



Cairns Labour Market Profile

Current as at 3 February 2022



**Jobs
Queensland**

Future skills. Future work. Future Queensland.

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Introduction

The Cairns Labour Market Profile provides a snapshot of the region as of 1 February 2022, including key indicators such as workforce composition, employment and unemployment, business figures and education and training pathways.

This report focuses on the Cairns Local Government Area (LGA) and the Cairns Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4). Comparing these areas can provide insights into current supply and demand challenges, helping to inform future planning. It also considers the context of neighbouring LGAs—Douglas, Mareeba, Tablelands, Cassowary Coast and Yarrabah—that compete for workforce participation from the same labour pool.

Where applicable, data from additional sources, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) quarterly Labour Force Survey, has been included. It is important to view this document in conjunction with other economic research and publications, rather than in isolation.

This report also contains an overview of the region's anticipated growth industries that will drive future jobs demand and skills needs locally.

Key observations and potential future opportunities have emerged from the data and align to four common themes:



Build small
business and
workforce
capability



Industry attraction
- enhance
pathways and
work readiness



Promote
workplace
diversity



Enhance local
collaboration

Cairns SA4 Regional Overview

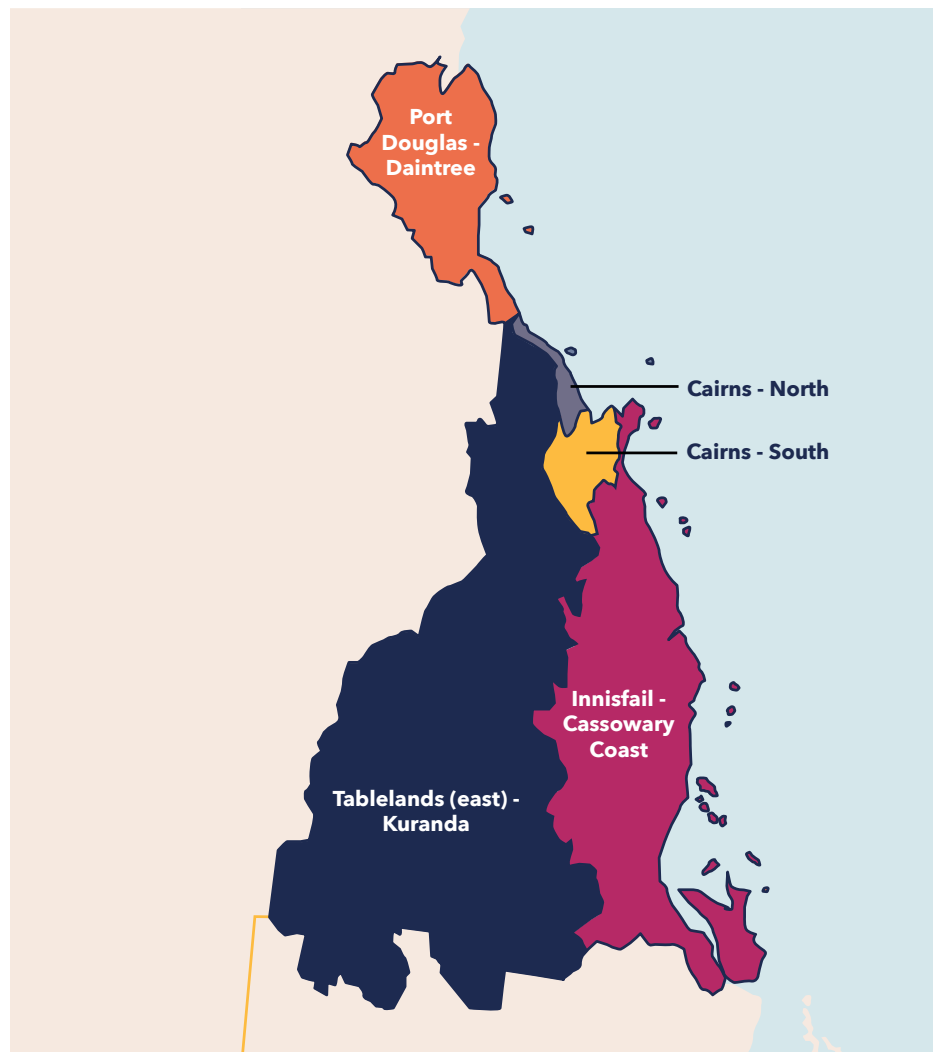
Cairns SA4 has a total land area of 21,338.0 km² and is comprised of five SA3s of Cairns - North, Cairns - South, Innisfail - Cassowary Coast, Port Douglas - Daintree and Tablelands (East) - Kuranda.

SA4s are geographical areas built from whole SA3s and have been designed to represent the labour markets of Australia's largest regional cities, of which Cairns is one.

Labour force data encapsulates both labour supply (where people live) and labour demand (where people work), with SA4 labour markets reflecting the highest possible degree of interconnectivity between the two.

Map of Cairns Statistical Area Level 4

Queensland Government Statistician's Office,
24 April 2024, Queensland Statistical Areas,
Level 4 (SA4), 2021 - Cairns (ASGS Code 306)
<https://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/issues/10706/qld-sa4-asgs-2021-cairns.pdf>



Your region

LGA Population¹
168,449




40.5%
aged 45 and over


9%
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander


21.5%
born overseas


4.4%
have profound or
severe disability


Growth of
19,987
persons (2021-2026)

SA4 workforce and labour market composition²



Employed persons
130,823

▶ Total unemployment rate **5%**

▶ Youth unemployment rate **11.2%**

Job held by gender



Female

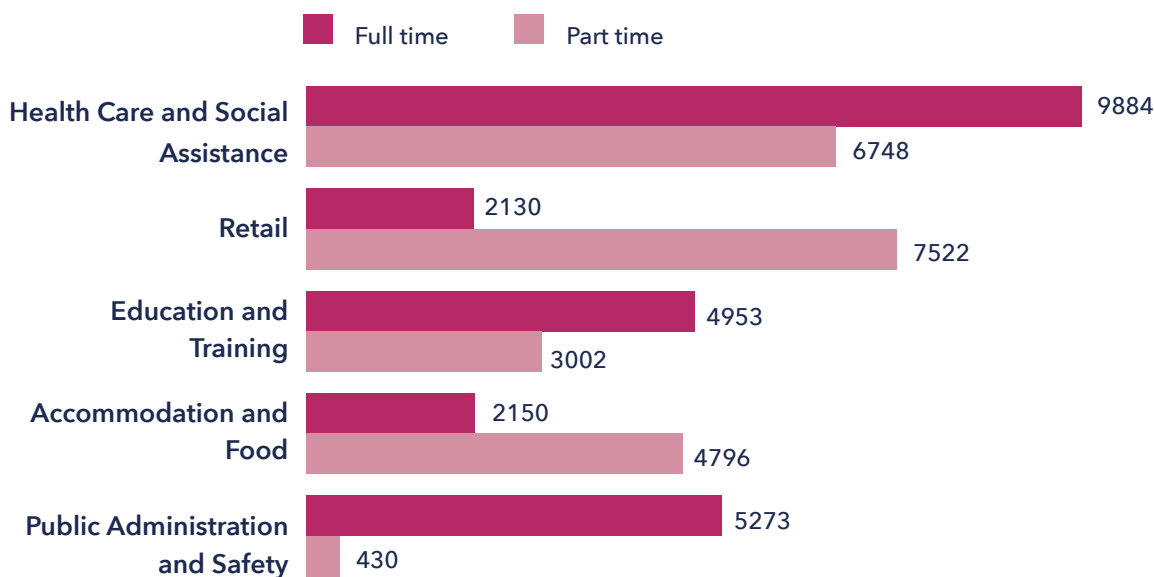
65,412
(50%)



