The Fraser Coast Workforce Blueprint 2018

Building capabilities to meet future demand

Contents

Image of Hervey Bay Pier
Credit: Lauren Bath/Tourism and Events Queensland.

Message from the Interim Chair

Jobs Queensland is committed to developing place-based approaches where the community, at a local level and supported by government, is equipped with the right tools and capacities to develop innovative employment and job creation strategies.

Formulating *The Fraser Coast Workforce Blueprint 2018* has been informed by the report, *Growing Opportunities in the Fraser Coast: informing regional workforce development*, which was developed through an innovative partnership between Jobs Queensland, TAFE Queensland and CSIRO. It has also drawn on further work supported by TAFE Queensland in developing a draft workforce plan, as well as significant community consultation through the Fraser Coast Regional Advisory Group.

The *Growing Opportunities in the Fraser Coast* report demonstrates the Fraser Coast has the potential to become a thriving service-oriented economy, providing the community has the skills and attitudes to meet, and grow, its future opportunities. These include further specialisation and investment in aged and disability care and associated health services, with spin off growth in education, hospitality, retail, advanced manufacturing and research. Importantly, the report also highlights future economic opportunities for the region to be gained from leveraging its competitive advantage. These include ecotourism, Indigenous cultural tourism and experience-oriented tourism, drawing on the Fraser Coast's ecological, cultural and historical attractions. The Regional Advisory Group established for this project has also highlighted the ongoing economic importance and opportunities in industries such as manufacturing and agriculture.

The Fraser Coast region faces similar issues found in many other regional areas. Issues the community continues to grapple with are those of high youth unemployment, disengagement and low educational attainment. The subsequent challenges experienced by impacted young people have a significant effect on the broader community, including loss of economic productivity and social capital.

The need for a focus on future workforce skills and growth leading to real world solutions will require continued attention on innovation, improvements in productivity, training, and the need for industry to collaborate with the community and training providers. The creation of sustainable and skilled occupations stemming from the diversification of traditional industry sectors and strengthening of the service economy will support future workforce growth.

We live in a world where change is constant. Economic shifts and global trends are leading the demand for new skills and different employment opportunities in Queensland. The Fraser Coast, through its work and commitment to the Regional Workforce Development Plan for the Fraser Coast project, is working to be better prepared for the broader forces driving change in the region's labour market.

On behalf of Jobs Queensland, I would like to sincerely thank all of the regional stakeholders who have contributed to this project. Your participation has been instrumental in the development of the Workforce Blueprint for the Fraser Coast.

Sincerely,

Peter Henneken AM
Interim Chair, Jobs Queensland

Foreword from the Advisory Group Chair

The Fraser Coast has a long and proud history as a strong, prosperous and diversified economy underpinned by various industries including manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fishery, tourism and health.

These sectors drive economic growth; however, historically high unemployment, low workforce participation, structural adjustment and a shifting economy, an ageing and growing population, as well as the threat from adverse weather conditions such as drought, flooding and natural disasters are challenges for the region.

Social, policy, technological and industry change will impact the nature of work and the skills required across the Fraser Coast. In this period of economic and demographic transition, the region will be reliant on the skills and productivity of people within the local community. The jobs of today will be different in the future. From low-skilled occupations to extremely specialised fields, the expectations and the output of jobs will change, influenced by the new technologies employed and the way work is organised, through to the skills required and the tasks undertaken.

The future growth and prosperity of the Fraser Coast is dependent on continuing to shape the region as an attractive place to live, learn and work. Skilled local jobs create opportunities for local residents to find rewarding careers with flow-on benefits across the region's economy and community.

This report represents the first step in better aligning employment supply and demand chains, and the vocational education and training (VET) system, with the current and future needs of local industry. However, the onus remains on regional stakeholders to sustain ongoing collaboration, and ensure implementation success that will enable the local community to make informed decisions about their education, training and career pathways.

I would personally like to thank the Fraser Coast Regional Advisory Group – Melinda Everett, Sandra Holebrook, Michelle Kennedy, Louise Knol, Mark Lourigan, Ana Rodger, Scott Rowe, Darryl Stewart, Lance Stone, Graham Young – for their commitment, ongoing support and advice on the development of the Blueprint. Your hard work, collaboration and preparedness to think outside the square and sharing of local intelligence has ensured the actions and advice provided in this Blueprint will support the future prosperity of the Fraser Coast in providing rewarding jobs and careers in your community.

It has been a pleasure and an honour to have served you in the capacity of Committee Chair, and I look forward to continuing to watch your progress over the years ahead.

Dr Scott R Davis
Advisory Group Chair
Fraser Coast Regional Advisory Group
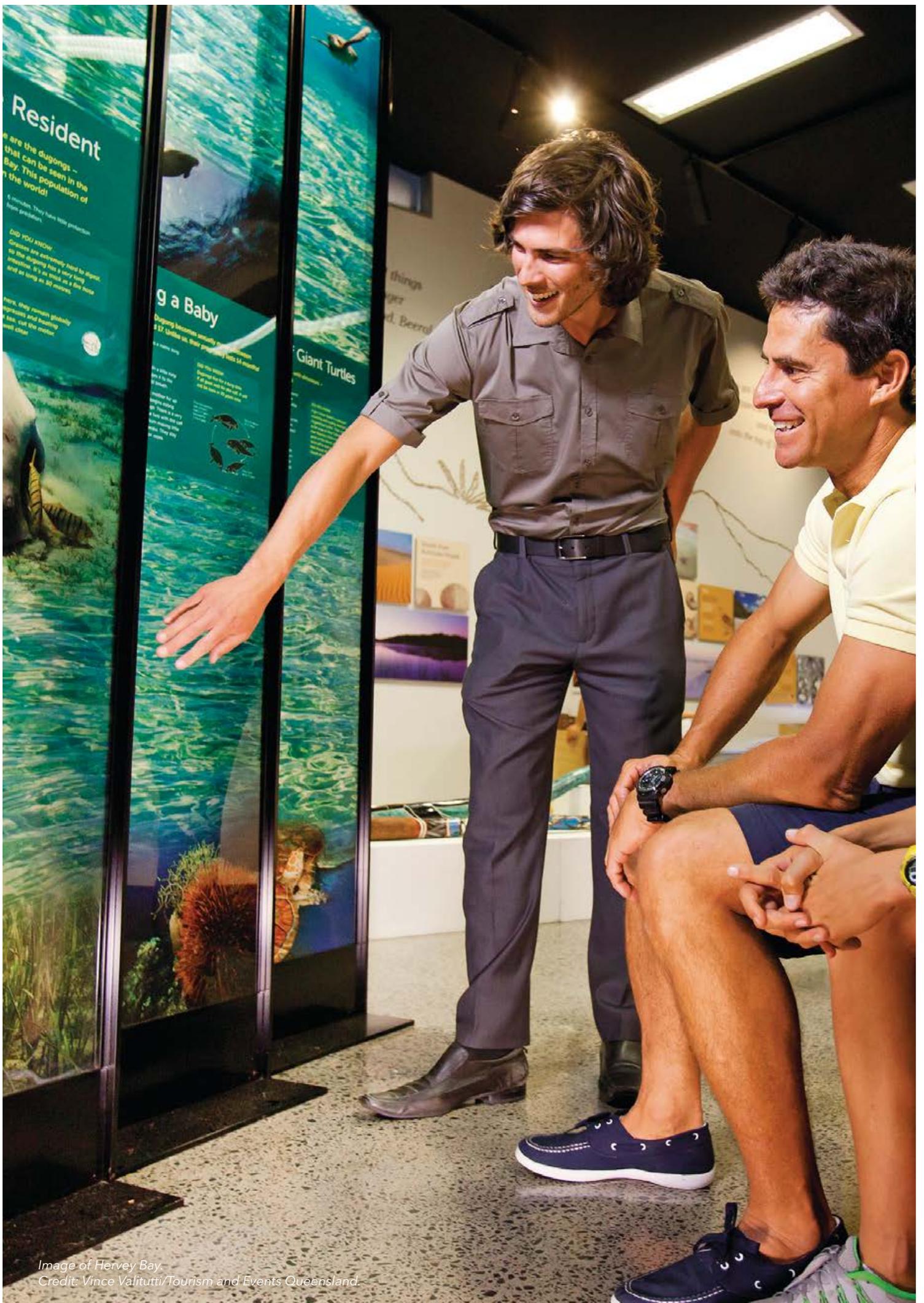
Executive summary

The Fraser Coast region is set to go through significant demographic and economic shifts over the coming years, and with this comes substantial 'growing pains' and challenges. Planning now, and investing in partnerships and innovation for the future, will help to alleviate some of the impacts as this shift occurs. One of the most widely expressed concerns is meeting the shifting skills requirements of industry and market trends. In addition, the region is facing other major challenges including the ageing population, low workforce participation, and the higher than average unemployment rates, particularly in the youth grouping (15 to 24 year olds).

Levels of education and training are directly related to workforce participation and productivity. A skilled and educated workforce is essential to productivity and sustainable economic growth. Not only are more skilled workers potentially more productive in their own right, but a highly skilled workforce is likely to impact significantly on the effectiveness of capital investment and the ability of workplaces to embrace innovative work practices and technological advances. On the other hand, lower levels of education attainment generally correlate to higher levels of youth disengagement and disadvantage. A future focus that delivers an increase in education and training levels, that supports workforce development, is likely to have wide ranging benefits for businesses, individuals and the region as a whole.

Low rates of participation in the labour force have an impact on the local economy, tax base and workforce. While attention is focused on the current levels of unemployment, more attention needs to be focused on bolstering the region's workforce participation as an imperative for the future of the Fraser Coast. Workforce development initiatives that focus on continually upgrading workers' skills to keep them relevant in the workforce, creating incentives for displaced workers to re-enter the workforce and increasing collaboration with businesses will become even more imperative to local economic development if the labour force participation rate continues to decline.

Skilled local jobs create opportunities for local residents to find rewarding careers with flow-on benefits across the region's economy and community. It follows that alignment of skills and training provision to industry demand is critical to realising the benefits for the region that flow from a strong local labour force and regional economy.

Employers need to identify and establish strategies that fully utilise and develop their existing workers' skills, as well as tap into a potential labour pool of underutilised workers such as youth, mature age, Indigenous, migrants, people with disability and women returning to work. Furthermore, it is important that local business investigates growth in a range of areas, including new markets, new products, services and sales demand, existing and new clients, and changes to markets, competitors, the economy, technology, finance and productivity, as well as current and future job requirements.

Skilled staff providing high-quality service are an essential component to business success and regional economic growth. Achieving this will require the application of knowledge, innovation and flexibility in meeting labour needs, while maintaining an eye on future trends. Access to the right skills mix must be offered through training, and the region needs to become a desired employment location, offering benefits and skills development opportunities to attract and retain the future workforce.

Implementation of a regional place-based plan will equip industry, at the local level, with the right tools and capacities to develop innovative employment and job creation strategies. In developing this plan, a detailed analysis was undertaken of:

- **Workforce supply** – identifying the number, skills, training and other characteristics of people currently engaged in employment, as well as the potential workforce (including those who are unemployed, underemployed or not in the workforce).

- **Workforce demand** – considering the workforce opportunities available now and in the future, and identifying the skills or training required to meet this demand.

This analysis provides a mechanism to inform industry, service providers, government and other stakeholders engaging with the local workforce, which will support people within the local community to get into work, as well as stay and advance in jobs.

Purpose of the Blueprint

Jobs Queensland, through the Fraser Coast Regional Advisory Group, led the development of *The Fraser Coast Workforce Blueprint 2018* (the Blueprint). Working at a local level with key leaders, business and industry has enabled connecting and leveraging local resources, knowledge and expertise to develop the Blueprint. It will ensure that the Fraser Coast region is best placed to attract new investment and opportunities; can increase its overall productivity and outputs; can identify new and emerging markets; and can build on and maintain the skills currency for individuals and the local economy.

Economic development is a key priority for the Queensland Government and is a mechanism for building the strength and resilience of regions. Skills development in regions is an essential driver

of economic growth; without it, many economic development strategies will not be able to be effectively realised. Workforce planning and development is therefore a critical driver of economic development.

A partnership with TAFE Queensland and the CSIRO delivered a research report, *Growing Opportunities in the Fraser Coast: Informing regional workforce development*. The report was launched in September 2017 by the then Minister for Training and Skills, the Hon Yvette D'Ath. This, along with further work supported by TAFE Queensland, has been used as input in the development of the Blueprint.

The research report drew on literature reviews, employment data and stakeholder interviews to reveal how the demand and supply of skills is changing over time in the region. It identified national key megatrends that are influencing local industry and labour market conditions, along with focusing on employment patterns and skills in demand to maximise future economic opportunities for the Fraser Coast's workers and businesses. The report demonstrated that the Fraser Coast has the potential to become a thriving service-oriented economy, provided business has access to the skills and attributes needed to meet, and grow, its future opportunities.

These opportunities include further specialisation and investment in health and wellness with associated health services, and spin-off growth in education, hospitality, retail, advanced manufacturing and research. The report also highlighted areas of future economic opportunities for the region to be gained from leveraging its competitive advantage. These include ecotourism, Indigenous cultural tourism and experience-oriented tourism, and drawing on the Fraser Coast's ecological, cultural and historical attractions. Other areas that were identified as having potential to build on include agribusiness and the environment.

The Blueprint builds on the research work already done by the CSIRO, and provides a resource and starting point for business and community in the region to look at ways in which they can be more proactive in developing individual strategies for workforce skills attraction, retention and training. The Blueprint expands the industry focus through linking into other workforce planning activity that was undertaken in the area by Jobs Queensland in the development of the *Advancing Manufacturing Skills: A Skills, Training and Workforce Development Strategy for the Advance Manufacturing Industry in Queensland,* and the *Fraser Coast Regional Tourism Workforce Plan*.

The Blueprint has been developed in collaboration with industry stakeholders, training providers, local employers and government entities, and guided by the insights of, and discussions with, the Fraser Coast Regional Advisory Group. It delivers a set of recommendations and actions to support these stakeholders in supporting skills and workforce development.

It is envisaged that the Blueprint will continually evolve, so that as the workforce environment changes, so too does the Blueprint in looking at future opportunities, emerging trends and challenges so the region can work in a more efficient and collaborative way.

The Blueprint is a guide for businesses in the region to develop stronger workforces and to enable them to become an 'Employer of Choice' both within the region and in their industry.

Section 1:
The Fraser Coast – a long, proud history

The Fraser Coast region, centred on the cities of Hervey Bay and Maryborough, is a local government area in the Wide Bay–Burnett region of Queensland, Australia, about 250 kilometres north of Brisbane. From Fraser Island (K'Gari) – the world's largest sand island – to the heritage streetscapes of Maryborough, the rich farmlands of Tiaro to the sheltered bayside waters of Hervey Bay, the Fraser Coast is a mix of stunning landscapes, islands, cities and towns, and sits within the Great Sandy Biosphere, which is part of a world network of Biosphere Reserves.[1]

The region covers an area of 7126km[2] – from the Gunalda Range in the south, past Howard on the Bruce Highway to the north, east to Fraser Island and west to near Biggenden.

The original inhabitants and Traditional Owners of the Fraser Coast region are the Butchulla People.[2] European settlement dates from the 1840s[3], with land used mainly for timber getting, grazing, farming and mining.

Source: Developed by Queensland Government Statistician's Office.

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[1] Australian Government (n.d.), *Fraser Coast Regional Council*, https://data.gov.au/organization/about/fraser-coast-regional-council, accessed July 2018.

[2] Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing 2012, *Traditional Owners – Butchulla people,* https://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/parks/fraser/butchulla/index.html, accessed July 2018.

[3] Travelstation.com.au 2017, *Fraser Island History*, http://www.seefraserisland.com/about/fraser-island-history.html, accessed July 2018.

Population was minimal until the late 1800s, with subsequent growth spurred by the opening of the railway line and development of the sugarcane industry.

The Maryborough district was one of the first sugarcane growing areas in Queensland. The first sugar manufactured in the district was in 1862, with a number of juice mills and plantations established along Tinana Creek and the Mary River. At one stage, there were more than 300 growers and 36 juice mills.

Currently, there are around 100 growers supplying sugar cane to the mill and the cane is harvested from an area of about 13,500 hectares. The Maryborough mill has a production capacity of around 900,000 tonnes of sugar cane in a crushing season, which extends from July to November each year.

In 1863, coal was discovered at Burrum, 25 km north of Maryborough with a rail line constructed in 1883 to service the mine. The Burrum coalfields played a major role in the early development of the entire region, accelerating the growth of Maryborough and Hervey Bay, and providing impetus for the rail extension north to Bundaberg in 1888 and the construction of the Urangan Pier, which was completed in 1913 to facilitate the export of sugar, timber and coal. In total, mining of the area spanned some 130 years, from 1866 until the closure of the last coalmine (Burgowan Number 12) in 1997, and saw some 94 shafts and tunnels dug and, at its peak, employed more than 400 personnel.[4]

By the early 1920s, the Hervey Bay area was rapidly expanding due to continued growth in primary industries such as sugar cane, citrus, pineapples, beef cattle and fishing, as well as investment in transport infrastructure. In the 1950s and 1960s, population and development increased (aided by tourism), and the coastal town slowly merged into a single urban area.

Alongside mining and sugar cane, a number of other industries have also been prominent in the history of the district; in particular timber getting (harvesting), manufacturing (timber, machinery and equipment, shipbuilding and food), citrus growing, cattle farming and small crop agriculture. The ocean has also provided a livelihood through fishing and oyster farming. Washing powder and cordial were also manufactured in Howard in the past.[5]

During the second half of the 1800s, Maryborough was a major port of entry to immigrants arriving in Queensland from all parts of the world. Substantial growth occurred during the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in and around the townships of Hervey Bay and Maryborough when the population of the area increased to approximately 60,000. The growth since the 1990s has been primarily in Hervey Bay, with some growth in the northern and southern rural areas. Hervey Bay is the largest population centre within the Fraser Coast region with a population of 53,035.[6] Affordable coastal living, whale watching and ecotourism – Fraser Island (K'Gari) gaining World Heritage listing in 2007 and the Great Sandy region awarded Biosphere Reserve status by UNESCO in 2009 – has fuelled this growth.

Where we are now

The population is growing and ageing

As at 30 June 2016, there were 101,504 people who chose to reside in the Fraser Coast region, with an annual average growth of 1.8 per cent over 10 years (Figure 1). This is just below the Queensland growth rate of 1.9 per cent for the same period. Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples accounted for 4231 residents (or 4.2 per cent) of the population. Female representation was 51,730 (51 per cent), while the male population was 49,773 (49 per cent).[7]
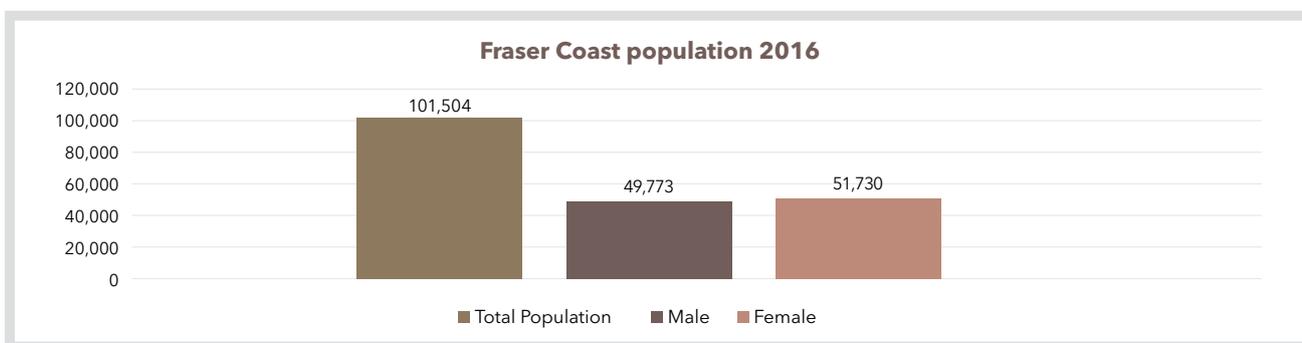

Figure 1. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2016.

