

An ageing workforce

The proportion of people aged 65 and over will increase from 13% to 20% of the population at the same time as those of working age will decrease from 67% to 60% of the total population.¹

The result of this is that more of the workforce will retire, taking with them experience, technical knowledge and expertise.

Older employees will move increasingly to flexible work arrangements (part-time employment) and phased retirement. An older workforce may lead to more health and wellbeing issues and increased use of sick leave.

Mingenew's vulnerability in this area is specifically in the Works department where approximately 50% of the employees are over the age of 60 years

Recruitment and Retention

As we are located in largely what is now considered a "mining and resources" state, Local Government is continuing to face greater difficulties in sourcing and securing the long term service of quality candidates with engineering and technical skills in particular.

Growth in the resource and energy sectors is creating competition for some skills types as workers change careers, attracted by higher wages and compressed work cycles (12hr shifts etc.).

The impact of this is the possible increased difficulty in filling essential roles therefore competitive recruitment and retention strategies will be increasingly required. As a result, recruitment costs and salary expectations will increase.

The following are professional areas of known and forecast skill shortages expected to impact on typical Local Government services:

- Engineering and civil construction
- Planning and building
- Environmental health
- Finance

The impact on Council will include having less qualified staff filling essential roles, which will affect the risk profile. (or alternatively, higher costs relating to efforts to attract and retain skilled staff.)

More detailed recruitment and retention strategies will be required, which means that recruiting costs will increase.

Skills shortages

From the information gathered so far through the employee self-assessment, discussions with Management, training records and the job performance, it appears there are no alarming trends concerning employee skills shortages. However, the following areas may need to be addressed in the future in a few individual circumstances:

- Safety/Soft training (admin areas)
- Supervisory skills training
- Basic computing skills training (will be addressed under WELL program)

Flexible work arrangements

The 2011 Census identified a trend away from full-time to part-time employment. As the population ages, it is expected that this trend will continue as older employees seek to reduce their hours prior to retirement.

The impact of this will be that flexible employment options will be needed. Systems and processes will need to allow for different employment types in the workforce and asset and technology access will need to increase for a larger workforce.

¹ Commonwealth of Australia, *Australia to 2050: Future Challenges*, 2010