Male

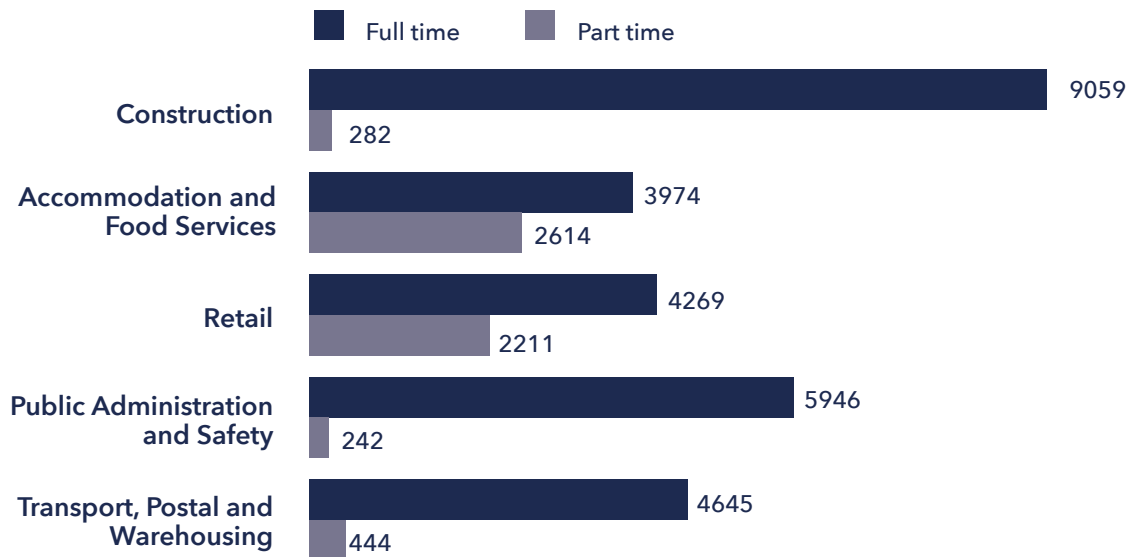
65,411
(50%)

Top 5 employing industries (Female)



1. Cairns LGA as at 30 June 2020. Queensland Government Statisticians Office, *Queensland Regional Profiles, Resident Profile, Cairns (R) LGA* [Accessed 1 February 2022]
2. Cairns SA4 as at December 2021. ABS, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, various editions. Released 27 January 2022 [Accessed 1 February 2022].

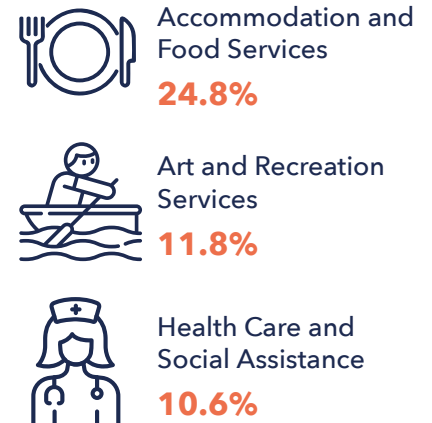
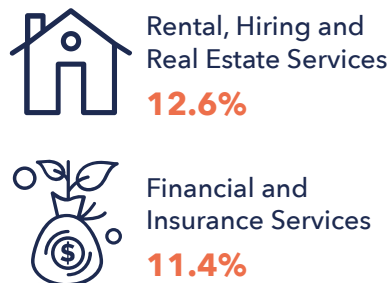
Top 5 employing industries (Male)



New jobs by 2024³



Top 5 growth industries (percentage change in new jobs by 2024-2025)⁴



Total registered businesses

13,800⁵

Small



Non-employing **7507 (54.4%)**
1-4 employees **4280 (31%)**
5-19 employees **1608 (11.7%)**

Medium



20-199 employees
397 (2.9%)

Large



200+ employees
10 (0.1%)

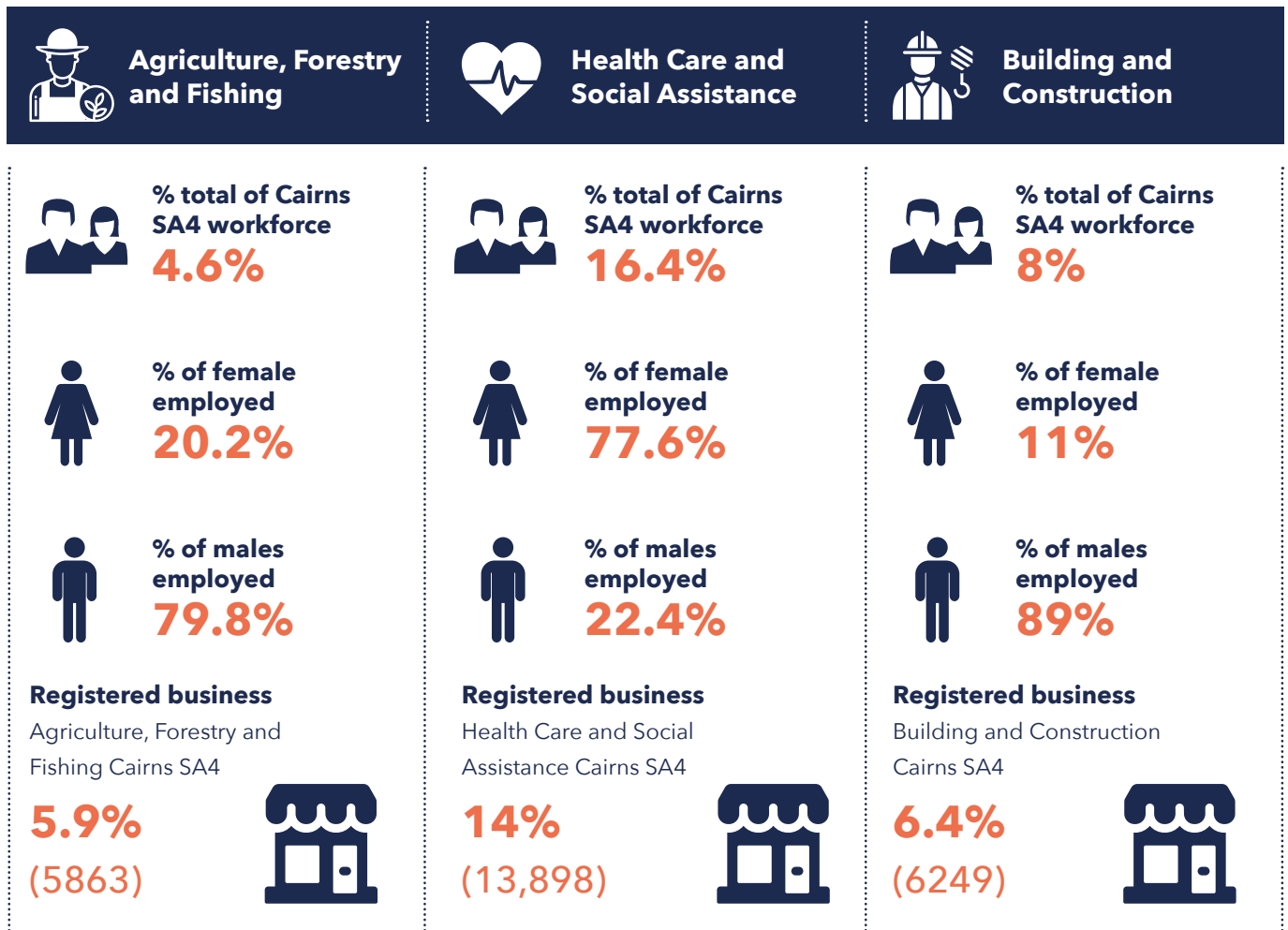
3. Jobs Queensland, *Anticipating Future Skills*. Cairns SA4 region. Projections are based on an unpublished economic model that is subject to revision and is not for public distribution. Previous iterations of projections can be explored at www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/afs

4. Ibid.

5. Cairns LGA as at 30 June 2020. ABS 8165.0, *Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits*, various editions.