4 Burrum and District Museum, 2009. *In Trove*. Retrieved July 5, 2018, from https://nla.gov.au/nla.party-782051, accessed July 2018.
5 Ibid.
6 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, *2016 Census QuickStats*, Hervey Bay, http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SED30036, accessed July 2018.
7 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, *2016 Census QuickStats*, Fraser Coast, http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA33220, accessed July 2018.

While the region's population is growing, it is also ageing, with 26,711 people (26.3 per cent) being 65 years and over, which was an increase of 6442 people from 2011 to 2016[8] (Figure 2). Additionally, there were 2553 people over the age of 85 living in the region in 2016.
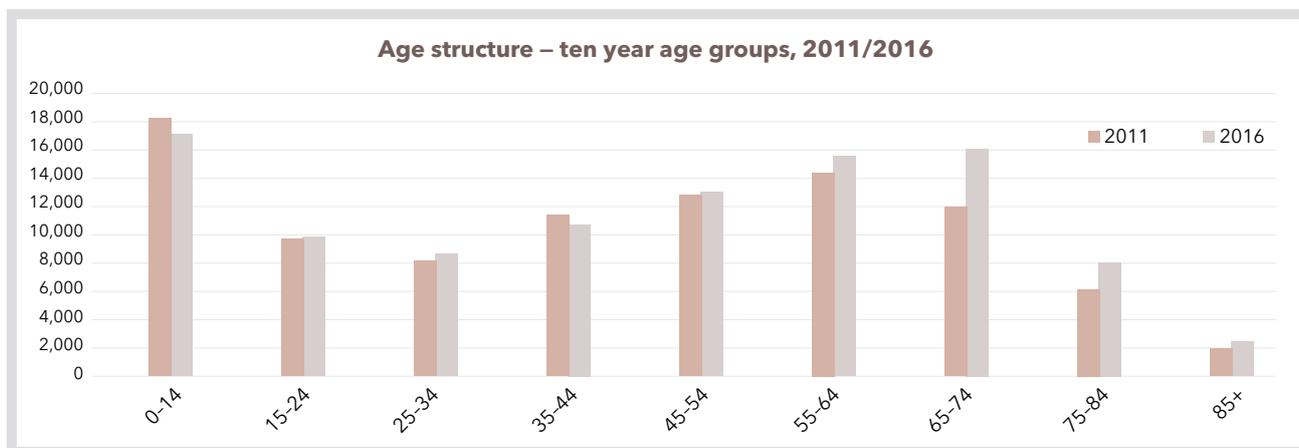

Figure 2. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011/2016.

In 2036 the population is forecast to be 134,973 people (1.3 per cent increase per annum), with a median age of 51.3 years. Comparatively for Queensland, the population is projected to grow to 6,763,153 by 2036 (1.7 per cent increase per annum), and have a median age of 37.0 years.[10] The highest net migration forecast for the Fraser Coast region will be 60–64 year olds, which is predicted to occur in the period between 2026 and 2031.[11]

In the December quarter 2017, there were 7108 recipients of the disability support pension.[12] This, coupled with the rising population age, will likely place increasing pressure on the health care and social assistance industry in the future. The roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) from 1 July 2018 will see an increased demand

for disability workers. This in turn is projected to drive demand for between 850 and 1000 disability workers.[13]

Figure 3 shows Fraser Coast's recent growth has been driven by net in-migration (3803), led by people aged 65 years and over (1758). The major source of new residents is from other parts of south-eastern Queensland, and neighbouring council areas such as the Gympie region and South Burnett. In contrast, migration from interstate is less significant. Like most regional areas of Australia, the Fraser Coast Regional Council area loses young adults (18–24 years), who move to Brisbane and elsewhere for education and employment opportunities, with 1941 young adults leaving the region in 2016.[14]
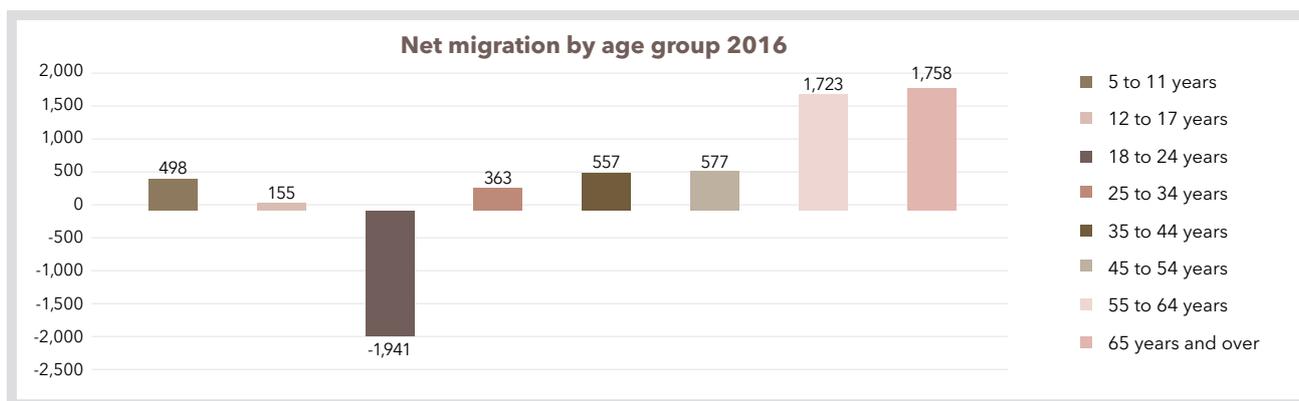

Figure 3. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, migration by age group, 2016.

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8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 *Queensland Regional Profiles*, Queensland Government Statistician's Office, Queensland Treasury, https://statistics.qgso.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles, accessed 19 June 2018.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 WorkAbility Qld 2017, *Bundaberg and Wide Bay Burnett NDIS Region Workforce Profile*, http://workabilityqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/NDIS-Jobs-Growth-Wide-Bay-Burnett-Fact-Sheet.pdf, accessed July 2018.
14 Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Community profile – Migration by age*, https://profile.id.com.au/fraser-coast/migration-by-age, accessed July 2018.

Regional workforce profile

Nearly 57 per cent of the Fraser Coast's population is of prime working age (15 to 64 years), with 48.2 per cent participating in the workforce. This is well below the state average of 65 per cent.[15] Table 1 provides an analysis of the age structure of the workforce in the Fraser Coast Regional Council area in 2016 compared to Queensland. This shows that there was a lower proportion of people in the younger age groups (15 to 44 years) in the Fraser Coast, as well as a higher proportion of people in the older age groups (45 years and over). Overall, 51.7 per cent of the workforce was aged under 45 years, compared to 59.3 per cent for Queensland. Conversely, 48.3 per cent were aged 45 years and over, compared to 40.7 per cent for Queensland.[16]

Fraser Coast Regional Council – All industries		2016	
Ten year age groups (years)	Number	%	Queensland %
15 to 24 years	4,215	14.5	15.6
25 to 34 years	4,731	16.2	21.8
35 to 44 years	6,122	21	21.9
45 to 54 years	7,153	24.6	21.8
55 to 64 years	5,598	19.2	14.8
65 years and over	1,317	4.5	4
Total	29,136	100	100

Table 1. Local workers age structure. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, local workers age structure, 2016.

For the year ending 30 June 2017, there were 33,377 estimated jobs (including vacancies) located in the Fraser Coast region (Figure 4). This is an increase of 0.09 per cent on the previous year, and a lower comparative growth to that of Queensland (0.14 per cent).[17]
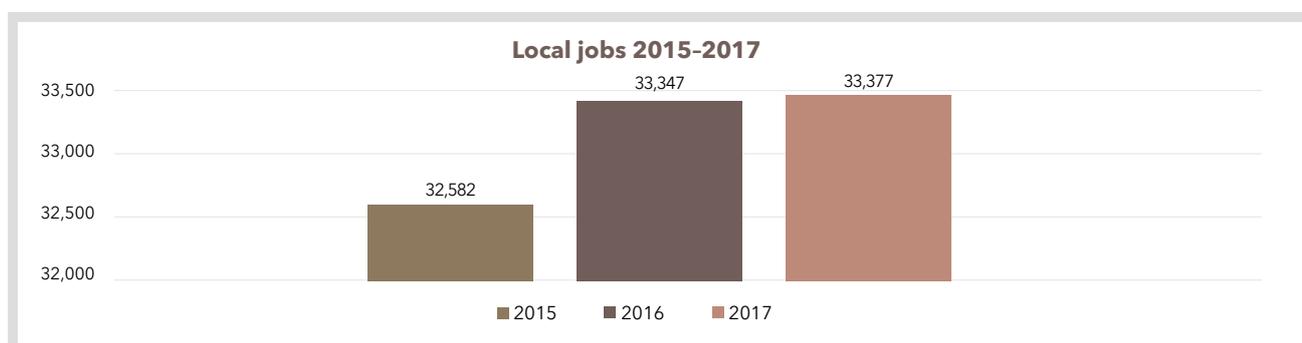
Figure 4. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, local jobs, 2016.

In the quarter ending March 2018, the unemployment rate in the Fraser Coast region was 10.2 per cent (Figure 5). Comparatively, the unemployment rate for the same quarter in 2016 was 9.7 per cent. There has been an increase of 0.5 per cent (255) in unemployed people for the two-year period March 2016 to March 2018.[18]
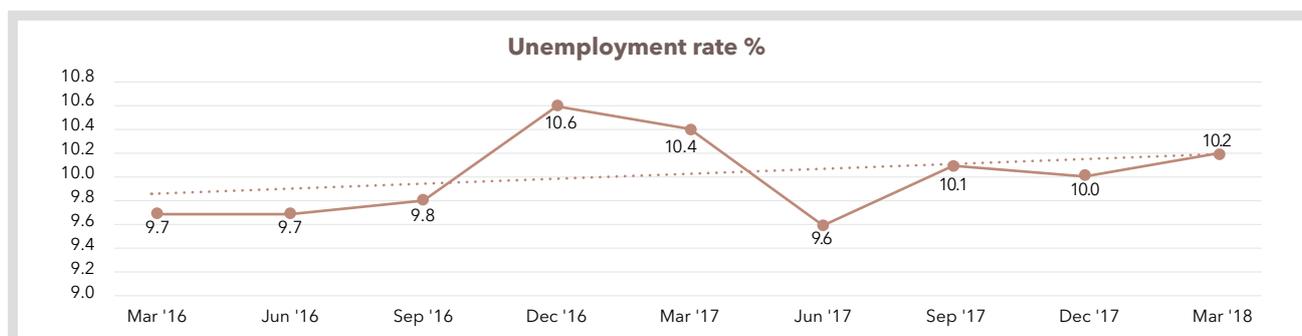

Figure 5. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, unemployment, March 2018.

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Local workers age structure*, 2016, https://economy.id.com.au/fraser-coast/workers-age-structure, accessed July 2018.

[17] Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Local jobs*, 2016, https://economy.id.com.au/fraser-coast/local-jobs, accessed July 2018.

[18] Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Unemployment*, March 2018. https://economy.id.com.au/fraser-coast/unemployment, accessed July 2018.

A focus on youth unemployment

The world of work has become an increasingly difficult environment for young people, which is evidenced by youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment in Australia, persistently higher than for other age groups. The Fraser Coast region has experienced ongoing challenges with youth unemployment over a prolonged period of time. More recently in March 2018, youth unemployment for Wide Bay, of which Fraser Coast is a part, was 28.7 per cent. This is an increase of 4.0 per cent in 12 months[19] and is more than double the Queensland rate of 13.3 per cent, and the national rate of 12.2 per cent. Wide Bay currently has the third highest youth unemployment rate nationally.[20]

What does the evidence tell us?

According the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), about 14 per cent of jobs are highly automatable – that is, 70 per cent of tasks in those roles are able to be automated.[21] The risk of automation is highest among entry-level roles traditionally undertaken by teenagers, with automation more likely to result in rising youth unemployment than in early retirements.[22] With globalisation and automation predicted to impact entry level roles, today's average 15 year old is:

- anticipated to have 17 jobs over five different careers
- not proficient in the skills they need for the future of work. This includes digital literacy, financial literacy, problem solving, science and maths
- on average, taking 4.7 years to transition from full-time education to full-time work.[23]

From 2003 to 2012, there were 7160 vocational or university students aged 17 to 19 who started receiving a student payment; then experienced more than 12 months on unemployment payments; and were still receiving unemployment payments in 2015–16. On average, these former young students who transitioned directly to unemployment payments are expected to receive income support for 33 years of their potential working life.

If nothing changes for these former young students, 39 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 30 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.[24]

Disengaged youth (aged 15–24 not employed or in education)

In 2016, 19.1 per cent of the population aged 15 to 24 years in the Fraser Coast Regional Council area were not employed or attending an education institution compared to 11.5 per cent for Queensland, and 9.6 per cent nationally.[25]

While the Fraser Coast Regional Council area has a higher proportion of 'disengaged youth' compared to Queensland generally, it is important to note that this varied across the regional council's geography (Figure 6), ranging from a low of 7.3 per cent in Great Sandy Strait–Fraser Island to a high of 26.2 per cent in the Southern Hinterland.[26] The five areas with the highest percentages were:

- Southern Hinterland (26.2 per cent)
- Maryborough (23.2 per cent)
- Hervey Bay (19.4 per cent)
- Northern Hinterland (18.3 per cent)
- Burrum Heads–Toogoom (18.2 per cent).

Reducing disengagement and promoting real and sustained engagement in the labour market is important for the young people of the Fraser Coast, both now and in the future. Young people who feel engaged through work or education, and who are provided with opportunities to participate, experience a better quality of life and contribute to creating and building a better community.

Responses to youth disengagement need to focus on policies that reduce disparities and address social

19 Queensland Government Statistician's Office 2018, *Regional youth unemployment*, March 2018, http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/reg-youth-unemployment/reg-youth-unemployment-201803.pdf, accessed July 2018.

20 Brotherhood of St Laurence 2018, *An Unfair Australia*, Mapping Youth Unemployment Hotspots, http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/10573/1/BSL_Unfair_Australia_Mapping_youth_unemployment_hotspots_Mar2018.pdf, accessed July 2018.

21 Nedelkoska, L and Quintini, G 2018, *Automation, skills use and training*, OECD, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/2e2f4eea-en.pdf?expires=1531112733&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=8D7BE0B91B380D5C99707FCA7D6E7DC7, accessed July 2018.

22 Ibid.

23 Foundation for Young Australians, 2017, *The New Work Orde*r, Melbourne. https://www.fya.org.au/report/new-work-order/, accessed July 2018.

24 Australian Government Department of Social Services 2018, *Y4Y Youth Force Fact Sheet*, https://www.dss.gov.au/review-of-australias-welfare-system/australian-priority-investment-approach-to-welfare/try-test-and-learn-fund/y4y-youth-force, accessed July 2018.

25 Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Community profile*, Employment status, https://profile.id.com.au/fraser-coast/employment-status, accessed July 2018.

26 Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Social atlas*, Disengaged youth, 2016, Enumerated, https://atlas.id.com.au/fraser-coast/maps/disengaged-youth, accessed July 2018.

**Disengaged youth (aged 15–24 not employed or in education), 2016**
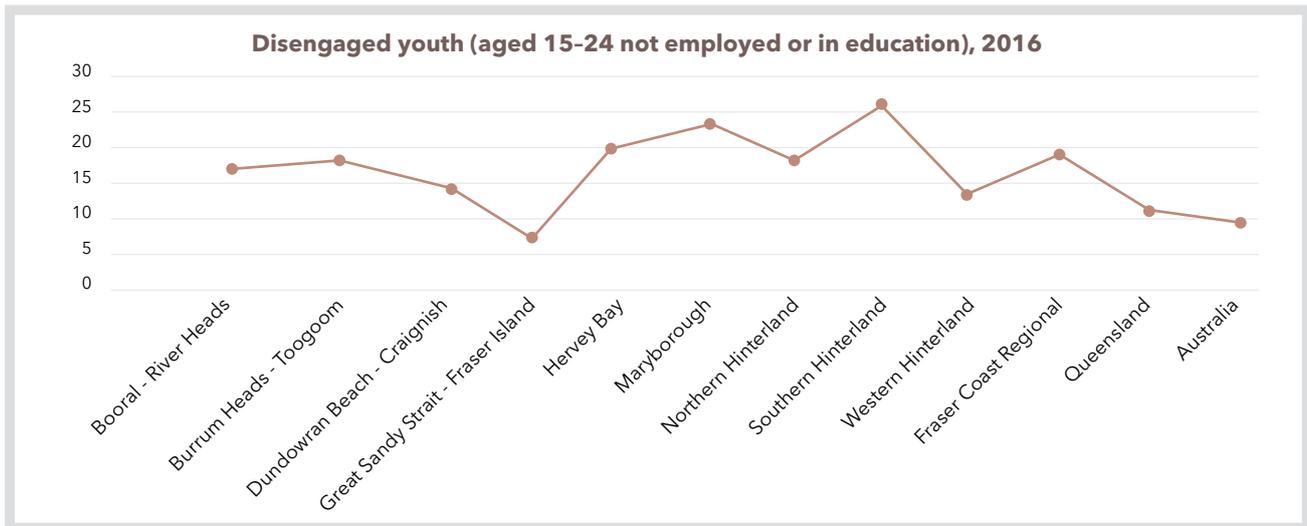
Figure 6. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, disengaged youth, 2016.

determinants, and be sustained to minimise the risk of generational disadvantage. Reducing poverty, increasing access to education, quality health care, employment and educational opportunities, and promoting social inclusion, family cohesion and freedom from discrimination and violence are fundamental to improving youth engagement at all levels of employment and education.

While it is highly concerning that many young people are currently not engaged in either education, training or employment, the creation of effective programs are crucial for the Fraser Coast to address this issue. This needs to be informed by youth and supported through partnerships with other stakeholders.

In order to be successful, programs must embrace a holistic and integrated approach to support that encompasses the entire needs of the marginalised young person. To implement such a program, it is often necessary to enlist the assistance of all levels of government that can work in partnership to enable the provision of assistance for young people who are disengaged, or at risk of disengagement.

Community engagement and support are also critical to the long-term success of any program, and must always remain central to any approach.

Tackling youth unemployment

The issue of youth unemployment continues to be a challenge and has an impact on economic growth and productivity for the region. Having a large share of the young labour force unemployed not only leads to reduced productivity and gross regional income, it also increases the economic costs for the region since there is a need for more money to be paid in social benefits and less money coming in from taxes.

Amid more than 20 years of national economic growth, youth unemployment continues to rise in some communities. In many cases, the regional/remote location, combined with intergenerational disadvantage, is contributing to shape a young person's destiny. While some parts of the nation offer young people abundant opportunity, in other areas Australia's young job hunters are struggling for their chance.

Tackling youth unemployment requires the input and commitment of employers in providing the job opportunities that enable young people to enter the labour market, while also engaging with youth in others ways (e.g. providing work experience and site visits) to help them to prepare for work. Acknowledging the role that businesses play in boosting employment for young workers, both state and federal governments are providing funding such as Back to Work[27] and Youth Jobs PaTH[28] (Prepare Trial Hire) Internships, as well as tax incentives that support employers transitioning youth into employment.

