with the generic employability skills previously discussed, however, with the regions need for a larger workforce it appears there are opportunities to support both employers and job seekers to better understand the skills that transfer across industry sectors.

As with previous surveys, respondents believe better educational programs for job seekers to help them identify their transferable skills and highlight them in the application process would be valuable.

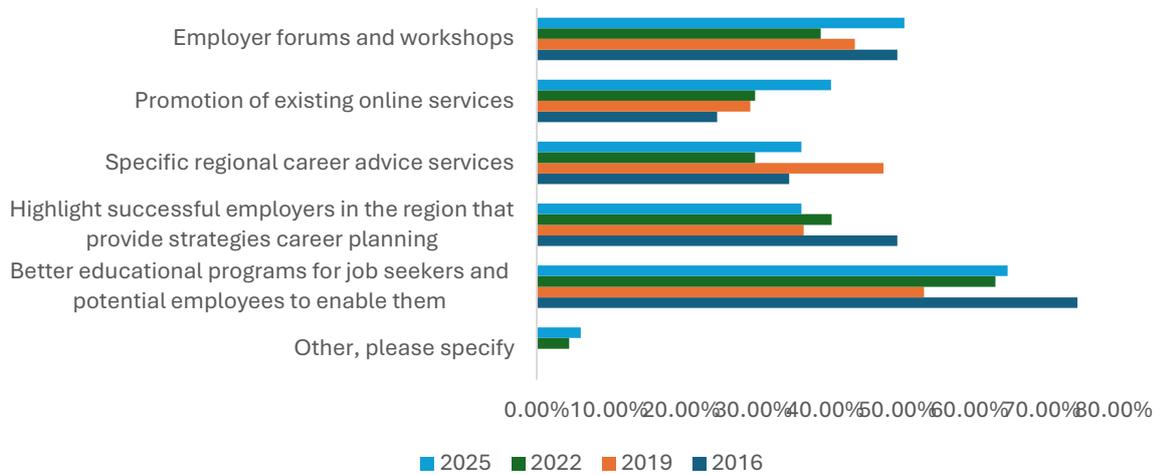
How could the region best ensure the recognition of transferable skills for employers? (tick as many as relevant)



Other, please specify

- Work in partnership with BHCC, Foundation Broken Hill, DNCO, DNSW, Austrade and Business Far West to develop a strong business and tourism association.
- Employers in town working together as we all have the same issues in town.

How could the region best ensure the recognition of transferable skills for employers?
2016-2025



*Highlight successful employers in the region that provide strategic career planning and advice to their staff and develop case studies around them

** Better educational programs for job seekers and potential employees to enable them to identify the transferable skills and highlight them in their applications.

Thinking about the transferability of skills what do you believe are the valuable transferable skills that could cross over industry and economic sectors? (tick as many as relevant)



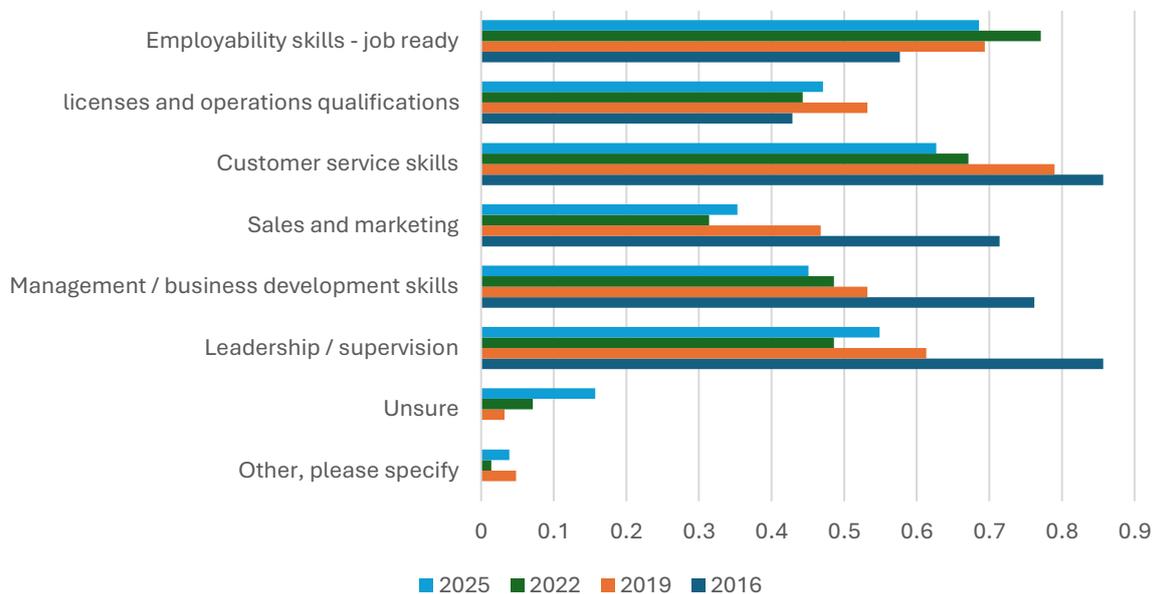
*Employability skills – job ready as described in the previous section