Industries and Occupations of Interest

The industries below were identified as focus for the development of this Labour Market Profile Report.



Source: ABS, *Census of Population and Housing, 2016*, and ABS, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, various editions. Released 23 December 2021.

In addition to the industries mentioned earlier, this report places particular emphasis on the occupations of Marine and Airport Maintenance. It's important to recognise that these occupations span multiple industries, making it challenging to provide precise statistics. The image to the right reflects Jobs Queensland's *Anticipating Future Skills* projections for the Cairns SA4 region, which closely correspond to the industry classifications 2394 – Aircraft Manufacturing and Repair Services, and 2391 – Shipbuilding and Repair Services.⁶ The regions stakeholders have expressed an interest in exploring the Cairns Aviation, Maritime and Marine industries through further research.



Boat Builders and Shipwrights
Projected jobs growth 2021 to 2025

8



Aircraft Maintenance Engineers
Projected jobs growth 2021 to 2025

19

6. Jobs Queensland, *Anticipating Future Skills*. Cairns SA4 region. Projections are based on an unpublished economic model that is subject to revision and is not for public distribution. Previous iterations of projections can be explored at www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/anticipating-future-skills

Your labour market - Key SA4 indicators⁷

- With a resident population of 256,039, almost 167,000 people comprise the Cairns SA4 working age labour force.
- The Cairns unemployment rate was 5 per cent, a decrease of 1.1 per cent over the year, in comparison to the Queensland unemployment rate of 4.7 per cent.
- Cairns SA4 youth unemployment was 11.2 per cent as at December 2021, decreasing from 13 per cent in December 2020. The state average was 11.2 per cent, decreasing from 15.8 per cent for the same period.
- Table 1 below provides a breakdown of 12-month averages by age group across key labour market indicators.

Table 1 Labour force indicators by Age (12-month averages), Cairns SA4 region.

Year to December 2021	Age Group (years)						
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	
Civilian population aged 15 years and over ('000)	29.6	35.6	34.8	33.0	33.9	38.8	
Employed Total ('000)	16.5	27.2	29.1	27.5	23.5	6.6	
Employed full-time ('000)	6.4	20.1	22.6	22.4	16.6	2.4	
Employed part-time ('000)	10.1	7.1	6.5	5.1	6.9	4.2	
Labour force total ('000)	18.6	29.1	30.1	28.0	24.8	6.7	
Not in the labour force (NILF) ('000)	11.0	6.5	4.6	5.1	9.1	32.1	
Employment to population rate (%)	55.8	76.6	83.5	83.4	69.4	16.9	
Unemployment rate (%)	10.9	6.6	3.5	1.5	4.9	1.9	
Participation rate (%)	Cairns	62.8	82.0	86.6	84.7	73.1	17.2
	Queensland	75.1	85.4	85.9	83.9	70.1	14.6

7. Cairns SA4. ABS. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, various editions [Accessed 1 February 2022].

Employment by industry⁸

According to the most recently published Census, the top five industries of employment for Cairns LGA (by proportion of employed persons) were:



**Health Care and
Social Assistance**

14.4%



Retail Trade

10.6%



**Accommodation
and Food Services**

10%



**Education and
Training**

9%



**Public Administration
and Safety**

8%



8. Cairns LGA ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, General Community Profile - G51 and unpublished data.






Vacancies⁹

The Internet Vacancy Index, compiled by the Labour Market Information Portal (LMIP), is based on a count of online job advertisements newly lodged on SEEK, CareerOne and Australian JobSearch during each month. The LMIP uses different regions to those of the Australian Bureau of Statistics to provide online vacancies data across the country. While not available at LGA or SA4 levels, comparable data is available for Far North Queensland.

The region's highest number of online vacancies as at December 2021 was seen in Medical Practitioners and Nurses (715), followed by Education Professionals (567), and Health and Diagnostic Therapy (556). Although a slight dip in trend is seen, it is important to note three of the top five vacancies for December 2021 were in Health and Allied Services.

Of further note is the upward trend for Education Professionals, ANZSCO sub-major group 24 (School and Tertiary Education Teachers and Miscellaneous Education Professionals). Miscellaneous Education Professionals include Education Advisers, Private Tutors and Teachers and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. Further exploration into the Cairns Health Care and Social Assistance industry may be beneficial in future.¹⁰

Table 2 Top five online vacancies by occupation as at December 2021, Far North Queensland region (including Cairns).

	Medical Practitioners and Nurses	Education Professionals	Health Diagnostic and Therapy Professionals	Health Education, ICT and Other Managers	Machine and Stationery Plant Operators
Jan-21	444.9	411.4	437.2	215.5	196.4
Feb-21	412.1	315.5	419.4	208.3	197.1
Mar-21	498.0	349.5	454.1	290.6	206.7
Apr-21	546.9	317.5	458.6	276.1	208.2
May-21	604.9	359.5	496.6	302.7	221.4
Jun-21	602.1	335.5	526.2	251.9	246.4
Jul-21	619.5	331.5	551.2	295.5	289.8
Aug-21	641.9	353.5	541.4	295.5	317.0
Sept-21	674.7	373.5	559.2	327.0	356.0
Oct-21	689.4	455.3	571.7	319.7	360.4
Nov-21	757.1	523.2	609.9	346.3	364.9
Dec-21	715.9	567.2	556.5	331.8	309.0
Trendline					

9. Labour Market Information Portal, *Internet Vacancy Index - December 2021*, Far North Queensland region.

10. ABS, 1220.0 - ANZSCO - Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations, First Edition, Revision 1. MINOR GROUP 249 MISCELLANEOUS EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS

Your future workforce

Jobs Queensland's *Anticipating Future Skills Series (AFS)* provides employment projections through to 2024 for the State's industries, regions (SA4-level), occupations and qualifications. The following projections are based on an unpublished economic model that is subject to revision and is currently being updated for period 2020-2025. Previous iterations of AFS data can be explored at www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/anticipating-future-skills. The industries highlighted are those where the Cairns SA4 has a greater growth rate than Queensland as a whole.