However, a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, and relying solely on local employers to tackle the issue, is not enough. One response to social disadvantage and youth unemployment is the implementation of regional 'place-based approaches' that are local collaborations between industry, schools and education providers, community organisations, government and community members.[29] Driving economic development that provides youth employment opportunities, along with place-based approaches, allows innovative local solutions to emerge through joint planning by stakeholders

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[27] Queensland Government, Back to Work, https://backtowork.initiatives.qld.gov.au/for-employers/youth-boost-payment/, accessed July 2018.

[28] Australian Government, Department of Jobs and Small Business, https://www.jobs.gov.au/youth , accessed July 2018.

[29] Queensland Council of Social Service 2016, *Place-based approaches*, https://www.qcoss.org.au/our-work/place-based-approaches, accessed July 2018.

Image of Maryborough
Credit: Aaron Spence/Tourism and Events Queensland.

and multi-agency collaboration. Entrenched youth unemployment is a generational issue that needs sustained attention on all fronts: schools, vocational training and universities, industry and community, as well as welfare assistance and employment programs.

Regional education and training profile

The Fraser Coast has a range of quality education assets with more than 40 primary and secondary schools in the region. Tertiary education is delivered through the University of the Sunshine Coast, a James Cook University mini-campus, The University of Queensland, TAFE Queensland and other registered training organisations providing a range of certificate, undergraduate and graduate opportunities.

Qualifications

Data from the 2016 Census reveals that 27.2 per cent of people were attending an educational institution. Of these, 27.7 per cent were in primary school; 21.7 per cent in secondary school; and 11.0 per cent in a tertiary or technical institution. For people aged 15 years and over, 11.8 per cent reported having completed Year 12 as their highest

level of educational attainment; 20.6 per cent had completed a Certificate III or IV; and 7.2 per cent had completed an Advanced Diploma or Diploma. A total of 11.7 per cent of Fraser Coast residents have a Year 9 or below level of educational attainment, compared to the state average of 7.3 per cent.[30]

The proportion of workers with no post-school qualification is relatively high in the Fraser Coast at 11.8 per cent, compared with Queensland more broadly at 7.4 per cent (Figure 7). This is a reflection of the region's age profile, with the largest proportion of residents over the age of 65 of any region in Queensland. The Fraser Coast also has a relatively small proportion of degree-qualified workers at 9.1 per cent, compared to Queensland more broadly at 18.3 per cent.[31]

The workforce of the Fraser Coast comprises a greater proportion than the state average of workers qualified in the fields of agriculture, health, education, food and hospitality, and society and culture, reflecting the industry profile of the region (Figure 8). This is offset by fewer workers qualified in management and commerce, engineering and information technology.[32]
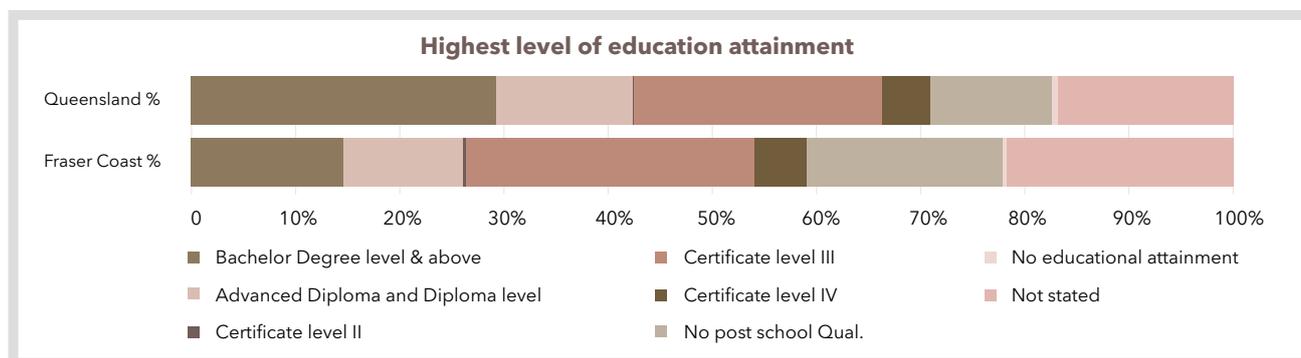
Figure 7. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 Census QuickStats, Fraser Coast (R).
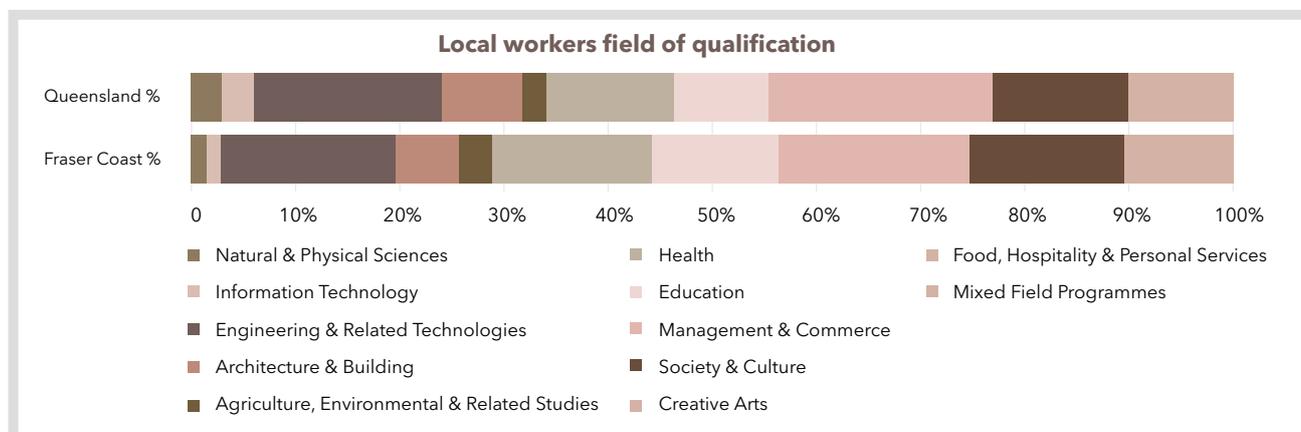
Figure 8. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, local workers – field of qualification – all industries, 2016.

30 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, 2016 Census QuickStats, Fraser Coast, http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA33220, accessed July 2018.
31 Ibid.
32 Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), Economic profile, local workers – field of qualification – all industries, https://economy.id.com.au/fraser-coast/workers-field-of-qualification, accessed July 2018.

Section 2: Meeting the challenges and capturing the opportunities

There are external and internal influences that will impact on the regional economy in the near future. These may change the way businesses operate and could be considered opportunities to diversify or grow, but ultimately will require businesses to adapt in order to meet these challenges head on.

Skills anticipation is a strategic and systemic process through which labour market stakeholders identify and prepare to meet future skills needs, thus helping to avoid potential gaps between skills demand and supply. Skills anticipation enables training providers, young people, policymakers, employers and workers to make better educational and training choices, and through institutional mechanisms and information resources can lead to improved use of skills and human capital development.

It is recognised that, while many industries require specialised skills, there are often commonalities that flow across different industries, particularly at entry level, and can be strengthened for the benefit of a stronger labour pool. This section will look at some key challenges the region is facing as a whole.

Key megatrends[33]

Key findings from *Growing Opportunities in the Fraser Coast: Informing regional workforce development* identified, at the national scale, key megatrends impacting the labour market, including:

- **Technology:** The digital revolution is increasing the rate at which tasks are automated. Technological developments are disrupting existing jobs and businesses but also creating new jobs and opportunities.

- **Demographics:** People are living for longer and are likely to work for longer, but there will also be increased demand for health and aged care. More women are participating and prospering in the workforce, but some unskilled people (particularly men) are withdrawing, and a growing proportion of workers are part-time.

- **Rise of the services sector:** Employment opportunities (particularly for medium and lower skilled workers) are increasingly concentrated in the services sector.

- **Increasing education:** More people than ever are getting post-school qualifications, and the strongest employment growth is in the most highly skilled occupations. Longer careers and technological change mean that lifelong learning is increasingly important.

- **Entrepreneurship:** Digital platforms are facilitating the rise of entrepreneurship and independent work arrangements (e.g. freelancing, portfolio employment).

- **Globalisation:** Competition from overseas businesses and workers continues, facilitated by an increased use of digital channels for the production and delivery of services and products

The Fraser Coast, along with much of regional Queensland, is being impacted by all of these trends. Global outsourcing has diminished the formerly strong manufacturing industry around Maryborough, the population is much older than average, workforce participation is falling, and education and income levels are behind the rest of the nation. Thus far, the benefits of the digital economy (e.g. new highly skilled jobs) have mostly been realised in the major cities, but the costs of disruption are felt everywhere.

Significant projects across the region either confirmed or planned

A number of infrastructure projects have been identified as significant catalysts for regional growth and, if progressed, they are expected to generate jobs and new skills. These include the:

- Bruce Highway Upgrade
- Hervey Bay CBD Urban Renewal Master Plan, including the knowledge precinct
- Maryborough CBD Urban Renewal Master Plan
- Hervey Bay Medical Precinct Master Plan
- Fraser Coast Sports Precinct
- Innovate Fraser Coast
- Urangan Harbour Activation

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[33] An extract from *Growing Opportunities in the Fraser Coast: Informing regional workforce development*, https://jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/growing_opportunities_research_report.pdf, accessed July 2018.

- HMAS Tobruk Dive Wreck
- Motorsports Complex
- Renewable energy projects, e.g. large-scale solar farms
- Wide Bay Minerals Province.

Common challenges and opportunities

One model of workforce development is the 70:20:10 model. Considering workforce development in a holistic manner, its philosophy recognises learning is a continuous and reflective practice. The framework describes that learning occurs 70 per cent through real-life and on-the-job experiences; 20 per cent through mentoring, coaching and feedback; and 10 per cent through formal and structured learning.[34] The 'catch-22' situation facing employers is that wanting 'job ready' or experienced candidates prior to hiring will only come from job seekers participating in paid or unpaid employment opportunities such as internships and volunteering. This requires employers to consider providing opportunities to inexperienced workers in order to develop the workforce for the future.

Industries in the region face common challenges and opportunities in relation to training and employment. Collaboration between industries, government and education is central to progressing the identified opportunities to overcome these challenges. These are summarised in Table 2.

Challenge	Opportunity
Students can benefit from a greater awareness of, interest in and exposure to careers in industry Changes and opportunities in the labour market take time to filter down to trainers, schools, students and their parents	**Highlight industry career opportunities and skills requirements to students and future workers** Broader industry marketing and engagement in schools and on social media can help raise awareness, understanding and interest. **Improve student on-the-job exposure to regional careers in secondary school** Structured pre-employment programs that provide intensive work readiness training to Year 10–12 students for work in industries such as disability support and aged care, hospitality, retail, tourism, manufacturing and agriculture. **Support a model that provides career advice to students in schools** Through industry champions, provide better information, resources and support to teachers and school career advisors on available opportunities, employment pathways and preferred training for careers in industry. **Strengthen vocational training and employment pathways in Years 10, 11 and 12** Increase awareness and support for pathways through Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SATs).
Language, literacy and numeracy	**Raise the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) standards of students and improve training in soft/employability skills** Work with education and training providers to investigate methods to lift LLN standards. This includes baseline skills such as communication, organisational and basic business-related software skills that are transferable across industry groups.
High youth unemployment – an untapped labour market	**Identify the barriers to employment for the 15 to 24 year age group, and develop strategies to influence better employment pathways and outcomes for this cohort and industry** Work with local schools, VET providers, industry, university and other stakeholders to establish a Youth Hub similar to Bundaberg. Facilitate industry to educational provider relationships to inform and develop courses in work preparation (desired behaviours, attitude, presentation etc.) and soft skills such as effective communication.
Ageing population and workforce	**Identify and promote alternative work groups as a solution to an ageing and shrinking workforce** Identify and promote effective recruitment and retention methods to local industry to best engage underutilised workgroups, including youth, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrant workers, women returning to work, people with disability and mature age workers.

Table 2. Common challenges and opportunities.

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[34] 70/20/10 learning concept was developed by Morgan McCall, Robert W. Eichinger and Michael M. Lombardo at the Center for Creative Leadership and is specifically mentioned in *The Career Architect Development Planner*, 3rd edition, by Michael M. Lombardo and Robert W. Eichinger.

Regional skills demand profiles by industry

The CSIRO report *Growing Opportunities in the Fraser Coast: Informing regional workforce development* highlighted the opportunities stemming from a growing service sector driven by an increasing older population. The Fraser Coast Regional Advisory Group identified, not only the importance of service industries such as health care and social assistance (including the NDIS) and tourism but also the opportunities arising from a diverse economy and building on a strong base of manufacturing and agriculture. This section provides an overview of four key industries' outlook, skills and job requirements, challenges and opportunities.

The key industries are:

1. tourism
2. manufacturing
3. health care and social assistance
4. agribusiness.

Tourism

From a solid history of agriculture and manufacturing, the Fraser Coast region's economy is in transition; growth industries driving this change include tourism.

With the region's geographic proximity to the southern Great Barrier Reef and iconic World Heritage listed Fraser Island within the protected waters of the Great Sandy Marine Park, and encompassing the Great Sandy Biosphere, it is the ideal location for the expansion of the tourism product.

Tourism is both a major economic activity and lifestyle driver for the Fraser Coast region, and visitor expenditure impacts a number of key regional economic sectors. The Fraser Coast's tourism industry recorded strong growth for the year 2016–17, with the latest data from Tourism Research Australia (TRA) showing the visitor economy contributes $413 million to the regional economy[35], which contributes to direct and indirect expenditure across sectors including transport, accommodation, food services and retail trade.

The region is well on the way to reaching its target of $503 million in direct overnight visitor expenditure by 2020.[36] To reach this target, the tourism industry plans to grow key market segments in the region, including sports and events, fly/drive, grey nomads, visiting friends and relatives (VFR), and niche markets such as edu-tourism.

The Fraser Coast region welcomed 825,000 domestic and international overnight visitors in the year ending December 2017, a 4.5 per cent rise over the past three years. All forms of travel contributed to this growth, with holiday travel growing 5.1 per cent to 357,000 on the three-year period. VFR was up 3.7 per cent to 226,000, while business travel was up 8.0 per cent to 69,000 visitors.

The intrastate market saw growth of 5.6 per cent to 510,000 visitors over the three years ending December 2017, and accounted for 76 per cent of domestic overnight visitation to the Fraser Coast region. This growth was underpinned by a rise in Brisbane visitors, the region's largest source market, with visitor numbers up by 9.8 per cent to 214,000 over the period. Interstate visitor numbers grew slightly, up 1.2 per cent to 165,000 over the same period.

International visitors to the Fraser Coast grew over a three-year period by 5.9 per cent to 150,000 visitors in the year ending December 2017. The region's international market accounted for 18 per cent of total overnight visitation and 11 per cent of total overnight expenditure.

Western markets dominate the region's top international source markets. The United Kingdom (UK) is the region's largest market, representing 23 per cent of international visitors. However, the UK's visitation softened by 9.0 per cent to 34,000 visitors in 2017.[37]

Germany is the second largest market and was the largest contributor to international visitation growth. German visitation grew by 13.3 per cent to 31,000 visitors, accounting for 21 per cent of international visitors to the region.[38]

Future opportunities exist for the Fraser Coast region to promote and develop sport and event tourism, domestic drive tourism, agri-tourism, cultural and Indigenous tourism, recreational fishing, beach and hinterland retreats, and ecotourism activities (such as diving, cruises, whale watching, beach-combing, wilderness camping, and flora and fauna exploration at coastal and rainforest locations). There are also strong opportunities for growth in military and heritage tourism, especially in the educational sector. Creating a more diverse tourism offering is critical for the Fraser Coast region to remain a competitive tourism destination for domestic and international visitors.

[35] Tourism Research Australia, Regional tourism satellite accounts, 2016–17, https://www.tra.gov.au/research/view-all-publications/all-publications/economic-reports/regional-tourism-satellite-accounts, accessed July 2018.
[36] Target provided by Fraser Coast Tourism and Events, June 2018.
[37] Tourism and Events Queensland (n.d.), *Fraser Coast Regional Snapshot*, Year Ending December 2017, https://teq.queensland.com/research-and-insights/domestic-research/regional-summaries/fraser-coast, accessed June 2018.
[38] Ibid.

Business and workforce characteristics of the tourism industry

While there are many different sectors within the tourism industry, the predominant sectors are accommodation and food services (Infographic 1), and retail (Infographic 2).

Accommodation and Food Services

292 (5%)	2,763	8.6%	15 to 24 years (44.7%)	55+ years (9.9%)
Registered businesses (% of region)	Current workforce size	Share of region's workforce	Highest % of workforce by age	Lowest % of workforce by age
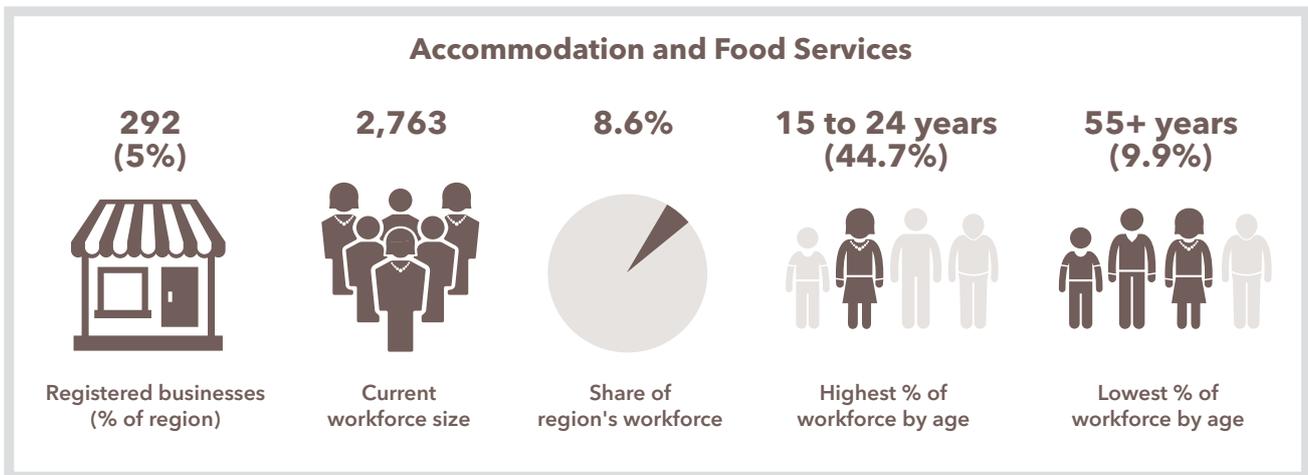
Infographic 1. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 8165.0 – Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2013 to June 2017, and ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016.

- Hospitality Workers — 658
- Food Preparation Assistants — 357
- Accommodation and Hospitality Managers — 305
- Food Trade Workers — 275
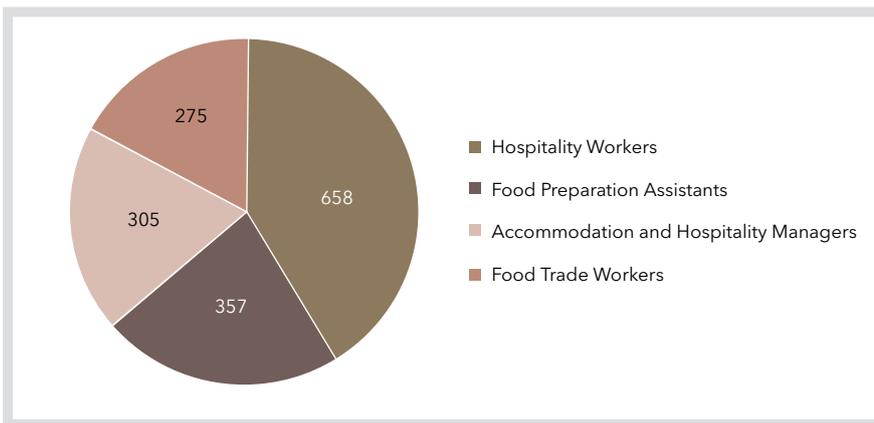
Figure 9: Top occupations – Accommodation and Food Services. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, top occupations – accommodation and food services, 2016.