Other, please specify

- Personal development/communication skills
- Willingness and ability to do a range of tasks such as housekeeping and merchandising. Money handling skills.

Thinking about the transferability of skills what do you believe are the valuable transferable skills that could cross over industry sectors? (tick as many as relevant)

2016-2025



Please tell us anything else relevant to attracting, retaining and meeting the workforce needs of our region that has not been captured in the survey.

- It would be good to consider including in future surveys, the opportunities that Community Education Providers can provide to the disadvantaged and vulnerable in our community. Not just education from TAFE and/or Country Universities.
- Why hasn't this region's Government Agencies got the message to government that we need funding for specific industries to develop, and we also need builders, trades, nurses, doctors, teachers. This region is going backwards due to lack of vision by the people who should be advising government.
- Expectation of pay being equal to what could be earned in a more built-up area. Infrastructure in the area being comparable to that in more built-up areas (public transport and availability of GPs as examples). The ability to catch a train to and from the region would be helpful as opposed to being limited to a plane or a bus. A website or regular publication outlining all the possible social groups or training opportunities across the region would be good - listing all sporting clubs, art groups, regular activities (like bingo or trivia) etc. Rather than those new to town having to track down information themselves. It could form part of a welcome pack employers can give new employees (regardless of whether they're local or not). We are remote and isolated so the social aspect of someone's life here has to be taken into account along with their workplace, career and training growth in order to retain them.
- Greater collaboration between local employers to share staff during seasonal fluctuations. Investment in affordable housing solutions to attract and retain new workers. Implementing these measures would directly strengthen the region's ability to meet visitor demand, improve service quality, and retain skilled staff.

As a reader of this document you may well believe some of the issues raised have already been addressed. You may not believe the issues raised are issues for your workplace or from your experience, however these are the responses from local employers and the issues they face attracting, retaining and developing staff to meet their needs.

Greater information sharing, marketing and promotion of opportunities may help ensure all stakeholders are aware of the opportunities and resources available, and greater collaboration appears to be required to ensure opportunities for everyone.

RDA Far West have developed a number of resources over the years to support the regions employers and provide resources that are freely available for everyone to utilise.

The Love the Far West Website offers a variety of resources, images and information about the region. <https://lovethefarwest.com.au/>. The website is also the virtual home of the [Far West Sporting Hall of Fame](#), showcasing not only some of the incredible sporting champions to hail from the region but demonstrating that sporting excellence is achievable from Far West NSW.

[Living in Far West NSW](#) is a prospectus that outlines the positive aspects of living in the region and showcases some of the unique and special aspects of our region. The document is available in an e-book and downloaded PDF and could support your marketing and induction for new staff, especially those from outside of the region. Access Living in the Far West on the Love the Far West website or the RDA Far West website.

[Welcome to the Far West](#) is a document developed to support new residents to better understand our communities. The document is available as an e-book and downloadable PDF and includes a brief history of the region, contacts for local sporting clubs, visitor information services, medical and education services, real estate, supermarkets, local media, places of worship, community groups and employment providers.

[Far West Hidden Secrets](#) provides a quick snapshot of some of the unique aspects of the region that may not be well known to potential new residents, filled with incredible images supplied by the exceptionally talented photographers of Far West NSW. Again, available as an e-book and downloadable PDF.

These documents are available for every stakeholder in the region to access and utilise in a way that suits their needs.

Regional Development Australia Far West update these documents regularly, however we don't know what we don't know and if you have suggestion for improvements we would like to know about them.

Broken Hill City Council website lists upcoming events.
<https://www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au/Home>

A photograph of a long, straight road stretching towards a bright sunset on the horizon. The sky is filled with dark, dramatic clouds, and the sun is a glowing orb just above the horizon line. The road is flanked by simple wooden posts, and the overall scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of the setting sun.

Regional Development Australia Far West
sincerely thank those respondents that
took the time to respond to the survey
and inform this report.