Cairns SA4 by 2024-25

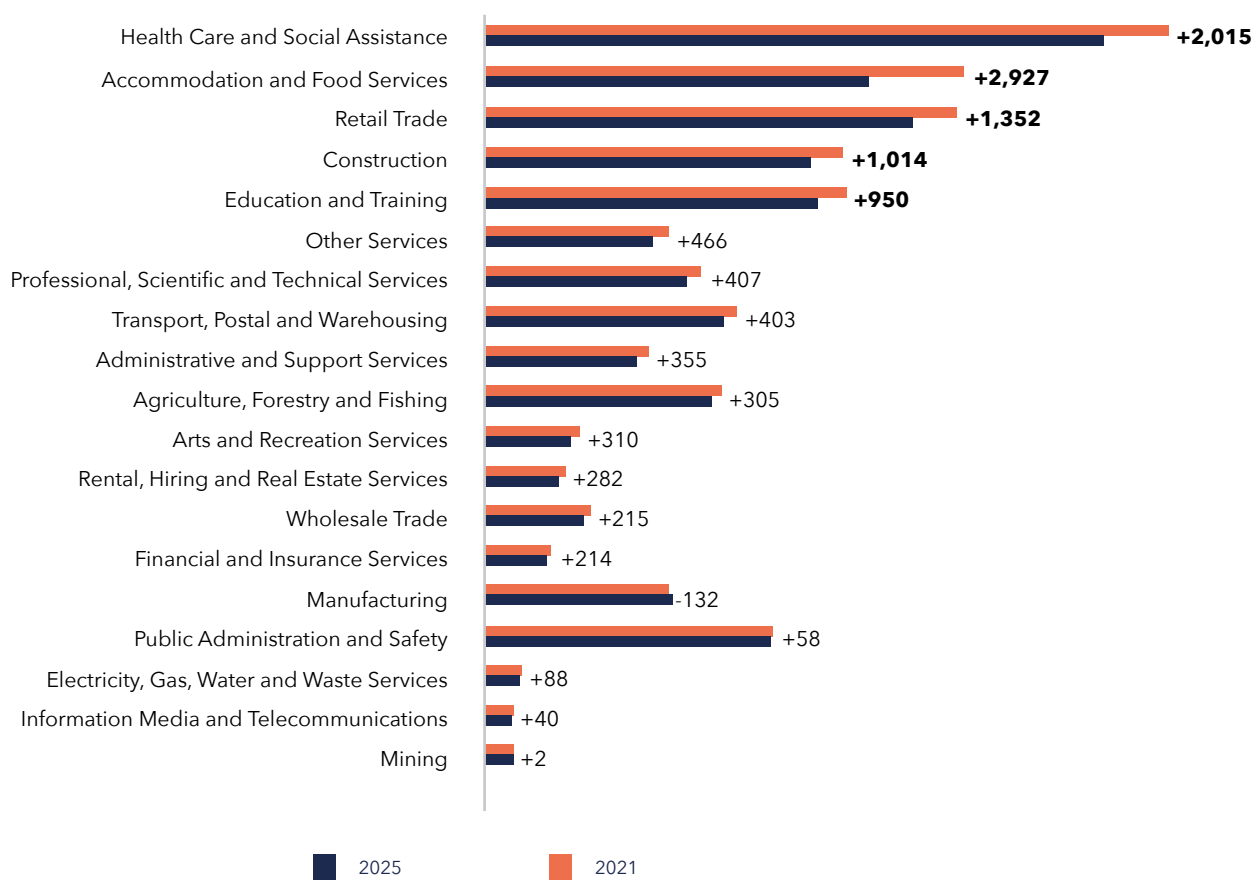


Industry	Cairns SA4 new jobs			Queensland new jobs		
	2020-21	2024-25	Change	2020-21	2024-25	Change
Accommodation and Food Services	11,795	14,722	24.8%	190,632	233,803	22.6%
Administrative and Support Services	4665	5020	7.6%	83,619	88,212	5.5%
Arts and Recreation Services	2636	2946	11.8%	46,036	52,964	15%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	7003	7308	4.4%	82,601	85,520	3.5%
Construction	10,010	11,024	10.1%	134,446	142,769	6.2%
Education and Training	10,239	11,189	9.3%	102,279	110,260	7.8%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1072	1160	8.2%	217,051	239,345	10.3%
Financial and Insurance Services	1877	2091	11.4%	375,085	419,998	12%
Health Care and Social Assistance	19,028	21,043	10.6%	70,874	79,061	11.6%
Information Media and Telecommunications	854	894	4.7%	27,908	29,343	5.1%
Manufacturing	5786	5654	-2.3%	173,234	167,894	-3.1%
Mining	885	887	0.2%	72,023	71,449	-0.8%
Other Services	5193	5659	9%	190,538	204,381	7.3%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	6205	6612	6.6%	237,590	254,542	7.1%
Public Administration and Safety	8782	8840	0.7%	164,403	167,698	2%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	2234	2516	12.6%	50,330	55,513	10.3%
Retail Trade	13,159	14,511	10.3%	255,634	282,876	10.7%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	7346	7749	5.5%	76,395	81,779	7%
Wholesale Trade	3048	3263	7.1%	30,030	32,311	7.6%
Totals	121,817	133,088	8%	2,580,708	2,799,718	8.5%

Employment (jobs) change by industry¹¹

The top 5 Jobs Queensland's Anticipating Future Skills Series 2020-2025 projected jobs growth by industry are:

Cairns SA4, 2020-21 to 2024-25



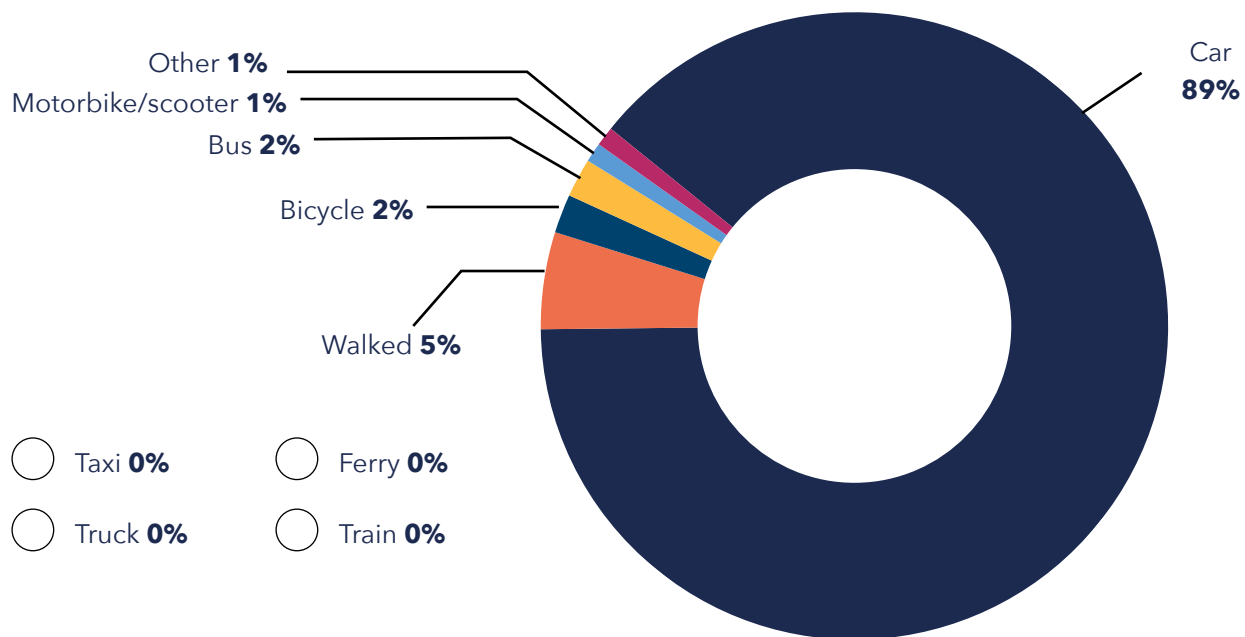
11. Jobs Queensland, *Anticipating Future Skills*. Cairns SA4 region. Projections are based on an unpublished economic model that is subject to revision and is not for public distribution. Previous iterations of projections can be explored at www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/anticipating-future-skills. See Your future workforce on page 17 for a detailed breakdown of employment projections by industry.