The VET ecosystem plays a vital role in building the work readiness of job seekers and developing the future workforce through the employment-based apprenticeship and traineeship pathway, as well as VET courses delivered by RTOs operating in the region. Figures 10 and 11 show the key qualifications and take-up of accommodation and food services apprenticeships and traineeships over the last few years.

Key qualifications – Accommodation and Food Services

Qualification	2014	2015	2016	Total
Certificate I in Hospitality	52	36	63	145
Certificate II in Hospitality	313	266	261	840
Certificate III in Hospitality	400	230	241	871
Certificate III in Commercial Cookery	88	71	64	223
Diploma of Event Management	29	48	44	121
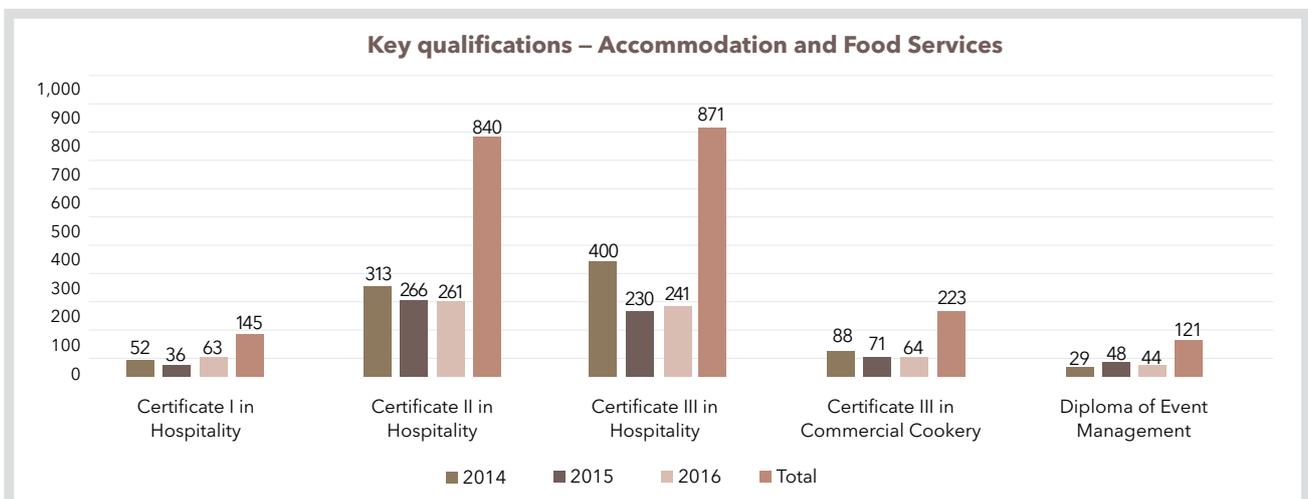
Figure 10: Key qualifications – Accommodation and Food Services. Source: National Council for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), 2018, National VET Provider Collection.

Commencements/completions 2014 to 2017

	Accommodation & Food Services Apprenticeship	Accommodation & Food Services Traineeship
2014 New Commencements	31	54
2014 Completions	7	56
2015 New Commencements	25	46
2015 Completions	9	30
2016 New Commencements	25	55
2016 Completions	8	38
2017 New Commencements	12	64
2017 Completions	5	38
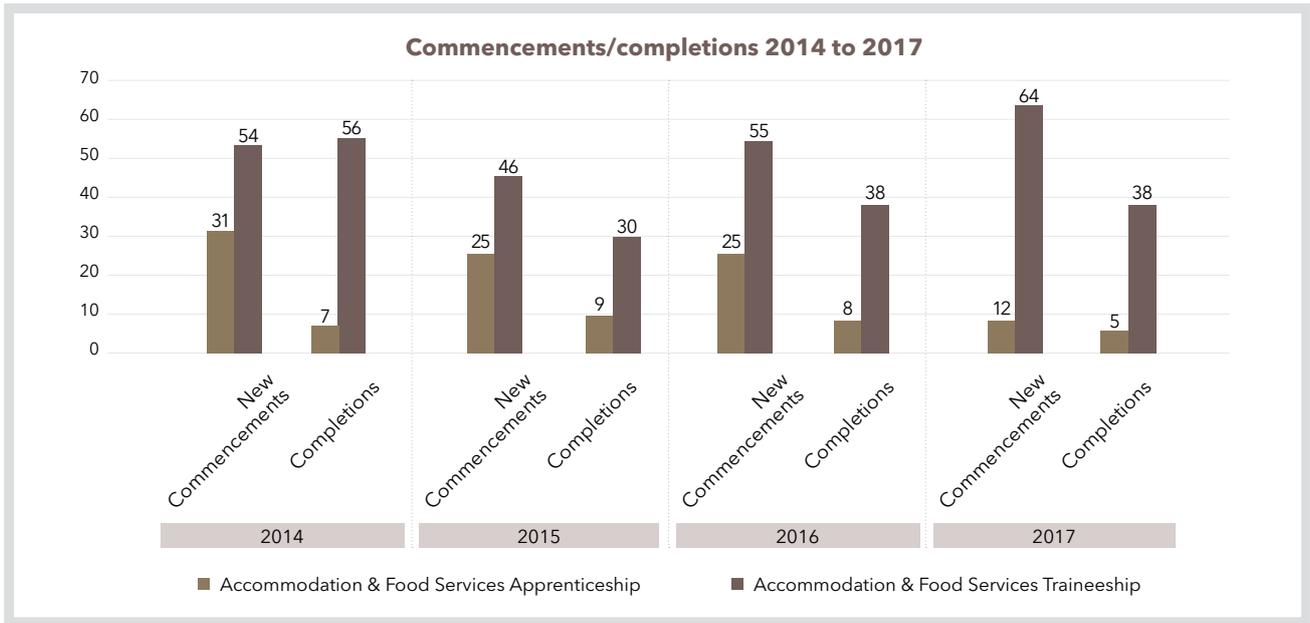
Figure 11: Apprenticeships and traineeships – Food and Accommodation Services. Source: Direct entry-level training administration (DELTA), accessed June 2018.

Retail

420 (7.2%)
Registered businesses (% of region)

3,956
Current workforce size

12.3%
Share of region's workforce

15 to 24 years (32%)
Highest % of workforce by age

55+ years (14.7%)
Lowest % of workforce by age
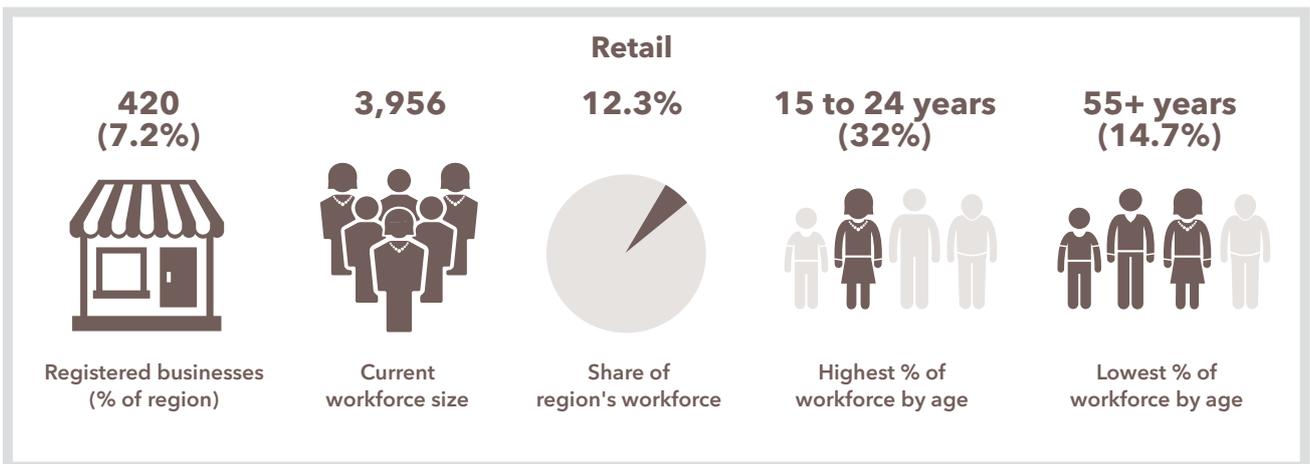
Infographic 2. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 8165.0 – Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2013 to June 2017, and ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016.

Top occupations – Retail

- Retail Sales Assistants and Salespersons — 1,810
- Retail Managers — 463
- Checkout Operators and Office Cashiers — 301
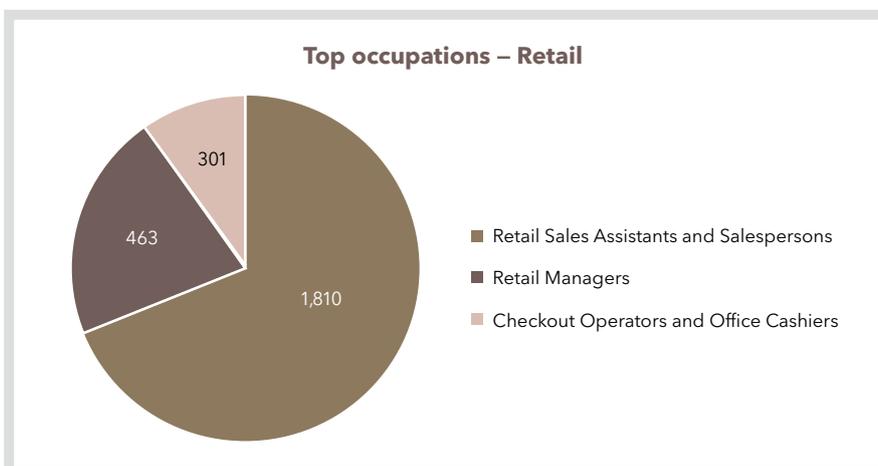
Figure 12: Top occupations – Retail. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, top occupations – retail, 2016.

Figures 13 and 14 show the key qualifications and take-up of retail apprenticeships and traineeships over the last few years.

Key qualifications – Retail

|	Certificate II in Retail Services	Certificate III in Retail	Certificate IV in Retail Management
2014	178	215	12
2015	155	126	13
2016	129	119	9
Total	460	467	24

Figure 13: Key qualifications – Retail. Source: National Council for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), 2018, National VET Provider Collection.

Commencements/completions 2014 to 2017

	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	New Commencements	Completions	New Commencements	Completions	New Commencements	Completions	New Commencements	Completions
Retail Trade Apprenticeship	11	12	4	4	12	10	10	5
Retail Trade Traineeship	47	33	35	32	30	20	45	18

Figure 14: Apprenticeships and traineeships – Retail. Source: Direct entry-level training administration (DELTA), accessed June 2018.

Workforce challenges

Fraser Coast tourism had 4397 people (direct and indirect) employed in the industry in 2016–2017.[39] A number of private and public sector tourism development and infrastructure projects have been identified as significant catalysts for tourism industry growth. If progressed, they are expected to generate jobs and new skills requirements.

Labour and skills are crucial components to the tourism supply chain. Enhancing the quality of service is pivotal in building the region's reputation, both domestically and globally. This will ensure that once tourists visit the region, they will want to return and bring others with them.

All regions in Queensland are experiencing shortages for waiters, kitchenhands, bar attendants, baristas and chefs.[40] Data shows that for each month between May 2010 and November 2017, the Central Queensland labour market region, of which the Fraser Coast tourism region is a part, had an average of 72 job advertisements for hospitality, retail and service managers and 72 for food trade workers (including chefs)[41], with 71 job advertisements respectively for hospitality workers.

Turnover in the tourism industry has been identified as a concern, which is costly for employers.[42] During consultation, stakeholders identified that staff retention issues were attributed to small labour pools, unsociable hours, low wages, seasonality and a casualised workforce. Industry can benefit from

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39 Tourism Research Australia, Regional tourism satellite accounts, 2016–17, https://www.tra.gov.au/research/view-all-publications/all-publications/economic-reports/regional-tourism-satellite-accounts, accessed July 2018.
40 Australian Government Department of Employment, 2017, *Presentation to the Tourism Industry Advisory Group*.
41 Australian Government Department of Jobs and Small Business, *Labour Market Information Portal*, Vacancy Report, May 2018, IVI Regional Data – May 2010 onwards, http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/VacancyReport, accessed July 2018.
41 Davidson, M, Timo, N & Wang, Y 2010, How much does labour turnover cost? A case study of Australian four and five-star hotels, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22 (4) June 2010, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/45192991_How_much_does_labour_turnover_cost_A_case_study_of_Australian_four-_and_five-star_hotels, accessed July 2018.

reviewing their own recruitment, retention, succession planning and training strategies to boost productivity and improve the attractiveness of the industry to meet the future demand for skilled labour.

There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to solving labour and skills issues. Collaboration between industries, government and education is central to progressing the identified opportunities to overcome these challenges. Table 3 looks at identified challenges for the industry, as well as opportunities to be progressed that may support the jobs and skills growth required to meet future demand.

Challenge	Opportunity/action
Build the industry's profile and attractiveness	○ Develop and promote a local nomination process to identify suitable local employers for an 'Employer of Choice' at the Fraser Coast Business and Tourism Awards and the Queensland Tourism Awards. ○ Identify and promote exceptional local apprentices and trainees and nominate for the Queensland Training Awards. ○ Promote the range and depth of career opportunities in the industry, including career advisors in schools and industry liaison officers in Jobactive providers.
Build a sustainable labour pool	○ Promote the benefits of work experience and internships to employers through increased collaboration between industry and education providers. ○ Investigate and develop Indigenous tourism opportunities and support Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in upskilling and training within the region. ○ Increase awareness of existing business support programs available within the region, and encourage business participation through marketing strategies across various media. ○ Increase industry awareness of employment options available to secure a continuous supply of labour – underutilised groups such as youth, migrant workers, Indigenous workers, women returning to work and mature age workers.
Build the industry's capacity to grow and flourish	○ Promote the benefits of volunteering as a hands-on opportunity to gain valuable employability skills within the industry while providing community benefit. ○ Inform employers of funding subsidies available for tourism-related qualifications. ○ Promote convenient and affordable upskilling opportunities for local tourism businesses to develop social media and marketing strategies.
Build the industry's capacity to address local issues and develop innovative solutions	○ Pilot an online database that will: - provide a list of current vacancies in the tourism and hospitality industry in the region - promote upcoming potential job opportunities - allow job seekers to list their skills and type of work they are looking for. ○ Increase promotion of existing resources, including employment and training, apprenticeships and traineeships, to build business capabilities. ○ Promote the range of services available to support Indigenous tourism businesses, and identify and promote Indigenous tourism champions.

Table 3: Challenges and opportunities – Tourism.

Manufacturing

The manufacturing industry is one of the Fraser Coast's most important sectors. It is the fifth largest employer in the region and contributes $748.7 million (gross total sales) or 11.1 per cent to the Fraser Coast economy.[43]

While manufacturing has a long and proud history in the Fraser Coast, it is facing both challenges and opportunities. The industry has weathered the impact of the global financial crisis and is on a growth trajectory anticipated to be fuelled by population growth, as well as significant manufacturing contracts in the region.

Manufacturing has been identified by the Fraser Coast Regional Council as one of the six pillars of the economy.[44] Its established engineering, timber, machinery and equipment manufacturing industry sectors have the potential to become world-class in servicing sectors such as transport, mining, industrial equipment, agriculture and waste. Significant manufacturing activities in the region include:

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[43] Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *economic profile*, Output by Industry. https://economy.id.com.au/fraser-coast/output-by-industry, accessed June 2018.
[44] Fraser Coast Regional Council 2015, *Economic Development Strategy 2015 – 2020,* http://www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/economic-development-strategy, accessed June 2018.

- timber production and processing of softwood and hardwood. The Fraser Coast region is a key centre of the Queensland forest and timber industry and employs 516 regional workers (1.75 per cent of local employment)[45]

- Queensland's largest producer of sawn timber, which manufactures a large volume of industrial, structural and engineered timber products. Operating from multiple sites throughout the eastern coast, they are a leader in technology implementation, product development and quality control, with state-of-the-art production facilities and environmental standards. Regionally, they employ more than 250 people, and provide significant indirect employment through contractor supply, site services and by-product processing

- a large logging, sawmilling, timber treatment and structural timber distribution and sales business, with strong exports to New Zealand, Fiji, New Guinea and other Pacific nations. This manufacturer has recently secured $1.75 million funding under the federal government's Regional Jobs and Investment Package to provide a production line for the development of laminated timber products. It is expected that this will double the number of jobs at the 30-employee Maryborough facility, with the potential to create more employment opportunities for sales representatives and harvesters in the field[46]

- a leading provider of integrated services in Australia and New Zealand that designs, builds and sustains assets, infrastructure and facilities for customers in sectors including rail, transport, utilities, oil and gas, and mining. The Maryborough Service Delivery Centre is an important part of the local economy, generating $60 million a year for the Queensland economy[47]

- a metal component manufacturing company established in 1982, which boasts more than 7000 square metres of factory workspace. With modern world-class equipment and lean manufacturing management principles, it services many diverse industries, including mining, engineering, construction, transport, rail, gas and oil, energy, medical and marine/shipping

- a leading sugar manufacturer that harvests cane from approximately 13,500 hectares and receives sugar cane from more than 100 growers across the Fraser Coast. The local sugar industry provides the primary income for approximately 500 Fraser Coast families.[48] The mill typically processes 800,000 to 900,000 tonnes of cane each year[49] and produces raw sugar in Maryborough and exports 100 per cent of its product through the bulk sugar terminal in Bundaberg.

Infographic 3 and Figure 15 provide a snapshot of business and workforce characteristics for the manufacturing industry in the Fraser Coast region.

Manufacturing

268 (4.6%)	1,764	5.5%	45 to 54 years (24.2%)	15 to 24 years (12.5%)
Registered businesses (% of region)	Current workforce size	Share of region's workforce	Highest % of workforce by age	Lowest % of workforce by age
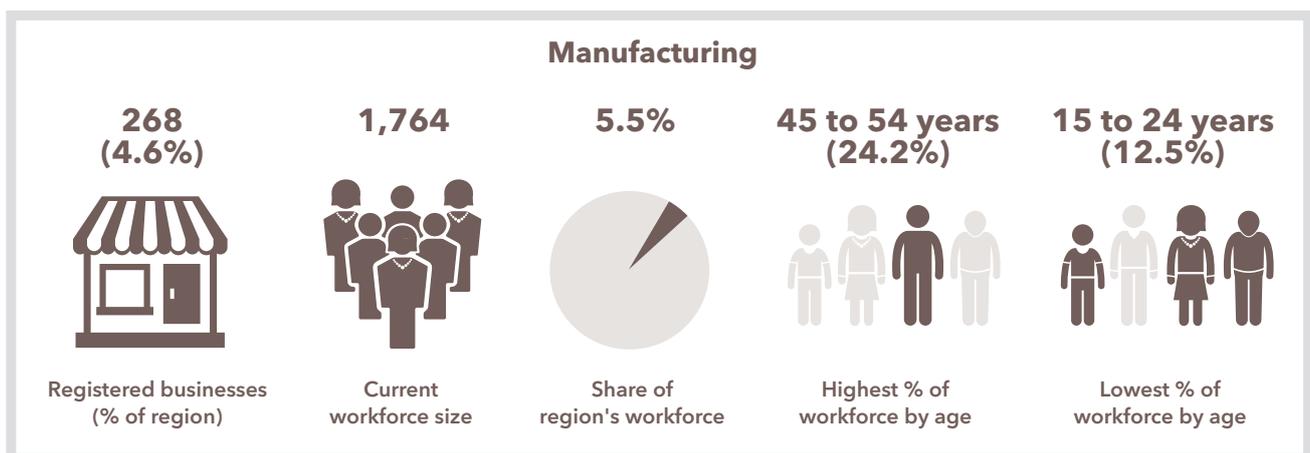
Infographic 3. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 8165.0 – Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2013 to June 2017, and ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016.