Travel to work

During the 2016 Census, 88.7 per cent of workers within the Cairns LGA reported travelling by car as their only form of transport to work in comparison to 69.6 per cent of the Queensland population reporting the same. It is worth noting that 5 per cent walked and 2 per cent used a bicycle to travel to work.

Public transport (Train, Bus or Ferry) was not heavily utilised, with only 1.6 per cent of the workforce using this method to travel to work. Further investigation into the region's public transport infrastructure may be warranted to understand if any limitations are impacting workforce participation from lower socio-economic groups, and/or outer lying areas. Understanding transport connectivity challenges may assist in improving local workforce participation rates.

Figure 1 Method of travel to work, Cairns LGA, 2016¹²



Journey to work data has been derived from unpublished 2016 Census of Population and Housing data and records the usual residence of a person and where they worked. This topic looks at those working in Cairns (R) LGA and the top five places of residence where these people have travelled from.

A total of 67,365 people travelled into the Cairns LGA with 8.9 per cent of workers commuting from Trinity Beach - Smithfield, 8.6 per cent from Redlynch, 7.1 per cent from Cairns City, 6.6 per cent from Clifton Beach - Kewarra Beach and 6.2 per cent from Edmonton.¹³

12. ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, Working Population Profile - W22 (place of work)

13. Townsville LGA as at 2016. ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, unpublished data and Queensland Treasury estimates.

Schooling and non-school qualifications

At the time of the 2016 Census, 70,485 persons (or 58.9 per cent) within the Cairns LGA had year 11 or 12 (or equivalent) as their highest level of schooling, matching that of Queensland as a whole. The table below provides a breakdown of other school year level attainments, comparative to Queensland.

Table 3 Highest level of schooling completed, Cairns (R) LGA and Queensland, 2016¹⁴

	Did not go to school or Year 8 or below (%)	Year 9 or 10 or	Year 11 or 12 Equivalent (%)
Cairns	4.7	24.9	58.9
Queensland	5.4	26.5	58.9

Table 4 Non-school qualifications by level of education, Cairns and Queensland, 2016¹⁵

	Bachelor degree or higher (%)	Advanced diploma or diploma (%)	Certificate (%)	Persons with a qualification (%)
Cairns	16.2	9.2	23	61.6
Queensland	18.3	8.7	21.3	59.1

According to the 2016 Census, the largest non-school qualification field of study for the Cairns SA4 was Engineering and Related Technologies (15.7 per cent). Other fields of study for Cairns were Management and Commerce (15.5 per cent), Society and Culture (10.45 per cent), Health (10.2 per cent) and Education (7.5 per cent). Updated data will be available following the release of the 2021 Census data, anticipated to occur in mid-2022.

14. ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, General Community Profile - G16

15. Townsville LGA as at 2016. ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, General Community Profile - G40 and G46.

Vocational education and training and employment pathways¹⁶

The figures below represent education and training enrolments and outcomes, comparing the combined North and South Cairns SA3s against the Cairns SA4.

Figure 2 Top 5 VET program enrolments (program name), 2020, Cairns SA3 and SA4.

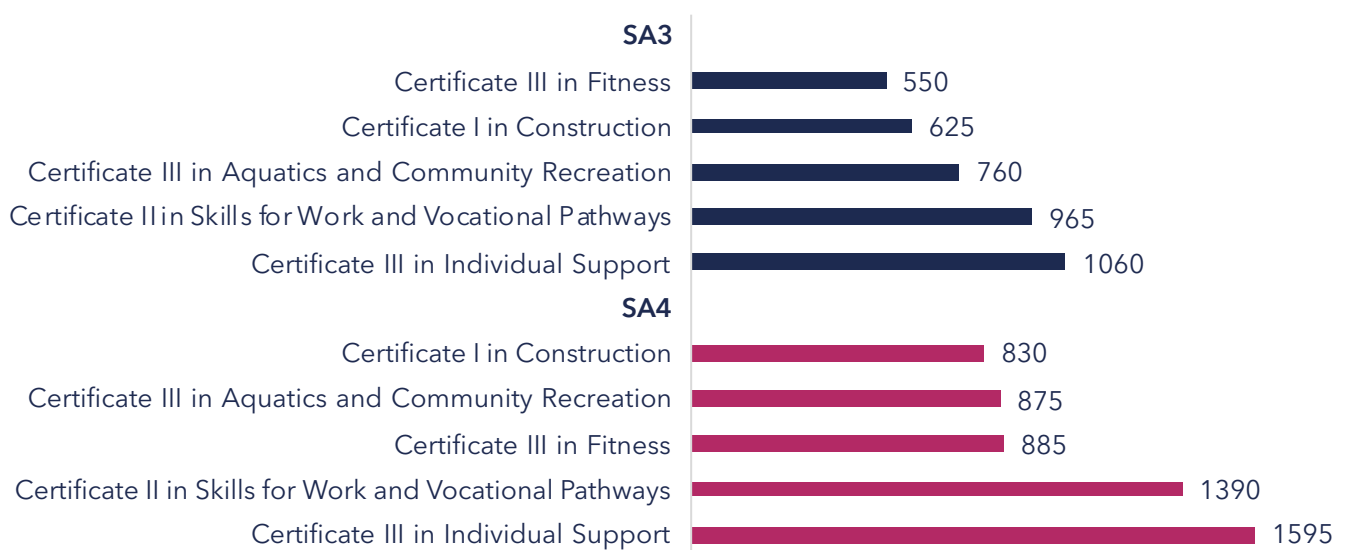
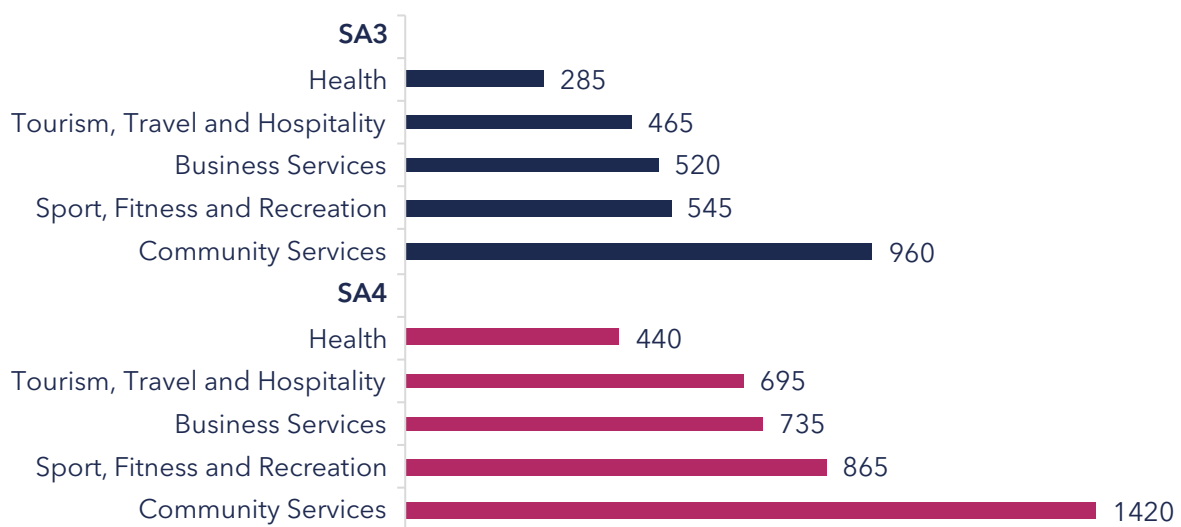
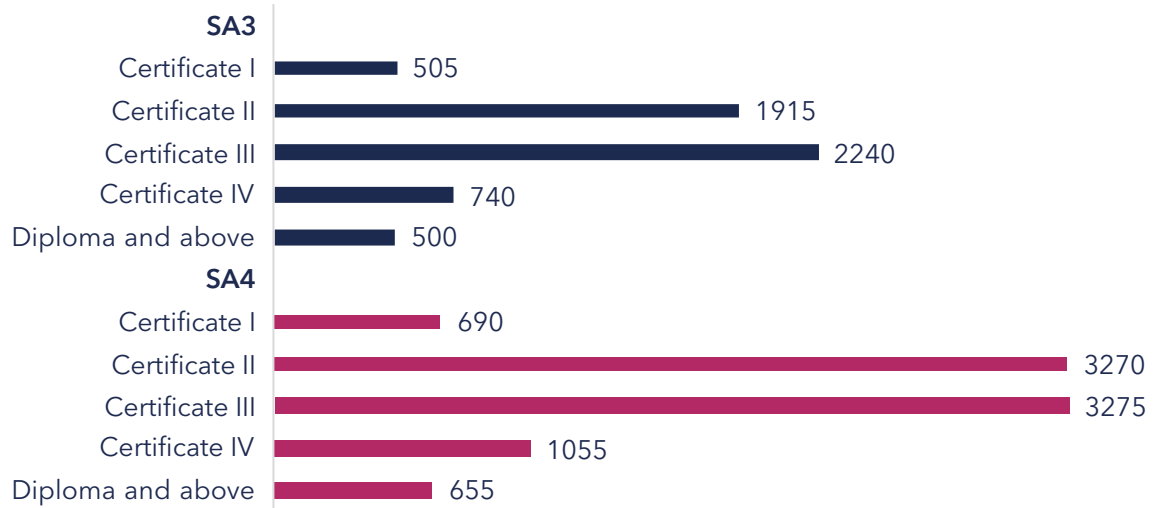


Figure 3 Top 5 VET program completions (parent training package), 2020, Cairns SA3 and SA4.



16. National Centre for Vocational Education and Research. Data visualisation gallery, Atlas of total VET. Accessed 1 February 2022.

Figure 4 Total VET program completions, level of qualification, 2020, Cairns SA3 and SA4.



Queensland Training Summary¹⁷

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) provides training data for the state and regions, the Far North Queensland region encompasses Cairns and is provided below.

Table 5 Government funded VET outcomes, DESBT Far North Queensland region, 2019-2020 to 2020-2021.

	Far North Queensland		
	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Certificate I and II	1907	2734	43.4% ↑
Certificate III	2660	2756	3.6% ↑
Certificate IV	408	525	28.7% ↑
Diploma and higher	257	287	11.7% ↑
Completed qualifications (Certificate I+)	5232	6302	20.4% ↑
15-19 year-old students	1602	2089	30.4% ↑
First Nations students	1202	1282	6.7% ↑
Students with a disability	209	223	6.7% ↑

Table 6 Apprentice and trainee activity, DESBT Far North Queensland region, 2019-2020 to 2020-2021.

	Far North Queensland		
	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Total new commencements	1562	2808	79.8% ↑
Total school-based new commencements	304	569	87.2% ↑
Total in-training	3245	4271	31.6% ↑
Total completions	993	958	-3.5% ↓
Total school-based completions	140	184	31.4% ↑

17. Data not for publication. Queensland Training Summary as at November 2021, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training.

Apprenticeships and Traineeships - Cairns SA4¹⁸

Apprenticeship and traineeship commencements for the year ending 30 June 2021 totalled 625 – a 257 per cent increase on the previous twelve-month period. The level of impact the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns have had on commencement rates during the comparative periods remains unclear.

The top five industries for apprenticeship and traineeship commencements are depicted below.

The top five training commencements by occupation were Technicians and Trade Workers, Community and Personal Service Workers, Clerical and Administrative Workers, Sales Workers and Machinery Operators and Drivers.

Completions of apprenticeships and traineeships for the year ending 31 June 2021 decreased marginally by 3.4 per cent compared to the previous year.

The top five training completions by occupation were Technicians and Trade Workers, Clerical and Administrative Workers, Community and Personal Service Workers, Sales Workers and Machinery Operators and Drivers.

Figure 5 below charts completions by industry (figures) for the Cairns SA4 for the twelve months to 31 June 2021.

Top 5 industries - Apprenticeships and Traineeships commencements, year ending 30 June 2021