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[45] Australian Government 2018, *Regional Jobs Investment Packages (RJIP)*, Wide Bay Burnett Queensland grant recipients, https://www.business.gov.au/Assistance/Regional-Jobs-and-Investment-Packages/Wide-Bay-Burnett-Queensland/RJIP-Wide-Bay-Burnett-Queensland-grant-recipients, accessed July 2018.

[46] Antrobus, B 2018, $1.75 million to carve new age for M'boro timber industry, *Fraser Coast Chronicle*, 9 March, https://www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au/news/headline-is-not-set/3356358/, accessed July 2018.

[47] Provided by Downer Group, July 2018.

[48] Provided by MSF Sugar Limited, July 2018.

Top occupations – Manufacturing

- Technicians and Trade Workers: 575
- Machinery Operators and Drivers: 241
- Managers: 239
- Labourers: 222
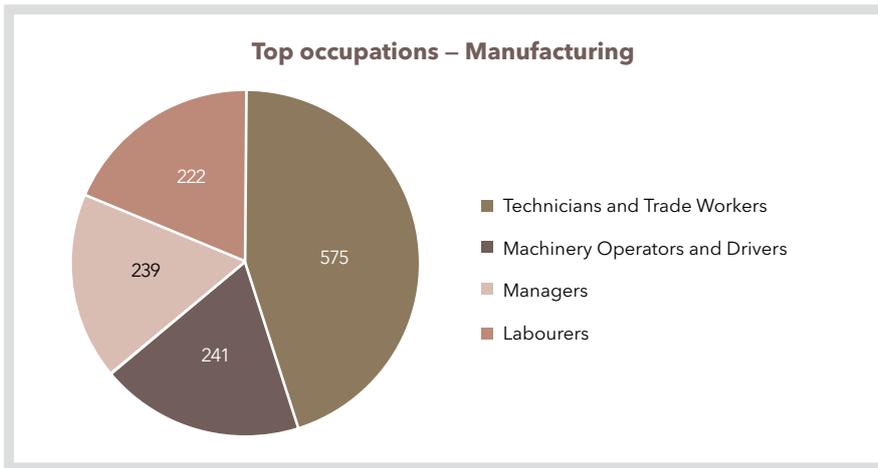
Figure 15: Top occupations – Manufacturing. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, top occupations – manufacturing, 2016.

The VET ecosystem plays a vital role in building the work readiness of job seekers and developing the future workforce through the employment-based apprenticeship and traineeship pathway, as well as VET courses delivered by RTOs operating in the region. Figures 16 and 17 show the key qualifications and take-up of apprenticeships and traineeships over the last few years.
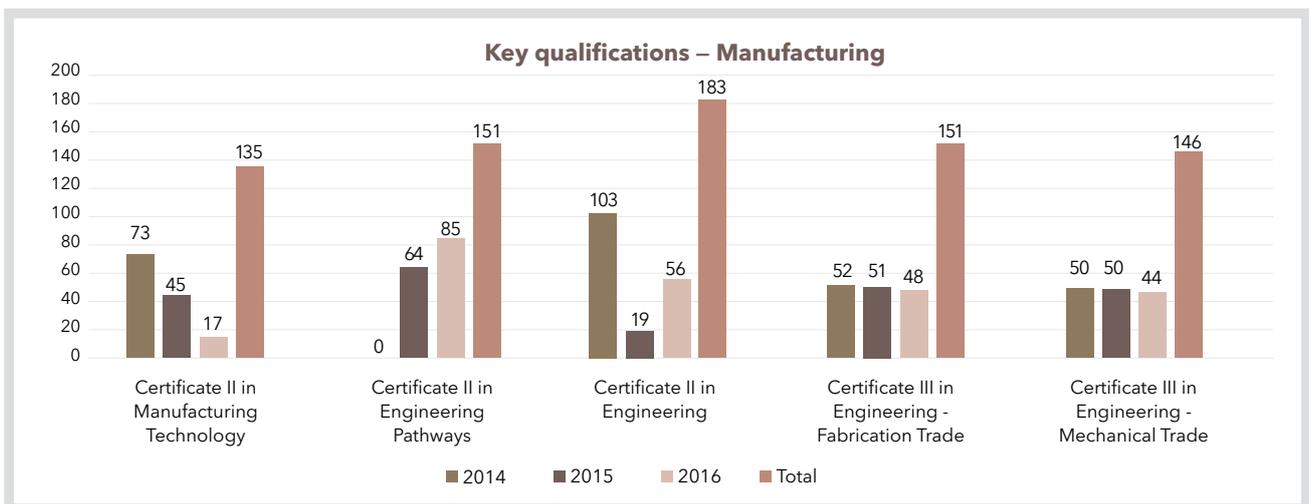
Figure 16: Key qualifications – Manufacturing. Source: National Council for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), 2018, National VET Provider Collection. NB – although not listed in top enrolments for the three-year period 2014 to 2016, it is important to note that Certificate III in Food Processing had 24 enrolments in 2016.
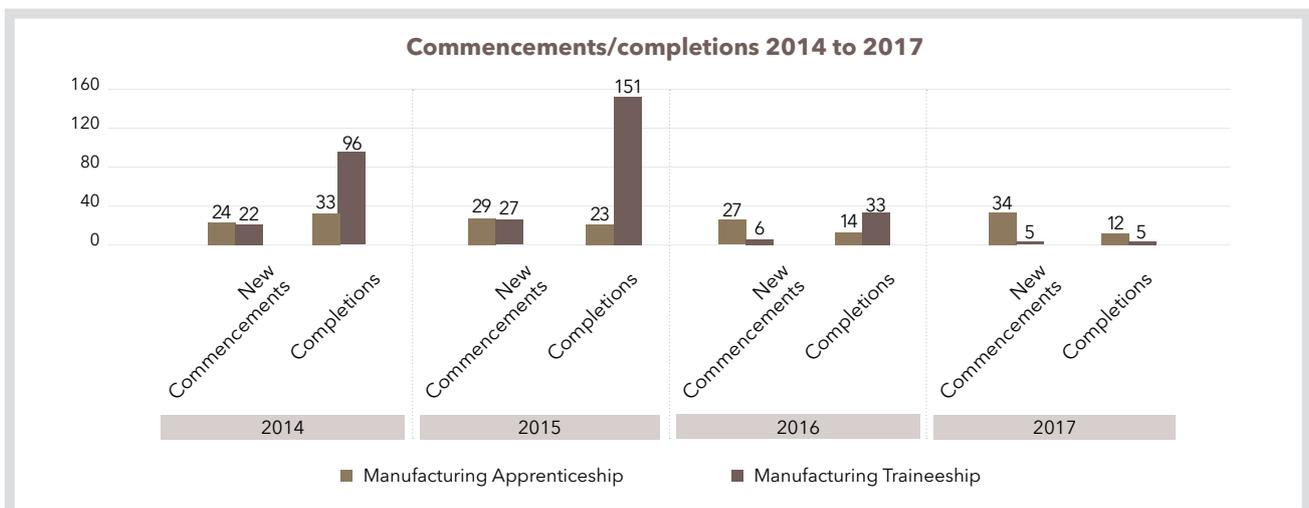
Figure 17: Apprenticeships and traineeships – Manufacturing. Source: Direct entry-level training administration (DELTA), accessed June 2018.

Workforce challenges

The manufacturing industry is continually changing and local consultation revealed there are concerns for the future, in particular the basic skills required for the future workforce.

Of concern to the industry are the numeracy and literacy skills of those seeking employment for the first time in the sector, and to a lesser extent the existing workforce, particularly as digital technology increases. Problem solving, critical thinking and effective communication – the ability to be able to 'think on your feet', assess problems, share thoughts and opinions, use good judgement and find solutions – are also identified as fundamental for the current and emerging workforce.

The delivery of LLN and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills in current education and training options is important for the manufacturing industry. As the wave of new technology and innovation evolves, it is important that proactive steps are taken to provide job seekers with the foundation skills required to enter the workforce, and importantly support the existing workforce to adapt to the shifting industry.

Skills gaps were identified by industry stakeholders as a prime constraint in growing local business. A shortage of suitably qualified trade and professional staff located in the region is hampering business growth. While there may be a pool of trade-qualified workers seeking employment, they often have not worked in manufacturing for some time and as such, they do not have the 'currency of skills' to re-enter the workforce without substantial retraining and financial commitment from the employer.

Additionally, the resurgence of the resources sector is expected to have a drain on this pool of labour, which is likely to exacerbate the issue.

The fact that industry is seeking new staff with a range of skills levels at a time of high regional unemployment suggests there is a gap or mismatch. While some of this might relate to an increasing requirement of skills, there may be other factors at play. For example, employers have voiced experience with poor attendance, attitude and low ambition as contributing factors. Conversely, employees have experiences where poor communication and management style have reduced satisfaction.

Another major issue concerning manufacturing employers is the ageing workforce. The 2016 Census data shows that the highest percentage of workforce by age for manufacturing in the Fraser Coast region is over 45 years (44.4 per cent), while the lowest percentage is the 15 to 24 years age bracket

(14.8 per cent).[50] This presents issues in the context of planning for the future workforce.

As businesses transition and take advantage of new opportunities, there is a need to ensure that workers (particularly those nearing retirement) keep their skills up to date and be available to mentor and supervise the new entrants, trainees and apprentices of the future.[51] Even if a mature age worker is skilled in the practical component of the job, it does not mean they are proficient teachers, coaches and mentors. Mature age workers, and high performing employees promoted into management roles, may require targeted training in their skills. If this issue is not addressed, there is a possibility that there will be significant loss of industry knowledge and capability leading to a decline in the capacity of manufacturing in the Fraser Coast region.

The take-up of apprenticeships and traineeships is not meeting the potential demand that will exist as the current workforce approaches retirement. A focus on education and training to attract a younger cohort will need to occur in order to not only avoid significant knowledge and skills gaps that will become more pronounced as technology and innovation evolve, but also meet demand as the workforce retires.

Industry to education partnerships are key to attracting the future workforce, and essential to ensure the delivery of training remains current and relevant to the ever-shifting landscape that is manufacturing. Both now and in to the future, manufacturing enterprises will need to engage with schools and preparatory programs such as Gateway Schools and Trade Training Centres to influence future curriculum direction to better prepare the manufacturing worker of the future.

Tailored, local community-based support through Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs is offered to disadvantaged groups, including young people, mature age job seekers, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with disability, women re-entering the workforce and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, to assist transition to employment and increase workforce participation.

SATs provide a valuable mechanism for employers and industries to work with schools to provide young people with the skills and knowledge required in the workplace.

Young people undertaking SATs gain experience and confidence working with colleagues, interacting with clients, and using the latest industry equipment.

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50 Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Economic profile*, Local workers – Age structure – Manufacturing, https://economy.id.com.au/fraser-coast/workers-age-structure?Indkey=23003, accessed June 2018.

51 Australian Industry Group 2016, *Making Apprenticeships Work*, Melbourne, http://cdn.aigroup.com.au/Reports/2016/15160_apprenticeships_policy_full.pdf, accessed July 2018.

In many cases, they finish school better prepared for full-time work, having already obtained valuable core practical and theoretical skills, and the 'employability traits' industry craves – they can hit the ground running.

Additionally, attending information sessions, and providing industry tours and work experience opportunities for both the students and their career advisors (parents, teachers and others) will go a long way to improving awareness of how the industry has changed and the diverse career pathways into the manufacturing sector. This will be a key driver to attract the next generation of workers into the industry.

The rapidly changing nature of the industry means that workers must adopt a lifelong learning approach and undertake education and training throughout their careers. The current and emerging manufacturing workforce in the Fraser Coast region can be strengthened. To achieve this, businesses will need to think outside the traditional box in their workforce development strategies. Collaboration between industries, government and education is central in progressing the identified opportunities to overcome these challenges.

Table 4 looks at identified challenges for the industry, as well as opportunities to be progressed that may support the jobs and skills growth required to meet future demand.

Challenge	Opportunity/action
Sporadic and inconsistent nature of supply and maintenance contracts	○ Work with all levels of government to identify and promote workshops and training to support local industry to better understand government procurement policy, and how to tender for projects, e.g. development of a capability statement. ○ Work with all levels of government to promote the manufacturing capability in the region to secure regional projects that will support jobs and skills growth.
The image of the manufacturing industry needs to be improved so that it is more attractive to new entrants	○ Improve the collaboration between industry, schools, Jobactive and other service providers to 'myth bust' the perceptions and attract career seekers from the underutilised groups of youth, migrant workers, Indigenous workers, women returning to work and mature age workers. ○ Promote the industry and career pathways at local and out-of-region career expos. ○ Facilitate industry tours for career advisors and consultants in schools and Jobactive providers to give them a better understanding of the industry and the diverse range of career options available. ○ Encourage greater industry collaboration with Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs to support workforce participation for underutilised groups.
Promoting and selling the region to skilled workers	○ Develop and publicise good news stories. ○ Promote the lifestyle opportunities. ○ Promote regional collaboration to investigate and design regionally targeted initiatives.
Education and training	○ Identify and promote training and workshops that will help businesses to build management capability to improve workplace culture within the enterprise, and enhance productivity by building employee satisfaction and engagement. ○ Promote apprenticeships and traineeships, workforce incentives and funding to businesses. ○ Encourage and facilitate open dialogue between industry and regional, state and national education stakeholders to investigate, design and implement region-specific education and training programs (particularly for unemployed and disengaged youth) that will support and drive transition to employment outcomes. ○ Work with training providers to develop industry-specific training and flexible delivery models. ○ Provide upskilling opportunities for the existing workforce to adopt new and emerging technologies. ○ Develop, implement and monitor a Regional Industry Training Register.
Language, literacy and numeracy	○ Work with education and training providers to run programs that will support and lift the level of language, literacy and numeracy of the existing workforce and better prepare new entrants to succeed in the industry. ○ Facilitate industry engagement with the Manufacturing Gateway Skills Program and Trade Training Centres to influence theoretical training requirements around language, literacy and numeracy, as well as science, technology, engineering and mathematics competence as a base entry requirement.

Table 4: Challenges and opportunities – Manufacturing.

Health care and social assistance

Over the past 30 years, there has been a fundamental structural change in the industry composition of employment in Australia. In particular, the share of workers in manufacturing and agriculture has declined, with a larger share of workers now employed in major service industries such as health care and social assistance.[52]

Nationally, the health care and social assistance sector is the fastest growing industry, employing more than 1.69 million people across Australia.[53] This strong growth is due in part to the ageing population and increasing demand for community and home-based care services. It covers health services like hospitals, dental and ambulance services, as well as services such as aged care and disability support. This section will focus on the aged care and disability support sectors, as these are predicted to have the largest impact on jobs and skills for the Fraser Coast region, particularly in the context of the NDIS rollout which commenced in July 2018.

In 2016, there were 5744 people employed in the health and social assistance industry. This equates to 17.8 per cent of the workforce.[54]

As at 30 June 2016, the estimated resident population of the Bundaberg and Wide Bay–Burnett NDIS region, of which Fraser Coast is a part, was 241,422 people, which equals five per cent of the Queensland population. The estimated population of the Bundaberg and Wide Bay–Burnett NDIS region has grown by nearly 30,000 people since 2010. The average annual population growth in the region is 0.7 per cent, which is less than half of Queensland overall (1.6 per cent).[55]

For the Fraser Coast region, between 2016 and 2036, the population is forecast to increase by 44,146 people, at an average annual rate of 1.8 per cent.[56] The region has an ageing population, with 26.3 per cent being 65 years and over, an increase of 6442 people from 2011 to 2016.[57] There were 2533 people over the age of 85 living in the region in 2016.[58]

The majority of the population in this NDIS region are in the Fraser Coast and Bundaberg local government areas (LGAs) (65 per cent), indicating that most of the disability workforce (and probably participants) are likely to be found in those areas. This is a large geographical area to cover, and it is not clear how mobile this workforce might be in order to support the other less populated areas in the region.

Infographic 4 and Figure 18 provide a snapshot of business and workforce characteristics for the health care and social assistance industry in the Fraser Coast region.

Health Care and Social Assistance

404 (6.9%)	**5,744**	**17.8%**	**45 to 54 years (24.4%)**	**15 to 24 years (9.8%)**
Registered businesses (% of region)	Current workforce size	Share of region's workforce	Highest % of workforce by age	Lowest % of workforce by age
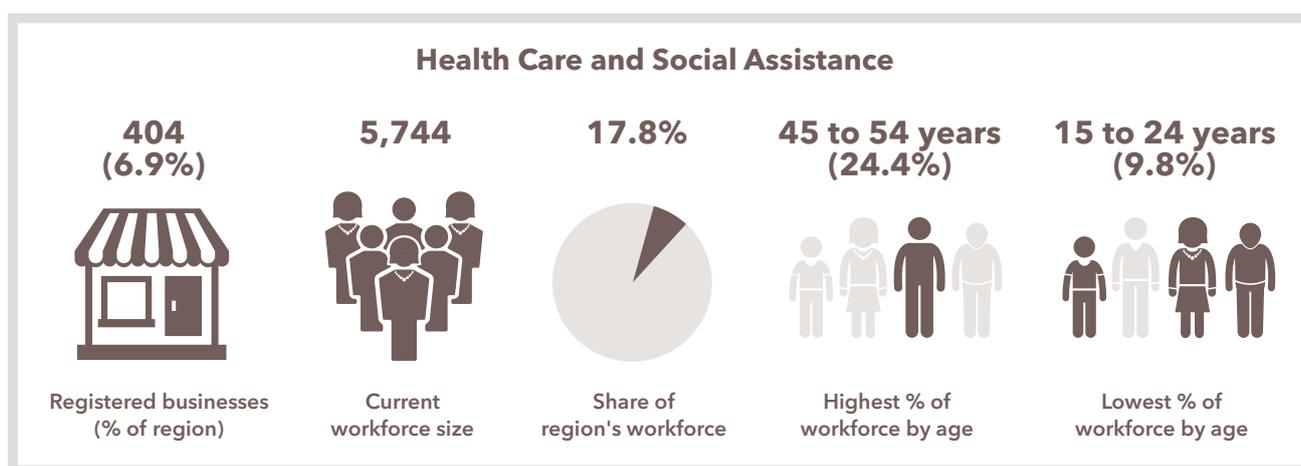
Infographic 4. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 8165.0 – Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2013 to June 2017, and ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016.

[52] Industry Outlook, *Health Care and Social Assistance*, September 2014, www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A65230, accessed July 2018.

[53] Australian Government Department of Jobs and Small Business 2018, *Labour Market Information Portal*, Health Care and Social Assistance, http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/IndustryInformation/HealthCareandSocialAssistance, accessed July 2018.