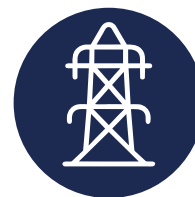
Agriculture



Mining



Manufacturing



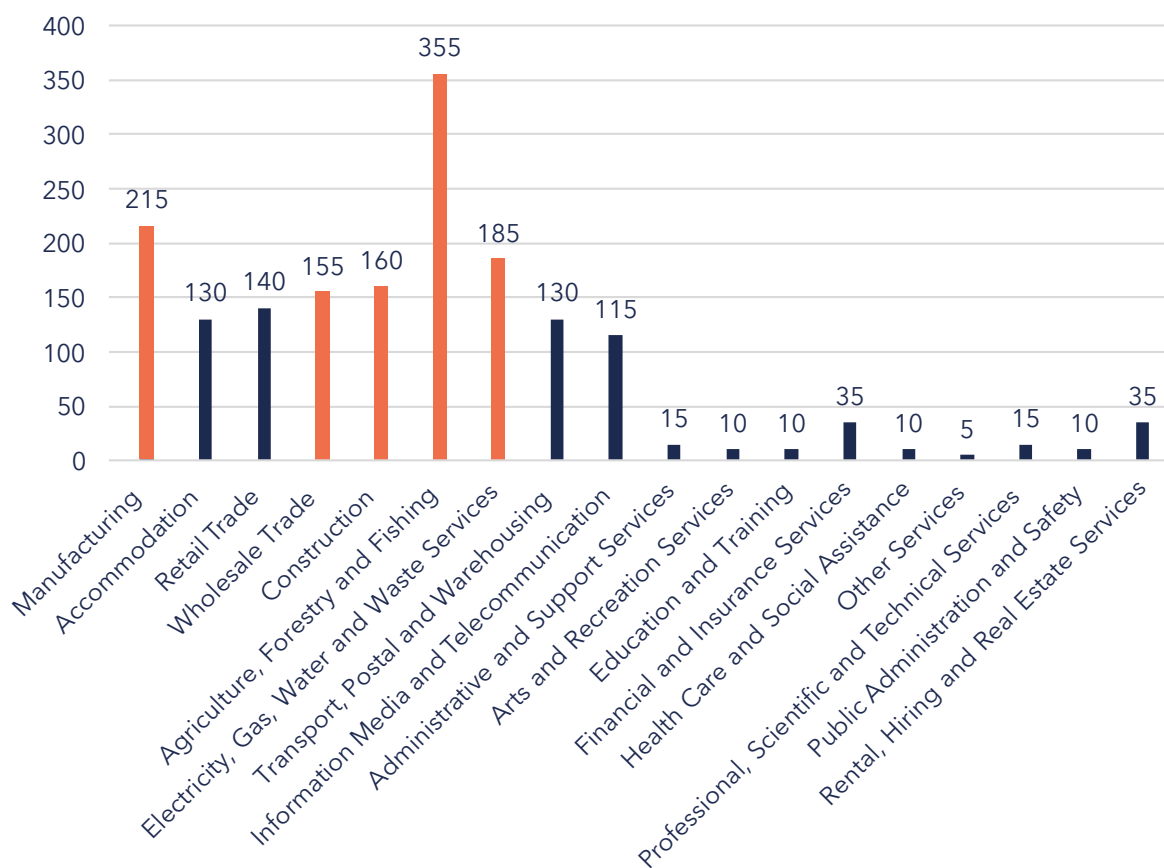
Electricity, Gas,
Water and Waste



Construction

18. NCVER 2021, Apprentices and trainees 2021: *June quarter* DataBuilder, Contract status, Workplace statistical area 4, Employer industry 1-digit, Occupation 1-digit, by 12 months ending 31 June.

Figure 5 Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by industry, Cairns SA4, 12 months to 31 June 2021.



Your businesses



Construction

Construction - the sector has a high representation of full-time workers, and demand will continue to be driven primarily by the need for new residential construction and major infrastructure projects. Construction represents 18.1 per cent of Cairns LGA businesses (2503) with 160 apprenticeship or traineeship completions in the 12 months to June 2021. Improving this workforce pipeline will be key to meeting future demand.



Agriculture

Agriculture and the supporting supply chain are an important employment segment for the broader SA4 region. The workforce supply has greatly diminished, primarily influenced by the restricted movement of seasonal workers and backpackers. There is also a growing demand for technical and scientific support skills for the sector.



Manufacturing (marine and aviation maintenance)

Opportunities across the broader region will continue to drive employment options. Skills demand is already building and will continue as major marine infrastructure projects are implemented. Improving this workforce pipeline will be key to meeting future demand. Further research into future skills needs and workforce implications is advised.



Healthcare and Social Assistance

As evidenced in the most recent vacancy data, there is an increasing demand for health-related skills and qualifications in the region. Clinical and allied health skills and qualifications are increasingly in demand, both in hospitals and throughout the community. Demand for skills and qualifications in the Healthcare and Social Assistance sector, including allied health, are also driven by NDIS and the presence of a diverse range of smaller employers.

Table 7 Registered businesses by industry, LGA, SA4 and Queensland, 30 June 2021¹⁹

The highlighted industries in table 7 below are those where the Cairns LGA has a greater proportion of businesses than Queensland as a whole.

Industry	Cairns LGA		Cairns SA4		QLD
	No.	%	No	%	% only
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	698	5.1	3104	13.8	8.9
Mining	51	0.4	110	0.5	0.4
Manufacturing	496	3.6	813	3.6	3.7
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	42	0.3	72	0.3	0.3
Construction	2503	18.1	3851	17.1	17.2
Wholesale Trade	323	2.3	491	2.2	3
Retail Trade	823	6	1360	6.1	6
Accommodation and Food Services	792	5.7	1238	5.5	4
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	1258	9.1	1696	7.5	7.5
Information Media and Telecommunications	1.5	0.8	143	0.6	0.8
Financial and Insurance Services	465	3.4	631	2.8	4
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1698	12.3	2567	11.4	11.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1511	10.9	2033	9	12.3
Administrative and Support Services	746	5.4	1073	4.8	4.5
Public Administration and Safety	40	0.3	57	0.3	0.3
Education and Training	217	1.6	305	1.4	1.5
Health Care and Social Assistance	1020	7.4	1325	5.9	6.9
Arts and Recreation Services	172	1.2	290	1.3	1.3
Other Services	813	5.9	1278	5.7	5.3
Not classified	28	0.2	34	0.2	0.1
Totals		13,800		22,471	

ABS 8165.0, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, various editions.

In addition to the identified focus industries, other sectors with a higher concentration of businesses compared to Queensland, as well as those with a larger workforce, could also be considered. These sectors could shape future actions and initiatives aimed at supporting long-term regional business and economic recovery, resilience and growth.

19. ABS 8165.0, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, various editions.

Future opportunities for consideration

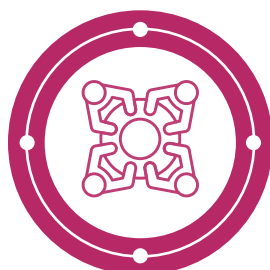
Future opportunities for Cairns align with four common themes:



Build small business and workforce capability



Industry attraction - enhance pathways and work readiness



Promote workplace diversity



Enhance local collaboration



1. Build small business and workforce capability

Workforce planning positions businesses to respond to workforce needs now and into the future. It helps businesses think ahead, manage change and leverage workforce opportunities as they emerge. Workforce Planning Connect is a suite of user-friendly resources designed to introduce small and medium-sized businesses to workforce planning and to enable them to undertake the process, regardless of their knowledge or experience. By building capability locally, businesses are best placed to respond to and manage change as it occurs. Upskilling in this area may support promotion and uptake rates of forward planning. JQ will support capability building through delivery of a series of webinars and workshops, including workforce planning and data sourcing and analysis.

Future opportunity

Promote benefits of workforce planning with local businesses and encourage them to engage in capability building, particularly those businesses in the Agriculture, Health and Social Assistance, and Manufacturing (including Aviation, Maritime and Marine). This may include collaboration with:

- Regional Jobs Committees
- Chambers of Commerce
- Local Government
- DESBT and Jobs Queensland

Existing resources

- [Workforce Planning Connect](#), Jobs Queensland
- [Workforce Planning Connect Toolkit for the Disability Sector - Workability Qld](#)

Through research and consultation, Jobs Queensland found that the ongoing development of digital skills and capabilities is considered essential for all small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to ensure their ongoing sustainability and competitiveness. SMEs that have advanced levels of digital engagement are 50 per cent more likely to be growing revenue, earning 60 per cent more revenue per employee when compared to similar businesses with basic levels of digital engagement.²⁰ Small businesses that are not already engaging with digital technologies to deliver their products and services are at a significant risk of being left behind. By supporting small business owners to continue their learning journey and promoting a lifelong learning mindset, SMEs are more likely to engage with the training system and engage in skills development at both the organisational and employee levels.

Continuous learning and knowledge sharing is essential to the ongoing competitiveness of the labour market and broader business economic feasibility. Staff should be encouraged to seek and share knowledge across the region.

Building transferrable skills to support career transitioning through locally based contextualised and flexible training options may increase participation rates and progression through the broader labour market.

Future opportunity

Promote a lifelong learning culture
Champion lifelong learning to encourage professional development discussions with local employers

Existing resources

- [Lifelong Learning: The Foundation of Future Work](#)



20. Jobs Queensland, 2021. *Future work for small business*. Ipswich



2. Industry attraction - enhance pathways and work readiness

School pathway programs

The Gateway to Industry Schools Program (GISP) builds partnerships between schools and industry to enable young people to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attributes to pursue careers and employment in the Cairns regional economy. Students participating in the program are exposed to a range of learning experiences to assist them in their career choices and pathways to employment.