[54] Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Economic profile*, Industry sector reports – Health care and social assistance, https://economy.id.com.au/fraser-coast/reports-industry, accessed June 2018.

[55] Workability Qld 2017, *Bundaberg and Wide Bay Burnett NDIS Region Workforce Profile*, http://workabilityqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/WorkAbility-Qld-Local-Workforce-Profile-Bundaberg-and-Wide-Bay-Burnett-NDIS-Region.pdf, accessed June 2018.

[56] Queensland Government Statisticians Office, *Queensland Regional Profiles*, Fraser Coast, 19 June 2018, https://statistics.qgso.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles, accessed July 2018.

[57] Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Community profile*, Five year age groups. https://profile.id.com.au/fraser-coast/five-year-age-groups?WebID=140, accessed June 2018.

[58] Ibid.

Top occupations – Health Care and Social Assistance

- Community and Personal Service Workers
- Professionals
- Clerical and Administrative Workers

2,132 | 1,840 | 705
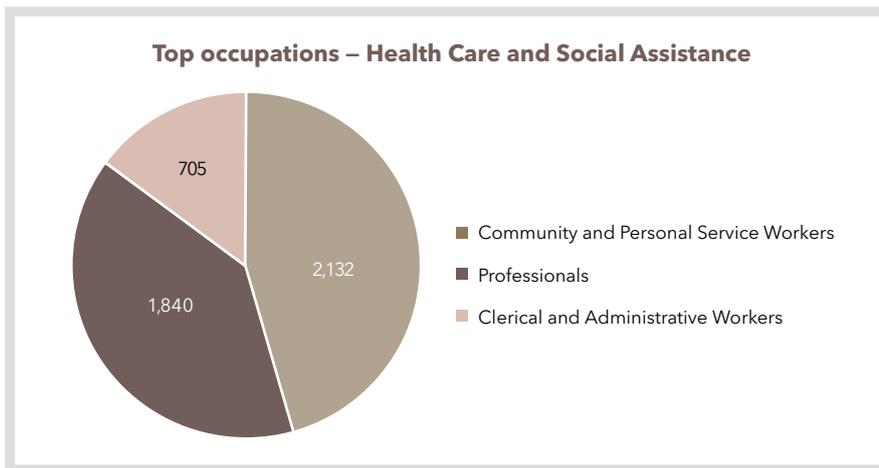
Figure 18: Top occupations – Health Care and Social Assistance. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, top occupations – health care and social assistance, 2016.

The VET ecosystem plays a vital role in building the work readiness of job seekers and developing the future workforce through the employment-based apprenticeship and traineeship pathway, as well as VET courses delivered by RTOs operating in the region. Figures 19 and 20 show the key qualifications and take-up of apprenticeships and traineeships over the last few years.


Key qualifications – Health Care and Social Assistance

	Certificate III in Aged Care	Certificate III in Disability	Certificate III in Individual Support	Certificate IV in Aged Care	Certificate IV in Disability
2014	578	98	0	60	65
2015	432	187	0	85	40
2016	171	101	379	42	29
Total	1,173	389	379	187	134
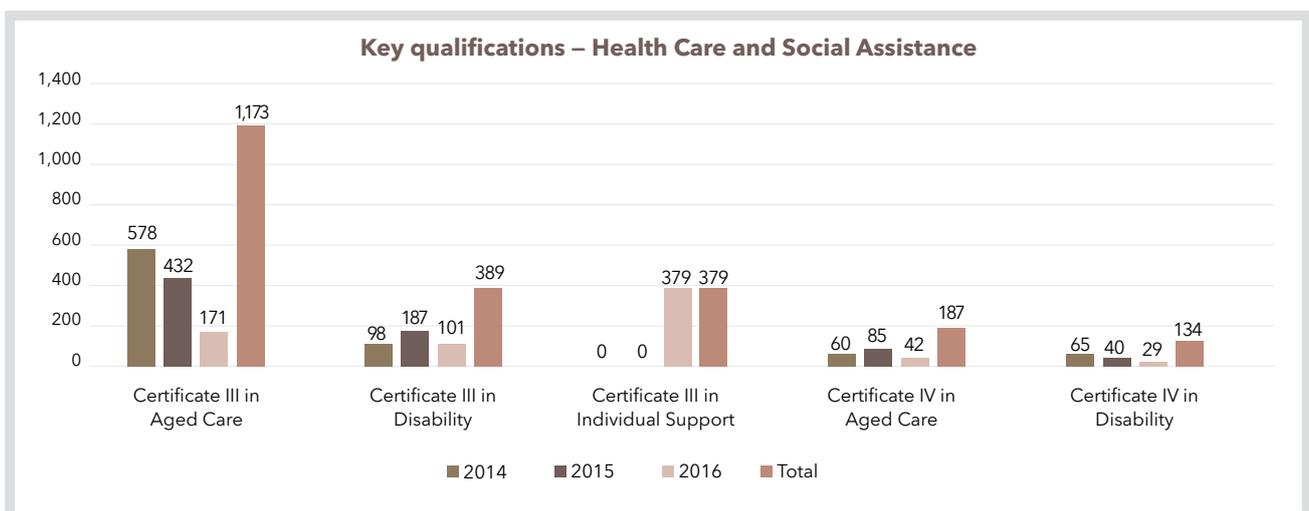
Figure 19: Key qualifications – Health Care and Social Assistance. Source: National Council for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), 2018, National VET Provider Collection.

The National Health Reform Agreement implemented in 2011 brought about changes in the way services were funded and delivered in aged care, health and disability.[59] To reflect these changes, the 2015 release of the CHC Training Package mirrored the significant changes that had occurred across the community services industry since the training package was last reviewed in 2008.

A major change that is reflected in enrolment data has been the replacement of three qualifications – Certificate III in Aged Care, Certificate III in Disability and Certificate III in Home and Community Care – by the Certificate III in Individual Support.

The subsequent impact on training enrolments can be seen in the data of Figure 19. In 2016, following the accreditation of the Certificate III in Individual Support, enrolments fell significantly in Certificate III in Aged Care and Certificate III in Disability as the industry transitioned to the new qualification. Of concern is that the enrolments in 2016 in the Certificate III in Individual Support are not comparable to the drop in enrolments in the superseded qualifications.

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[59] Council of Australian Governments, *National Health Reform Agreement*, 2011, http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/health/_archive/national-agreement.pdf, accessed July 2018.

Commencements/completions 2014 to 2017

	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	New Commencements	Completions	New Commencements	Completions	New Commencements	Completions	New Commencements	Completions
Health Care and Social Assistance Apprenticeship	13	6	0	3	8	1	1	1
Health Care and Social Assistance Traineeship	27	45	19	27	20	19	31	11
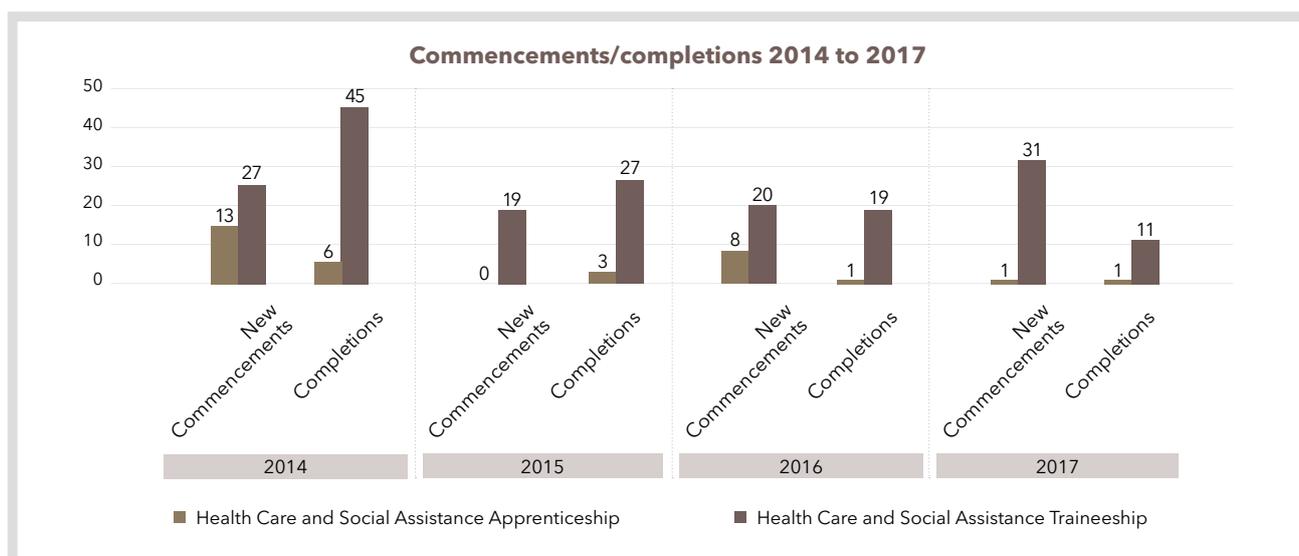
Figure 20: Apprenticeships and Traineeships – Health Care and Social Assistance. Source: Direct entry-level training administration (DELTA), accessed June 2018.

Workforce challenges

The progressive increase in available options for people with disability and the increased investment under the NDIS will require significant growth in the number of workers to support people with disability. There will also be a new range of skills required of workers to meet this increased demand.

The Fraser Coast and Bundaberg LGAs, which likely contain the majority of both participants and workforce, dominate this NDIS region. The region covers a significant geographical area, with an estimated 50 participants per 100 km^2, which means that the existing and new workforce will need to be comfortable with and supported to cover large distances to provide services.

There is a significant workforce requirement in the Wide Bay–Burnett region, of which the Fraser Coast is a part. The estimates around workforce growth for this region at full NDIS implementation are approximately 1850–2200 full-time equivalent (FTE) roles (or up to 3500 part-time). For the Fraser Coast region, the highest National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) projection rates when translated to part-time positions indicates up to 1609 workers will be needed. This is a significant workforce demand, requiring substantial attraction, retention and capability development work to be undertaken to meet the targets.[60]

There is an opportunity to support short and medium-term workforce stability by targeting the mature/semi-retired/retired cohort to consider working in the health care and social assistance sector. While this does not necessarily support longer term workforce needs, as these 'second careers' may be of a shorter duration, it could help to meet the short to medium-term needs.

According to the data from the 2016 Census, the Fraser Coast region's workforce was 77.8 per cent female – traditionally females are more likely to seek part-time work, and there may be opportunities to encourage this group to increase their total work hours. The same data source also stated that 41.6 per cent of the workforce is aged 55 years and over. It may also be challenging to extend the hours of older age groups who may be in transition to retirement.[61]

It is recognised that an appropriately skilled, engaged and diverse workforce will be needed to meet the expectations of the NDIS participants in the region. Collaboration between industries, government and education is central to progressing the identified opportunities to overcome these challenges.

Table 5 looks at identified challenges for the industry, as well as opportunities to be progressed that may support the jobs and skills growth required to meet future demand.

[60] WorkAbility Qld 2017, *Bundaberg and Wide Bay Burnett NDIS Region Workforce Profile*, http://workabilityqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/WorkAbility-Qld-Local-Workforce-Profile-Bundaberg-and-Wide-Bay-Burnett-NDIS-Region.pdf, accessed June 2018.
[61] Ibid.

Challenge	Opportunity/action
Attracting a diverse and skilled future workforce	o Build relationships and sector understanding within employment service providers to increase awareness and accurate perceptions of the aged care and disability sectors. o Identify and capitalise on varied communication channels and media within local communities to promote key aged care and disability workforce opportunities to job seekers and career changers. o Participate in major community events that target job seekers and career changers (e.g. expos, open days). o Work with schools and youth agencies to identify effective ways to inform and engage young people regarding working in the aged care and disability sectors. o Identify and promote effective recruitment and retention methods to best engage workforce priority populations, including Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse applicants, and people with disability and their families. o Work with education providers and other key skills ecosystem stakeholders to promote and incorporate more VETiS options for senior students. o Support the ongoing development of productive relationships between employers, training providers and employment providers to increase quality of applicants, trainees and placements. o Investigate, adapt and promote methods and tools being developed in other workforce growth areas.
Retaining an engaged workforce	o Review strategies being used in NDIS transitioned areas to solve remuneration, reward and flexibility challenges with a view to increasing worker satisfaction. o Investigate collaborative shift / job-sharing models. o Identify and support professional development that is congruent with new work skills required to transition existing workforces. o Investigate and trial the potential of collaborative training across the industry to reduce duplication. o Identify upskilling needs in organisations to better manage performance and change management communication for remote workforces. o Seek and share current information and data around NDIS rollout and effects including the key commonalities of successfully transitioning workforces. o Identify and address specific areas of technology gaps within the skills of the current workforces and within workforce management systems. o Promote greater inclusion of technology components within training for regional contexts.

Table 5: Challenges and opportunities – Health care and social assistance.

Agribusiness

As an historically agricultural area, the region has an established supply chain with significant infrastructure including water, sugar mills and meat processing works. The Wide Bay–Burnett region, of which the Fraser Coast is a part, accounts for 10 per cent of Queensland's agricultural production. Significant agricultural activities include timber production and processing (softwood and hardwood), beef, pork and poultry production and processing, sugar cane production and processing, tree crops (especially macadamias and avocadoes), fruit and vegetable production (especially citrus and tomatoes), and seafood production and processing.

The total value of agriculture commodities produced (VACP – excluding fisheries and forestry) for the Fraser Coast region in 2015–2016 was $72 million. The largest commodity produced was livestock slaughtering, which accounted for 42.2 per cent of the region's agricultural output in value terms, followed by other broadacre crops (33.7 per cent).[63]

There is a noticeable trend in the transference of some farming operations such as small crops to tree crops. This is attributed to market trends, pest incursions and re-evaluation of farming operations to more manageable and profitable commodities such as macadamia and avocado. These crops are less labour intensive and often can be managed, harvested and transported with a team of fewer than 15 people in peak season.

The Maryborough and Gympie area accounts for more than 50 per cent of the state's total forestry and timber production, predominantly softwood plantation-based, but also native hardwood. This area also contains some of the region's new hardwood plantation estate, which is presently immature and is expected to be ready for harvest after 2025. Forestry production in this area has been supported by significant government investment in the past, particularly in the establishment of the softwood plantation and hardwood plantation estates. The region includes some of the state's more 'productive' native forests areas, on both state and private lands, which are generally associated with higher rainfall.

Due to the forestry production resource critical mass, there has been significant private sector investment in regional timber processing facilities, taking advantage of shorter haulage distances for forest products and playing a significant role in employment in the manufacturing sector. These facilities process considerable quantities of forest products from inside and outside of the Wide Bay–Burnett region.[64]

Established more than 25 years ago, Urangan is home to one of the longest standing seafood processors and exporters in Queensland. Employing an estimated 100 people, the site consists of a processing factory, freezing facility, cold storage, raw material handling facility, ice production and offices. The company has been professionally processing and exporting fresh and frozen seafood to Asia, the United States and the European Union for more than 10 years.[65] Gross value of production of seafood landed in the greater Wide Bay–Burnett region is in the order of $30 million, and up to 400 locals are employed in the catching, processing and distribution of seafood.[66]

Infographic 5 and Figure 21 provide a snapshot of business and workforce characteristics for the agribusiness industry in the Fraser Coast region.

Agribusiness

661 (11.3%)	876	2.7%	45 to 54 years (20.4%)	15 to 24 years (11.5%)
Registered businesses (% of region)	Current workforce size	Share of region's workforce	Highest % of workforce by age	Lowest % of workforce by age

Infographic 5. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 8165.0 – Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2013 to June 2017, and ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016.

[62] Australian Government 2018, *Regional Jobs Investment Packages (RJIP)*, Wide Bay Burnett Queensland grant recipients, https://www.business.gov.au/Assistance/Regional-Jobs-and-Investment-Packages/Wide-Bay-Burnett-Queensland/RJIP-Wide-Bay-Burnett-Queensland-grant-recipients, accessed July 2018.
[63] Fraser Coast Regional Council (n.d.), *Economic profile*, Agriculture, https://economy.id.com.au/fraser-coast/value-of-agriculture, accessed July 2018.
[64] Queensland Agriculture Land Audit – revised 2015, https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/environment/ag-land-audit, accessed July 2018.
[65] Australian Government 2018, *Regional Jobs Investment Packages (RJIP)*, Wide Bay Burnett Queensland grant recipients, https://www.business.gov.au/Assistance/Regional-Jobs-and-Investment-Packages/Wide-Bay-Burnett-Queensland/RJIP-Wide-Bay-Burnett-Queensland-grant-recipients, accessed July 2018.
[66] Fraser Coast Regional Council 2015, *Economic Development Strategy 2015 – 2020*, http://www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/economic-development-strategy, accessed June 2018.

Top occupations – Agribusiness

- Managers: 351
- Labourers: 215
- Machinery Operators: 96
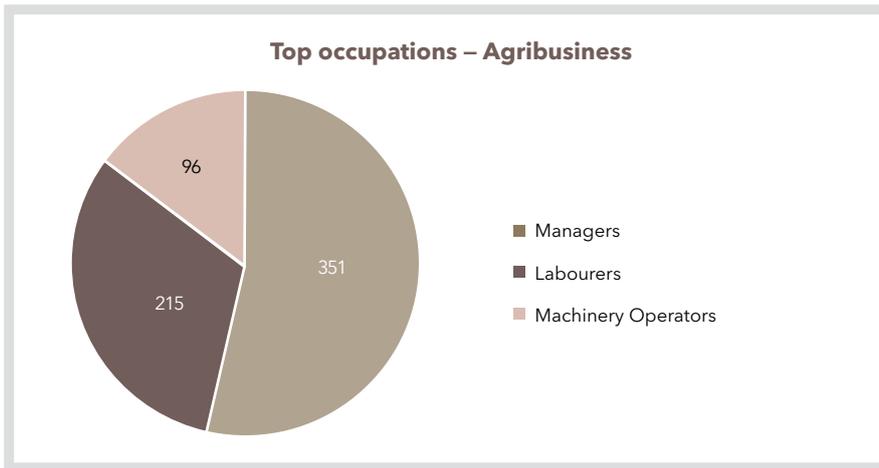
Figure 21: Top occupations – Agribusiness. Source: idcommunity, demographic resources, Fraser Coast Regional Council, top occupations – agricultural, forestry and fisheries, 2016. **Note:** *Anecdotally the Census data may not fully reflect the extent of seasonal and ad hoc workforces called upon for harvesting and packing.*

The VET ecosystem plays a vital role in building the work readiness of job seekers and developing the future workforce through the employment-based apprenticeship and traineeship pathway, as well as VET courses delivered by RTOs operating in the region. Figures 22 and 23 show the key qualifications and take-up of apprenticeships and traineeships over the last few years.

Key qualifications - Agribusiness

	2014	2015	2016	Total
Certificate II in Rural Operations	102	96	110	308
Certificate II in Forest Growing & Management	29	23	8	60
Certificate II in Horticulture	9	45	80	134
Certificate III in Horticulture	61	140	120	321
Diploma of Horticulture	16	26	55	67
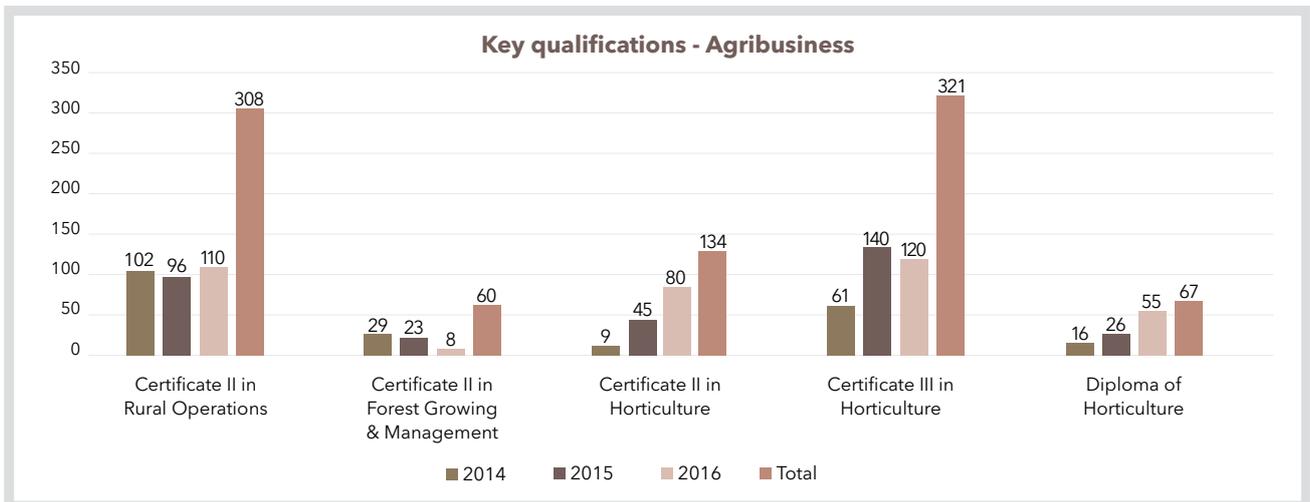
Figure 22: Key qualifications – Agribusiness. Source: National Council for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), 2018, National VET Provider Collection.

Commencements/completions 2014 to 2017
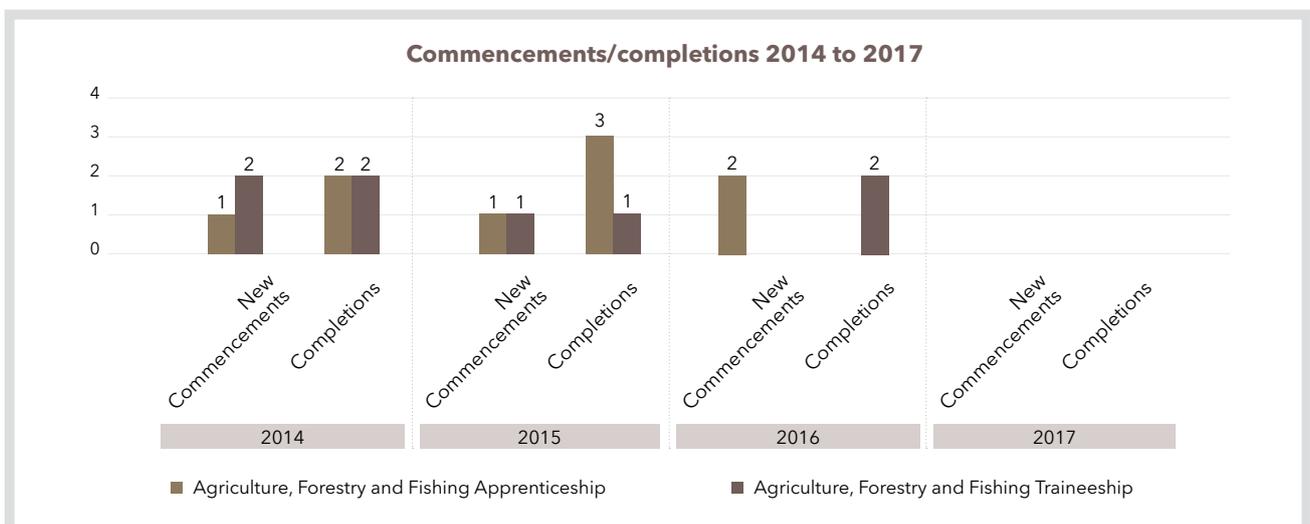
Figure 23: Apprenticeships and traineeships – Agribusiness. Source: Direct entry-level training administration (DELTA), accessed June 2018.

Workforce challenges

A number of factors influence employment in agribusiness. These include fluctuating commodity prices and adverse weather conditions such as drought, flooding and natural disasters.

A major capacity constraint to the agriculture sector is the ongoing supply of skilled and unskilled labour, in the context of a rapidly ageing workforce. From a workforce development perspective, the industry faces a challenge in several sectors as a result of the ageing of its people, skilled workers exiting the industry, and poor attraction and retention rates over an extended period. The 2016 Census of Population and Housing data identified 54.6 per cent (488) of the workforce in the Fraser Coast region was 45+ years, with 34.2 per cent (326) of workers aged 55 and over. Based on this data, the agriculture sector is forecast to lose a significant amount of its workforce over the next 10 years, mainly due to ageing.

Despite this trend, current educational enrolment numbers, particularly in Certificate II in Rural Operations, could meet future industry skills and labour needs as an entry point to the sector. However, low training commencement and completion rates in the apprenticeship and traineeship pathway, combined with high rates of labour departure from the sector due to portable skills, indicates that the current supply of VET graduates to industry is likely to be insufficient to meet the challenge of future industry skills and labour demand.

A significant barrier to attracting and keeping skilled workers relates to poor perceptions of agriculture as a career choice. Hard work for little return is the common view, with perceptions fuelled by the physical nature of work and low wages compared to other industries. Additionally, in other industries – such as traditional trades – there is an ability to 'step out on your own' after a few years. On the other hand, it is difficult for younger farmers to get a start on their own.

The McColl Report[67] attributed the decline in enrolments in agriculture-related tertiary courses in Australia to negative perceptions towards agricultural careers held by the general public, and a failure of the sector to promote the courses. Low levels of industry involvement in education and training, poor promotion of agricultural pathways and the limited capacity of the current education and training system to deliver innovative training solutions all reinforce negativity about working in agriculture.

More recent studies have found a link between low uptake of careers in agriculture and a lack of understanding of what such a career entails.[68] In 2012, the *Blueprint for Australian Agriculture*[69] linked labour shortages in Australian agriculture to community perceptions of the industry, a lack of knowledge and understanding of the agricultural sector, and a consequent poor uptake of agricultural careers.

Another significant issue is the attraction and retention of workers. In many aspects, the challenges faced by agriculture are those faced by rural Australia more generally.[70] For example, poor accessibility and limited access to transport, low wages, a lack of medical services, local education, appropriate accommodation, information technology and telecommunications services have contributed to the migration of young people away from rural areas.

Increasing automation is not only influencing the skills required (e.g. machinery operation and maintenance) and career pathway opportunities within the sector, it also means producers are likely to require fewer but more highly skilled workers in the future.

Automation and technology provide an additional challenge in that farm owners can be reluctant to allow an unskilled worker to operate expensive equipment that can be easily damaged, or damage crops as a result of improper operational practices. High-level machinery skills are also in demand in the mining sector.

Increasing mechanisation does not necessarily mean fewer jobs in the industry, but rather a shift in the skills required. Machinery operation, maintenance, design, innovation and new technologies, for example drones, will be more in demand in both extensive and intensive production regions. Digital literacy will be essential.[71]

The seasonal and variable nature of many agriculture products also poses significant constraints in terms of attraction, career path development and continuity of skilled labour. At the lower skilled end of the industry, ongoing casualisation due to seasonality, as well as variable market forces and weather patterns, means the labour force is substantially based on itinerant labour including international working holidaymakers, Australian travellers as well as a core of local workers who move between multiple employers.

The demand for food is expected to grow substantially in upcoming decades. A major factor for this increase is world population growth. Every

67 VOCEDplus, Report of the Review of Agricultural and Related Education [McColl report], http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/325742 accessed June 2018.
68 National Farmers' Federation 2013, *The Blueprint for Australian Agriculture 2013-2020*, Barton, http://www.nff.org.au/blueprint.html, accessed June 2018.
69 Ibid.
70 National Farmers' Federation 2014, *National Agriculture Workforce Development Plan*, http://www.nff.org.au/submissions-search. html?subcategoryid=3662, accessed June 2018.
71 Hollick, V 2016, Robotics for farms of the future, *News*, 15 June, University of Sydney, https://sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2016/06/15/robotics-for-farms-of-the-future.html, accessed July 2018.

day, more than 200,000 people are added to the world population, which is projected to increase to 9.2 billion by 2050.[72] The need to produce far more food and fibre from essentially the same production area will likely increase pressures in relation to cost of production, which will in turn reduce seasonality in agriculture.

The Queensland Government's food and fibre policy outlines its vision to support the growth of a productive and prosperous food and fibre sector in Queensland. The policy nominates five priority areas including the support of a modern and skilled workforce.[73] Agriculture is now approaching a new technology boom, with acknowledgement that the skills requirements of the sector will be met from a combination of non-traditional areas such as science,

engineering and IT, as well as more traditional agriculture courses.[74]

The casualised nature of the workforce limits the ability for agribusiness operators and potential employees to access federal and state program support, as casual workers generally do not meet guideline requirements. Additionally, the impact of casualisation is apparent with long-term, full-time workers generally not offered the security of permanent full-time status.

Collaboration between industries, government and education is central to progressing the identified opportunities to overcome these challenges. Table 6 looks at identified challenges for the industry, as well as opportunities to be progressed that may support the jobs and skills growth required to meet future demand.

Challenge	Opportunity/action
Building world-class business management capability	○ Develop business and management skills through targeted skill sets and educational programs. ○ Build workforce capability in effective job design, work organisation and 'employer of choice' principles. ○ Develop the role of industry bodies in promoting workforce planning and skills development as a core business strategy.
Attracting a new generation of motivated and skilled workers	○ Promote the benefits of work experience to employers through increased collaboration between industry and education providers. ○ Provide intensive work readiness training to Year 10–12 students. ○ Promote a broader based approach to entry level skills training. Many lower skilled jobs entail a wide range of tasks – employers identify work-ready generalists as more useful than theoretically training specialists at the entry level. ○ Consider supporting access to skill sets in agriculture that do not require a qualification, where a clear and transferable benefit to the individual being trained and the regional labour market can be demonstrated. ○ Expand skill sets to encompass more intensive production regimes and technologies in all agricultural and animal production and research disciplines and associated machinery skills. ○ Develop common branding and promotion of careers in agriculture for all workers (including Indigenous workers, migrants, refugees and returning workers). ○ Build better learning experiences into industry for school students through VETiS and SATs. ○ Encourage and support RTO partnerships so a well-rounded approach to training can be made available.
Building higher level knowledge and skills within the existing workforce	○ Identify and promote the building of higher level skills within the workforce through delivery of skill sets, units of competency and full qualifications. ○ Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to increase language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy capabilities of the existing workforce as a platform for further skills development.
Utilising the skills of existing workers and lifting retention rates	○ Build sustainable grass roots skills strategies at a regional level. ○ Drive widespread formal recognition of existing skills through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) pathways. ○ Promote skills-based career pathways for existing workers. ○ Identify and develop innovative responses to the skills needs of casual, contract and seasonal workers.

Table 6: Challenges and opportunities – Agribusiness.

[72] Population Matters 2016, *Population and food security*, https://www.populationmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/population-and-food-security.pdf, accessed June 2018.
[73] Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, *Queensland Agriculture and Food Research, Development and Extension 10-Year Roadmap and Action Plan*, April 2018, file:///C:/Users/gwsmi1/Downloads/queensland-agriculture-and-food-research-development-and-extension-10-ye....pdf, accessed July 2018.
[74] Ibid.

Image of Hervey Bay.
Credit: Barry Goodwin/Tourism and Events Queensland.

Section 3: Fraser Coast workforce priorities and recommendations

Roadmap to implementation

The future legacy of *The Fraser Coast Workforce Blueprint 2018* will be dependent on continued support and engagement for its implementation. The shared governance arrangement for the Regional Advisory Group to develop the Blueprint included the involvement of business, community and government stakeholders working collaboratively to identify key trends and opportunities, and actions that could be taken to create employment pathways supported by the education pipeline.

This document is not the end product. The onus of ongoing collaboration remains on regional stakeholders and industry, and will be needed to sustain and ensure implementation success that will enable the local community to make informed decisions about the region's future education, training and career pathways. This will include identifying gaps in engagement and possible extension of membership of Jobs Fraser Coast, particularly in the four industry sectors of tourism, manufacturing, agriculture, and health care and social assistance addressed in this document.

The potential of the region is significant, though the workforce must be identified, developed and available to realise this potential. A series of recommendations are proposed to begin addressing the challenges and opportunities in workforce training and employment for industries in the region. These have been endorsed by the Regional Advisory Group.

Core themes and recommendations

To develop the Blueprint, key research, business, community and government stakeholders worked collaboratively to identify trends and opportunities, and actions that could be taken to create employment pathways supported by the tertiary education sector.

Stakeholders told us that the Fraser Coast region needed to:

1. build aspirational, entrepreneurial and collaborative mindsets

2. develop entrepreneurial skills and networks that will enable the region to diversify and reshape industries

3. provide agile training and development options to support future demand for continuous re-skilling

4. strengthen strategies to reconnect disengaged individuals to the labour market

5. build better connectivity between educators, training and employment providers, and employers to improve student/worker access to quality work-based experiences.

The need to embrace innovation and adapt to increasing customer expectations (e.g. by developing high-end niche products and experiences) will be a key driver of business and workforce development to make the most of these opportunities. Aligning education, skills and training provision to support and help drive industry and employer demand is critical to realising the benefits for the Fraser Coast that will flow from a strong local economy and a skilled and entrepreneurial labour force. To effectively transition to a more diverse economy, a diverse range of skills will be needed throughout the region.

The following skills areas (themes) were highlighted as the most important areas of focus for training and recruitment over the coming decades.

Theme 1: Education pathways

Education pathway programs provide high quality learning opportunities and play a vital role in assisting students through each stage of their educational journey. From work experience and VETiS, through to a range of short courses, certificates, diplomas and associate and degree programs, education pathway programs aim to provide employment-ready graduates.

Students who undertake tertiary education in regional areas are more likely to remain (65.7 per cent) than move to an urban area (34.3 per cent).[75] This highlights the importance of ensuring local education pathways are aligned to local job opportunities and are responsive to local industry and workforce supply and demand indicators.

Industry consultation has highlighted the need for education providers to increase student exposure to industry during their educational journey by raising awareness of industry needs and ensuring that graduates are well prepared for the future, skilled and adaptive to change.

The Fraser Coast Education Alliance (FCEA) is an

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75 Richardson S 2011, Higher education and community benefits: the role of regional provision, *Joining the Dots research briefing*; v. 1 n. 5, Australian Council for Educational Research, https://research.acer.edu.au/joining_the_dots/26/, accessed July 2018.

incorporated body and consortium of all Fraser Coast education providers. It encompasses public, private and Catholic schools, including early childhood, primary, secondary and special schools. Vocational education and universities, in partnership with the Chambers of Commerce and Fraser Coast Regional Council, complete the educational suite. All of these educational facilities work together in a harmonious way to ensure a variety of smooth educational journeys for students.

Across industries, it was proposed that an increase of work experience and industry placements, annual site or industry tours, and hosting guest speakers would assist in increasing general awareness. A review of existing pathway programs from a student and industry perspective may identify areas for improvement and strengthen established processes.

A need for more 'just in time' targeted individual skills/knowledge development or accreditation, rather than the need for completion of an entire qualification, was highlighted as being of value for industry and workers. In some cases, the current rate of change in workplaces meant the time to commence and complete a qualification for the building of a specific skill contained in the

qualification took too long. Scheduled course timetables do not take into account peak business trading cycles to enable workers to attend courses when the business trading cycle was quieter. This is different for each industry, but presents difficulties for employers to have workers absent at peak times. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) provide a platform to address this demand for some skills and knowledge development.

Promotion of best practice, through highlighting case studies via social media, business reviews and local news articles, to raise the positive image of the region's workforce and increasing opportunities was noted. By emphasising the benefits of regional employment options, skilled workers are likely to seek positions within the region rather than relocate.

There is a range of existing training programs available for community and employers to access. Increased promotion of these programs to industry is required to support lifelong learning and continuous upskilling of the existing workforce. A skilled workforce provides mentorship to entry-level candidates and strengthens the industry and the customer experience overall.

Recommendation: Increase applied learning via practical, hands on activities during education and tertiary courses	
Local action	**Current resources**
1. Increase the breadth of work experience and industry placements across industries.	○ Pre-employment/work placement programs for secondary students, TAFE/VET and university students. ○ FCEA.
2. Increase opportunities for students, advisors and potential employers to visit industry sites and learn first-hand about workplace expectations and behaviours.	○ Pre-employment/work placement programs for secondary students, TAFE/VET and university students. ○ FCEA.
3. Increase opportunities for students to engage directly or virtually with industry representatives.	○ Pre-employment/work placement programs for secondary students, TAFE/VET and university students. ○ FCEA.

Future opportunity: Monitor effectiveness of education pathway programs
4. Undertake regional review of effectiveness of existing education pathway programs from a student and industry perspective.

Recommendation: Promote best practice and success	
Local action	**Current resources**
5. Identify case studies of employers or individuals to highlight success and promote via social media, business forums (Chamber of Commerce), community and educational areas to celebrate regional success stories.	○ Chamber of Commerce meetings. ○ Office of Small Business, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT).

Recommendation: Increase promotion of entrepreneurial skills currently available within training packages	
Local action	**Current resources**
6. Increase awareness of training available within existing training packages, with focus on entrepreneurship.	○ Queensland Government VET Investment Plan. ○ Certificate IV Small Business Management. ○ Office of Small Business, DESBT. ○ Business Queensland's Tourism small business tools.

Theme 2: Digital literacy

Digital literacy, and familiarisation with technology generally, will be relied on as technology continues to be integrated into standard industry practices. Technology development and automation have the potential to increase productivity and improve lives; they also bring a need to adapt current skills and obtain base level knowledge on which to build required specialised expertise when and where it is required.

As the workplace diversifies due to generational expansion, workforces will soon have three or four generations working together. Mature age workers can bring an ability to embrace change, analyse issues and utilise problem-solving skills, and a wealth of experience gained through years within the workforce. These workers are capable of translating information and data into valuable insights, which complement younger industry entrants who are viewed as 'digital natives'.[76] Businesses can upskill their existing workforce by introducing base-level technology skills through cross-generational mentoring, or alternatively invest in training programs for their existing mature age workforce.

In response to customers' increased use of mobile phones or tablets to browse products and services online, small business has expressed a need to escalate regional training options, particularly for digital marketing of their businesses.

Linkages between education providers and industry would benefit from business enterprises offering professional development opportunities through site visits and hands-on experience within the business to trainers to support industry currency.

Highlighting regional successes of education providers could raise the profile of their course offerings, content and the sharing of success stories with industry to increase industry awareness of programs on offer to graduates, while promotion of employers who have invested in upskilling of employees encourages others to do the same, thereby creating regional confidence in the available labour pool.

An independent regional review to support adjustment of existing, or development of new, training courses was also recommended by regional stakeholders who are focused on best practice methods to support industries ongoing skills needs.

Recommendation: Improve familiarisation with existing technology and broader applications for business and employees	
Local action	**Current resources**
7. Encourage local businesses to identify and upskill mature age employees to improve understanding of existing and emerging technology to manage digital disruption.	○ Be Connected – improving digital literacy for older Australians. ○ Back to Work Mature Aged Worker Boost. ○ Restart Wage Subsidy. ○ Support for Mature Age Worker Apprenticeships.
8. Provide training for small business operators to familiarise themselves with digital marketing opportunities.	○ Community Boost Initiative. ○ TAFE Queensland short courses for small business. ○ Business Queensland. ○ Fraser Coast Regional Council Library. ○ Other regional training providers. ○ Digital marketing specific workshops by local consultants.
9. Education providers to link with employers/industry through increased professional development opportunities to gain hands on experience and understanding of existing technology.	○ Professional development industry engagement for educators, trainers and assessors. ○ Mentorship and work integrated learning programs.