Group Training Organisation pre-apprenticeship support program

This existing program has a current allocation of \$15.3 million over two calendar years. The objective is to generate apprentices who are productive from day one and have a greater likelihood of completing their apprenticeship. Connecting with this program to leverage from the opportunity it presents may enhance outcomes for local jobseekers and early entrants.

Future opportunity

Support more local high schools to participate in the [Gateway to Industry Schools Program](#) (GISP) may provide valuable linkages to industry and pathways for students. This is particularly relevant to Programs connected to industries with high business representation across the region such as Agriculture, and Building and Construction, as well as those projected to experience significant jobs growth in the region (Accommodation and Food Services, and Retail Trade; both of which form a large portion of Tourism as a composite industry).

Understand and promote Pre-Apprenticeship pathways to assist participants with better industry comprehension and job-ready skills.

Work with DESBT to create a targeted campaign to increase uptake of Apprenticeships and Traineeships in growth industries, with a focus on underutilised cohorts in language and imagery.

Existing resources

Gateway to Industry Schools Programs:

- [Health and Community Services](#)
- Advanced Manufacturing
- [Agribusiness](#)
- [Building and Construction](#)
- [Aerospace](#)

- [TAFE QLD pre-apprenticeship courses](#)
- [Skill360](#)
- [Australian Training Works](#)

- Apprenticeship and Traineeship system

Other industry initiatives that align with identified regional focus.

Resources include (not an exhaustive list)

Marine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Great Barrier Reef International Marine College
Health Care and Social Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workability Micro-Credentials• Choose Your Own Health Career - Vocational Education (cyohealthcareer.com.au)
Building and Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CSQ Trade Start
Aviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cairns Aviation Skills Centre
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network
Other/general	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skilling Queenslanders for Work• Back to Work





3. Promote workplace diversity

By targeting organisations in larger employing industries and those anticipated to experience growth, the region may benefit from focusing on increasing the workforce participation of job seekers from underutilised cohorts, including people returning to work after undertaking family caring responsibilities, migrants, partners of defence force personnel, older workers and younger people. Strategies and actions should also support employers to better engage with and appeal to a broader pool of job seekers. This may include collaboration with DESBT, Jobs Queensland, Chamber of Commerce, Regional Jobs Committees and key local community organisations.

Future opportunity

Targeted strategies and actions to appeal to underrepresented cohorts, understand their barriers and increase their participation in the workforce, such as:

- engaging local stakeholders to better understand the unique needs of underutilised cohorts
- identifying local advocates to champion the benefits of increasing workforce representation and diversity
- changing imagery and language of employment promotional material to help job seekers identify with opportunities
- review and advocate for change of gendered descriptors in advertisements and courses

Existing resources

- DESBT Regional Office
 - DESBT Apprenticeship and Traineeship promotional materials
 - Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN) Strategic Plan 2021 - 2026
 - Choose Your Own Health Career - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner
 - Choose Your Own Health Career - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker
-

Cairns would benefit from improved employment outcomes for their youth and Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, both now and in the future. Programs need to be co-designed with the commitment of community organisations, government at all levels and community members.

Future opportunity

Host a forum to discuss employment barriers for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples locally and develop a strategy to address the issues collaboratively.

Existing resources

- Community organisations
 - All levels of Government
 - Elders
-



4. Enhance local collaboration

Better understanding of existing resources to leverage partnerships and collaboration and to avoid duplication of work is beneficial for all stakeholders.

Future opportunity

Development of targeted workforce strategies and actions to support business and economic recovery, resilience and growth.

There are varied characteristics of economic diversity and employment opportunities in the region. Workforce planning activities would assist the RJC in developing future strategies to support local business and economic recovery, diversity, resilience and growth.

Existing resources

- Cairns Regional Council - Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026
 - Small Business Friendly Program
 - Small Business Financial Counselling NQ
-
- Workforce Planning Connect
 - Region Workforce Planning
 - Industry Workforce Planning
-

A list of potential stakeholders (not exhaustive)

Stakeholders

- Cairns Regional Council
- Cairns Chamber of Commerce
- Cairns Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
- Industry Skills Advisors
- Queensland Small Business Commissioner
- Workforce North
- Cairns Alliance of Social Services
- AiGroup
- Regional Development Australia
- Workability
- Advance Cairns
- Master Builders Qld (FNQ)
- Small Business Financial Counselling
- AusIndustry
- Cairns Manufacturing Hub

State and Federal Government Departments

- Employment, Small Business and Training
- State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
- Agriculture and Fisheries
- Education, Skills and Employment (Federal)
- Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water
- Tourism, Innovation and Sport
- Transport and Main Roads
- Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (Federal)

Strategies to support

There are several bodies of work that may support the workforce planning process.



Good People. Good Jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032

The *Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032* is a 10-year plan designed to address workforce challenges and ensure Queensland has a skilled, adaptable, and diverse workforce to meet future demands. The strategy was developed in response to significant shifts in the economy, labour market, and global trends, such as technological advancements and the COVID-19 pandemic.



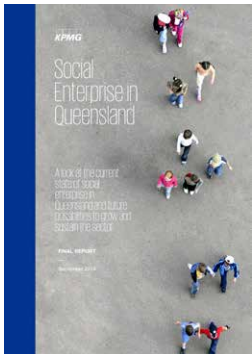
Future work, future jobs

While change to the composition of employment in Queensland has been happening for decades, the speed and extent of change is increasing. Opportunities for new and different work are emerging. Future work, future jobs examines this transition and provides a roadmap to the future. Collaboration and planning are essential. [Read the summary of the key findings.](#)



Supporting workforces during industry transition

Transition is a continual event in an industry's life cycle and the impact of industry transitions can be challenging. However, transitions can also bring about positive change in situations where an industry grows rapidly or where there is industry renewal. Both of these experiences have been amplified as a result of recent economic disruption. This research identified eight key elements that can influence a successful transition strategy for industries and regions. Read the report summary.



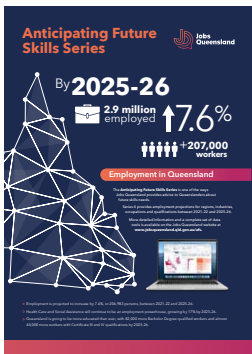
Social Enterprise

Jobs Queensland facilitated research to understand appropriate roles for government to help support social enterprise activity to deliver economic and social outcomes for Queensland. [Read the research overview](#). As discussed, Jobs Queensland's work informed the *Queensland Social Enterprise Strategy* that was released in September 2019.



Cairns Regional Council Priority Industry Profiles

Cairns Regional Council commissioned an independent economic analysis to monitor the performance of the priority industries outlined in its Economic Development Strategy over time. The strategy also highlights agriculture, mining, and energy—particularly renewables—as key industry sectors for Far North Queensland. As the main service hub for the FNQ region, Cairns plays a crucial role in supporting the ongoing growth and development of these important sectors.



Anticipating Future Skills

In consultation with stakeholders across the state, Jobs Queensland devised three future scenarios, which are useful tools for dealing with complexity and uncertainty. Grounded in existing data and trends, scenarios do not generate predictions but depict plausible futures. [Read the AFS report summary](#).