Recommendation: Increase promotion of existing and new training opportunities	
Local action	**Current resources**
10. Highlight training opportunities currently on offer within the region to increase industry awareness of course offerings, content, purpose and success.	○ Social media. ○ Local media. ○ Industry network meetings and circulars.
11. Develop case studies highlighting employers who have upskilled staff for benefit of business and employees for promotion within the region.	○ Local media. ○ Social media via stakeholders. ○ Guest speaking at local events and network opportunities.
Future opportunity: Monitor effectiveness of existing training programs.	
12. Undertake a regional review of existing digital training courses via an independent survey of participants and industry.	

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76 Kirkby, E 2017, Need to handle digital disruption? Hire older workers, *HRM*, 16 June, https://www.hrmonline.com.au/mature-age-workers/digital-disruption-hire-older-workers/, accessed June 2018.

Theme 3: Service and people skills

The ability to effectively facilitate and communicate with colleagues, peers and customers is increasingly a skill required by all employees and employers, regardless of industry and role. Building positive relationships with others can impact staff morale, the overall customer experience and, more broadly, productivity.

With technological advancements, the shift from verbal communication (face-to-face) to increased reliance on non-verbal or print is well underway. This has the potential to increase misunderstandings within the workplace and with customers, as well as decrease training opportunities for new entrants who need social interactions to develop skills and confidence to improve communication skills.

Mentoring across the region will improve general work readiness through increased industry liaison with education providers, neighbourhood centres and employment pathway programs. Increasing interactions between industry and education providers through the provision of work experience

students, career expos, site visits, virtual tours and 'try a trade' days will raise awareness of local opportunities and an awareness of industry expectations.

Development and regional delivery of tailored programs such as *Be My Guest*[77], which aim to drive service excellence across Queensland, would also be of benefit. This program includes a series of workshops for leaders, managers and front-facing staff from the tourism, hospitality and wider business community. Participants have the opportunity to learn how to lead the delivery of consistent, high-quality genuine guest experiences that reflect the soul of the region.

Regional business training programs would benefit from inclusion of advice regarding generational differences, including how to train, mentor and supervise across generations. With an ageing workforce, the need for these skills will continue to increase in importance. Leaders with the ability to inspire and support staff across the generational divide will have a competitive advantage in to the future.

Recommendation: Increase opportunities for new and potential entrants to engage with business to improve communication skills	
Local action	**Current resources**
13. Encourage business enterprises to support education providers 'industry liaison' activities such as work experience, career expos, site visits, virtual tours and 'try a trade' days.	○ Pre-employment/work placement programs for secondary students, TAFE/VET and university students. ○ FCEA.
14. Mentor new and potential entrants within the region regarding industry expectations to increase general awareness.	○ Young Tourism Leader. ○ Employment agencies. ○ Work integrated learning placements in VET and university. ○ Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks (AASNs).
Recommendation: Implement a tailored regional program such as 'Be My Guest' that focuses on a consistent message for the region	
Local action	**Current resources**
15. Develop an agreed approach to marketing the region and promote the message across all industries and other regions, identifying the Fraser Coast as a 'place of choice' to live, learn and work. For example, develop messages regarding regional job opportunities, with an emphasis on work-life balance benefits.	○ Social media. ○ Local media. ○ Queensland Tourism and Events.
Recommendation: Provide advice to regional businesses on generational differences within the workforce	
Local action	**Current resources**
16. Promote educational training programs for business leaders to understand and develop skills required to bridge generational gaps and support new entrants in to their industry.	○ Social media. ○ Local media.

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[77] Embracing 2018, XXI Commonwealth Games, The Legacy Program, https://www.embracing2018.com/legacy-program/tourism-supporting-queensland-business/be-my-guest, accessed July 2018.

Theme 4: Numeracy, literacy and problem-solving

Today's information-rich environment highlights the need for a strong base of literacy and numeracy skills. Various government programs and initiatives currently exist to support the development of literacy and numeracy, including additional support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It is important that new initiatives are not introduced where increased promotion of existing regional programs may increase participation levels and have a stronger community benefit.

While 11.7 per cent of Fraser Coast residents have a Year 9 or below level of educational attainment, compared to the state average of 7.3 per cent[78], assumptions that the population overall has poor literacy and numeracy levels need to be treated with caution. Consultation with regional stakeholders suggest that those seeking employment or new entrants may benefit from targeted additional literacy and numeracy support to enable the transition into the workplace.

Development, promotion and regular usage of core work skills and work readiness testing within local neighbourhood centres, Jobactive providers, schools, TAFEs and other registered training providers, as well as universities, may familiarise potential new entrants with the process and highlight where additional support for individuals is required. Longer term, with appropriate regional support programs, the labour pool base skills level may be strengthened.

Recommendation: Support use of existing foundation skills training	
Local action	**Current resources**
17. Promote available training in work readiness and spoken and written English foundation skills.	○ TAFE and other regional training providers. ○ Certificate II in Foundation Skills. ○ Get Set for Work. ○ Skills for Education and Employment (SEE). ○ Jobactive Providers. ○ Neighbourhood centres.
18. Develop and promote the use of core work skills testing for local neighbourhood centres and Jobactive providers.	○ Jobactive Providers. ○ Neighbourhood centres.
19. Increase the use of work readiness testing within schools, TAFEs and universities to increase familiarisation with the process, and provide additional support to individuals who do not pass the tests to improve skills proficiency.	○ Schools. ○ TAFEs. ○ Universities.

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[78] Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017, *2016 Census QuickStats*, Fraser Coast, http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA33220, accessed June 2018.

Theme 5: Entrepreneurship

By working together, the Advance Queensland[79] initiative aims to tackle today's challenges and grasp tomorrow's opportunities by diversifying the economy. With up to $518 million in supporting programs that drive innovation, build on natural advantages and help raise the profile of Queensland as an attractive investment destination, entrepreneurs have an opportunity to leverage the support programs currently in place.

Local entrepreneurs (both new and existing businesses) will be the ones who develop future industries and micro-businesses. These opportunities are needed to improve the resilience and diversity of the local economy, so that there are jobs and career paths for local workers.

The ageing population is just one area that presents diverse business opportunities, including nutritional food services, personal transport, home maintenance, pet care, personal fitness, home automation services and security. There are also opportunities to build on the region's strengths such as tourism, food, agribusiness and advanced manufacturing.

When considering startups, they tend to flourish in supportive ecosystems specifically for entrepreneurs.[80] Environments with innovative co-working spaces, flexible meeting rooms and access to guidance from experienced professionals can support the business and provide networking opportunities.

The region will greatly benefit from ongoing links with the Office of the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur. One of its aims is to connect with regional and remote Queensland to encourage and foster statewide entrepreneurship.[81]

Entrepreneurship opportunities supported through programs such as Business Queensland's Business Advisors may increase success rates of those entering the market and further enhance their opportunity for growth.

Recommendation: Identify opportunities for developing a regional entrepreneurship ecosystem	
Local action	**Current resources**
20. Build and maintain links with the Office of the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur.	○ Office of the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur. ○ Advancing Regional Innovation Program.
21. Establish links with Small Business Solutions and local Chambers of Commerce.	○ Local Chambers of Commerce (Burrum Heads, Hervey Bay, Maryborough, Tiaro). ○ Office of Small Business, DESBT. ○ Business Queensland.
22. Establish links with DESBT and TAFE to discuss projects which support entrepreneurial skills.	○ Regional Training Reference Group meetings. ○ VET Industry Advisory Reference Groups.
Recommendation: Increase support for new startups within the region	
Local action	**Current resources**
23. Host regional information sessions and workshops.	○ TAFE Queensland. ○ University of the Sunshine Coast.
24. Promote the opportunities for skills development in entrepreneurship currently available.	○ Certificate IV in Small Business Management. ○ Business Queensland's small business tools. ○ Office of Small Business, DESBT.
25. Leverage state and federal government innovation support schemes designed to improve new opportunities for business growth.	○ Business Queensland's Small Business Entrepreneur Grants Program.
Future opportunity: Promote success stories through regional awards	
26. Establish a regional Innovation Awards process to highlight local business success stories.	

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[79] Queensland Government 2018, *Advance Queensland initiative*, https://advance.qld.gov.au/about, accessed June 2018.

[80] Queensland Government, *Startup Ecosystem Report 2014*, https://www.qld.gov.au/dsiti/assets/documents/startup-ecosystem-mapping-report.pdf, accessed July 2018.

[81] Office of the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur, https://www.chiefentrepreneur.qld.gov.au/who-we-are, accessed June 2018.

Image of Villa Cavour, Point Vernon.
Credit : Krista Eppelstun/Tourism and Events Queensland.

Section 4:
Policy recommendations

Economic development

A growing and ageing population, combined with increased availability of NDIS funding, will create an increased focus on the additional demand for goods and services in health and wellness-related industries for the area's population. To maximise other opportunities, regional economic development efforts need to foster and support an innovative business environment across a broad range of industry sectors, including manufacturing, agriculture, education, professional services and tourism, by encouraging partnerships, business networks and alliances to plan and facilitate supportive economic development.

It is **recommended** that economic development efforts are coordinated across sectors and linked to workforce development investment to focus on identifying and building these diverse economic opportunities.

Regional leadership

The Fraser Coast area would benefit from more leaders who are entrepreneurial, willing to take calculated risks, think strategically and proactively explore opportunities to grow the region. Greater alignment is needed in defining and maximising the Fraser Coast's opportunities for growth. Efforts to drive change need to be transparent and applied within a joined-up approach. This includes undertaking research and making recommendations on matters relating to changes in local economic, social and environmental landscapes.

It is **recommended** that community and civic leaders are fostered and encouraged to work collaboratively to develop a shared narrative and vision to achieve complementary outcomes and realise the strengths of the region.

Stronger communities

Stronger communities are achieved through reducing disadvantage and increasing social, civil and economic participation. Recognising that all community members are valuable assets and contributors is the first step in achieving a cohesive community. Targeted strategies may be required to support individuals who have become disconnected from the labour market. The opportunity for individuals to engage with the wider community through their educational experience is crucial, because it is this sense of local pride and connectedness with local industry that can underpin the future strength of the Fraser Coast.

It is **recommended** that linkages and referral relationships are fostered, improved and maintained to provide support to employers, industry groups, trainers and employment services to improve outcomes for diverse groups, including mature age workers, young people, culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers.

It is **recommended** that commitment from all levels of government to address entrenched and locational disadvantage at the community level is needed over the long term. To reduce overlap and duplication, opportunities to pool employment and education/skills funding should be explored so that strategies can be identified and developed to meet local needs. Solutions need to be based on strong local participation, flexible in adapting to changes and lessons learned, while being community-owned and driven. They should demonstrate an understanding of the multiple and complex needs within the Fraser Coast community, including economic development, and provide an integrated service response through community partnerships.

Education and training

Industry, TAFE Queensland, universities, other training providers, schools and government all play an essential role in aligning the education system with future economic demand and realising benefits for the Fraser Coast regional economy and community.

Lifelong learning and flexibility in career opportunities is predicted to see a rise in micro-credentialing, with students demanding access to individual courses (or modules) that can act as building blocks to a qualification. There will be steady demand for tourism and hospitality programs, but increasing the numbers qualified to work in the health industry and with STEM-related qualifications will be critical to meeting the future workforce needs of the Fraser Coast, to support the emerging economy.

Ongoing connections between educators and employers will be essential to ensure that skills demand and supply are better aligned. Students' learning and career choices are also improved when they experience formal learning in combination with work-based learning.

Standard skills and training to support lifelong learning and transitions (certificates, qualifications

and degrees) are often not well suited to the needs of employers and workers who may need to adjust roles and skills fairly rapidly in response to ongoing technological change. Modular training offerings represent a more efficient means of supporting lifelong learning and participation.

It is **recommended** that TAFEs, universities and other training providers review and refine delivery methodologies to make training more flexible and accessible.

Innovation and entrepreneurship

Building aspirational, collaborative and digital mindsets, as well as creating a vision for the region, will help to create momentum for change and foster a sense of pride. Activities that embed and promote aspirational, digital, collaborative and entrepreneurial mindsets should be fostered and encouraged. Expansion and promotion of the Fraser Coast's existing innovative and entrepreneurial leaders will help in realising long-term benefits for the whole community.

It is **recommended** that efforts to encourage creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, together with the initiative, attitude and ability to thrive within a dynamic, challenging and changing environment, be implemented and supported.

Section 5: Resources and acronyms

Resources – current August 2018

The following links contain valuable insights and recommendations for a career in Tourism, Manufacturing, Health Care and Agriculture, as well as targeted business advice and support.

Careers in tourism	
Discover Hospitality	http://discoveryourcareer.com.au/discover-hospitality/
Discover Tourism	http://discoveryourcareer.com.au/discover-tourism/
QTIC Tourism and Hospitality Career Guide	https://www.qtic.com.au/project-service/qtic-tourism-and-hospitality-career-guide
Start a Career in Retail	https://www.retailreadyjobs.com/

Careers in manufacturing	
Myskills – Manufacturing and Engineering	https://www.myskills.gov.au/industries/manufacturing-engineering
Job Outlook	https://joboutlook.gov.au/IndustrySpecific.aspx?search=Industry&Industry=C
Open Universities	https://www.open.edu.au/your-career/manufacturing
Labour Market Information Portal	http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/IndustryInformation/Manufacturing

Careers in health care and social assistance	
Care Careers	https://www.carecareers.com.au/queensland/
Job Outlook	https://joboutlook.gov.au/occupation.aspx?code=4231
Open Colleges	https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/careers/why-how-to-become-an-aged-care-worker
Career FAQs	https://www.careerfaqs.com.au/careers/how-to-become-a-disability-support-worker-in-australia-careers-in-disability-services

Careers in agriculture	
Australian Farmers	https://farmers.org.au/community/blog/7-types-of-agricultural-jobs-you-can-try-in-Australia-14092017.html
Rural Careers	http://www.ruralcareers.net.au/agriculture/
Graduate Careers Australia	http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/agriculture/
Future Farmers Network	https://www.futurefarmers.com.au/

All industries	
Digital technologies – online resources and access to digital technologies and services	
Small Business Guide	https://www.staysmartonline.gov.au/get-involved/guides/smallbusinessguide
Digital Scoreboard	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/it/digital-scorecard
Online Marketing	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing-promotion/online-marketing
Doing business online	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/internet-start-ups/online-basics
Advance Queensland Community Digital Champions	https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/comm-digital-champ.aspx
Be Connected – improving digital literacy for older Australians	https://www.dss.gov.au/seniors/be-connected-improving-digital-literacy-for-older-australians
Support for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	https://www.education.gov.au/support-science-technology-engineering-and-mathematics
Australia's Digital Pulse	https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/acs-publications/Australia's%20Digital%20Pulse%202017.pdf
Employment/training services - resources and support for employers and job seekers	
Youth Employment Program	https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/programs-initiatives/youth-employment-program
Career Industry Council of Australia	https://cica.org.au/
Skilling Queenslanders for Work	https://training.qld.gov.au/employers/funding/sqw

Jobactive	https://jobactive.gov.au/
myskills	https://www.myskills.gov.au/
Relocation Assistance	https://www.jobs.gov.au/relocation-assistance-take-job
Back to Work	https://backtowork.initiatives.qld.gov.au/for-employers/
Apprenticeships Info	https://training.qld.gov.au/apprenticeshipsinfo/
VET Investment Plan	https://training.qld.gov.au/site/docs-data/Documents/strategies/vetinvest/annual-vet-investment-plan.pdf
Australian Apprenticeship Pathways	https://www.aapathways.com.au/

Indigenous business support – resources and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	
Contacts and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/support/support-indigenous/indigenous-contacts
Business Ownership	http://www.iba.gov.au/business/
Enterprise Development	https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/programs-initiatives/enterprise-development
Government Champions	https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/programs-initiatives/government-champions
Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Business Directory	http://www.bbf.org.au/
Indigenous Business Australia	https://www.business.gov.au/info/plan-and-start/start-your-business/indigenous-business
Advancing Indigenous Business	https://www.ditid.qld.gov.au/small-business/advancing-indigenous-business

Marketing/promoting your business – everything to successfully market your business	
Online Marketing	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing-promotion/online-marketing
Consider Your Idea	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/planning/business-success/idea
Marketing and Promotion	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing-promotion
101 Small Business Marketing Ideas	https://www.thebalancesmb.com/small-business-marketing-ideas-2951688
Using Facebook	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing-promotion/online-marketing/facebook
Small Business 101	https://www.hubaustralia.com/your-guide-for-marketing-strategy/
Advertising and online	https://www.business.gov.au/info/run/advertising-and-online

Funding/grants	
Financial assistance, professional advice and support for small businesses	
Accelerate Indigenous Small Business Grants	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/grants
Small Business Grants	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/grants/digital-grants
Small Business Entrepreneur Grants	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/grants/entrepreneur-grants
Community Sustainability Action Grants	https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/pollution/funding/community-sustainability
Business Development Fund	https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/business-development-fund.aspx
Ignite Ideas Fund	https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/ignite-ideas-fund.aspx
Grant Finder	https://www.business.gov.au/assistance
Made in Queensland	https://statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/industry-development/made-in-queensland.html
Entrepreneur's Programme	https://www.business.gov.au/assistance/entrepreneurs-programme
R&D Tax Incentive	https://www.business.gov.au/assistance/research-and-development-tax-incentive
QTIC Grants Gateway	https://www.qtic.com.au/industry-development/grants-gateway/
QTIC Registered Trade Skills Pathway	https://www.qtic.com.au/workforce-development/rtsp/
Austrade Landing Pad	https://www.australiaunlimited.com/LandingPads/about-landing-pads
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships program – Advance Queensland	http://www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/grants

Export Market Development Grants (EMDG)	https://www.austrade.gov.au/Australian/Export/Export-Grants/About/what-is-emdg
Back to Work	https://backtowork.initiatives.qld.gov.au/for-employers/
Restart Wage Subsidy	https://www.jobs.gov.au/restart-help-employ-mature-workers-0
Skilling Queenslanders for Work	https://training.qld.gov.au/employers/funding/sqw
Australian Apprenticeships Employer Incentives	https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/employer-incentives

Acronym	Translation
AASNs	Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ASGS	Australian Statistical Geography Standard
CBD	Central business district
CHC	Community, Health and Childcare
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DELTA	Direct Entry-Level Training Administration
DESBT	Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
EC&M	Engineering, construction and mining
EMDG	Export Market Development Grants
FAQs	Frequently asked questions
FTE	Full-time equivalent
LGA	Local government area
LLN	Language, literacy and numeracy
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NDIA	National Disability Insurance Agency
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NFF	National Farmers' Federation
NIEIR	National Institute of Economic and Industry Research
NSW	New South Wales
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PaTH	Prepare, Trial, Hire
QGSO	Queensland Government Statisticians Office
QTIC	Queensland Tourism Industry Council
R&D	Research and development
RJIP	Regional Jobs Investment Package
RPL	Recognition of prior learning
SATs	School-based apprenticeships and traineeships
SEE	Skills for Education and Employment
SQW	Skilling Queenslanders for Work
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and maths
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TEQ	Tourism and Events Queensland
TRA	Tourism Research Australia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UK	United Kingdom
VACP	Value of agriculture commodities produced
VET	Vocational education and training
VFR	Visiting friends and relatives
VETiS	Vocational Education and Training in Schools

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