



# Leading consultation

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Undertaking consultation with your region and industry representatives need not be complicated or daunting. It provides opportunity for those most impacted by workforce challenges locally to provide input on how best to stay ahead and how to address the region's changing landscape.

A genuine consultation process ensures that you have considered all the challenges, opportunities and potential solutions for your region. Genuine engagement in consultation is more likely to deliver stronger outcomes and acceptance from the stakeholders themselves as the recommendations proposed should reflect their views.

## Why undertake consultation

Leading consultation with stakeholders in your region is important to the workforce planning process for many reasons, including:

- **Informed decision-making:** Receiving the benefits of stakeholders' knowledge and experience, influencing informed decision making based on region and industry trends and real-world data.
- **Stronger buy-in:** Stakeholders are invested in the outcomes and implementation when they are involved in the development of strategies to address identified challenges within the region.
- **Strategic alignment:** By involving industry leaders, regional priorities and industry needs are well-considered, enhancing the relevance and impact of workforce planning, economic development and other strategic goals.
- **Enhanced collaboration:** Consultation can foster collaboration among employers, encouraging partnerships that can lead to identifying new opportunities and solutions to common challenges.
- **Responsive and adaptive:** With input from industry experts, consultation can quickly identify emerging trends and challenges, driving consultative discussions toward identification of local solutions.

By bringing together local experts, leaders and stakeholders from across a region, consultation can provide valuable insights to guide decision-making, shape the workforce plan and drive innovation.

When developing your consultation plan, consider why you are undertaking the consultation, who you want to consult with and how best to do this.



## Principles of consultation and engagement

Being strategic in your approach to consultation and engagement enables you to efficiently produce quality outcomes. Through careful consideration about how best to approach the process, who you will engage with, their level of influence and impact as well as connected activities, policies and processes, you will reduce the risk of overlooking key stakeholders.

Jobs Queensland has outlined and published its own principles of engagement to define how each project will have:<sup>1</sup>

- clear purpose, scope and outcomes
- appropriateness and structure
- open communication and collaboration
- inclusive and respectful outcomes
- commitment, accountability and transparency.

Many organisations have documents like these on their websites that can provide guidance to your engagement activities. If you do not have one, though not essential, you may choose to develop one as part of the workforce planning process.



1. Jobs Queensland. (2021). *Jobs Queensland: Principles of engagement*. Ipswich: Queensland Government. [https://jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/\\_resources/files/pdf/engagement-principles.pdf](https://jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/_resources/files/pdf/engagement-principles.pdf)

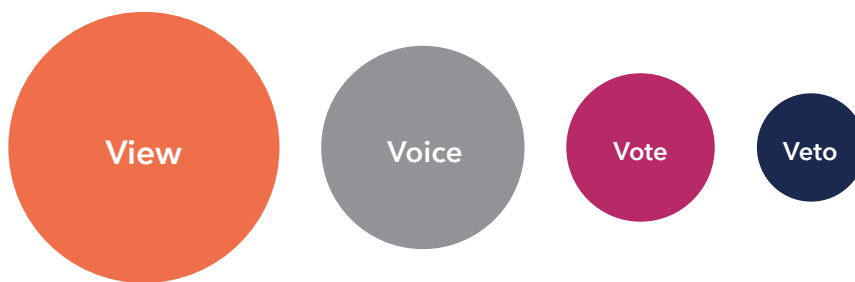


## Stakeholders impact and influence

### Expectation setting

Prior to commencing consultation, it is essential to consider the levels of impact and influence each group can have on the workforce planning project and how you will manage their expectations.

Different stakeholders will have different levels of influence and impact. There is a wide variety of consultation and engagement theories available. The four Vs below provide one example for your consideration:<sup>2</sup>



**View:** May be considered as anyone in the region or industry of focus who is likely to have a view (or perspective) on the direction and outcomes of the project.

Consider how best to activate and engage these views from a passive to an active voice through consultation and engagement activities, with a focus on those who are working within the region/industry of focus.

**Voice:** Should predominately be any stakeholder working in the region/industry of focus relating to your workforce planning project. See below for ideas on who to involve and ways to undertake consultation for guidance on how to capture the voice of your region.

**Vote:** Having a group of region representatives to provide strategic oversight and influence project outcomes can be achieved through the establishment of an Advisory Group. Generally, this group will reach consensus on the projects pathway forward and endorse the final workforce plan prior to publication.<sup>3</sup>

For more in-depth advice, please see the **Establishing an Advisory Group** document.

**Veto:** This is usually reserved for final decision makers for the project such as Chief Operating Officer, a Board or Executive level officer who may not endorse or approve the final product.

To reduce this risk, it is important to keep those with veto powers engaged and updated on the project's progress and processes along the way.

Now that you have considered the level of impact and influence, you can consider who and how to engage with them.

2. Forbes. (2022). *Easing Group Decision Making: A View, A Voice, A Vote or a Veto*. Jersey City: Forbes.  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ericpliner/2022/04/04/easing-group-decision-making-a-view-a-voice-a-vote-or-a-veto/>

3. Consensus does not require 100 per cent agreement, it just means everyone can live with the decision.



## Who to involve?

**Identify key stakeholders:** Include representatives from relevant local industries (you may be focusing on two industries), education, union representatives and government.

**Diversity:** Aim for a mix of backgrounds, expertise and viewpoints to ensure well-rounded advice.

### **Employers**

**Large and small organisations:** Small to medium sized organisations have different challenges to larger organisations. It is important to provide opportunity for all business sizes to have a voice during the consultation process, e.g. small businesses may also be represented through the local Chamber of Commerce or via a survey or focus group.

### **Employees**

**Employees or their representatives:** Employees can be represented through a spokesperson such as a union to capture different viewpoints to their employers on workforce challenges. It is important to consider ways for this to occur during consultation planning.

## Ways to undertake consultation

Consultation can be undertaken in a variety of ways:

**Survey:** Surveys can capture information from a large number of people at low cost. Well-crafted surveys can be objective by posing questions in a consistent manner where results can be collated and compared to help identify common themes, including for sentiment.

*Appendix A: Survey design tips.*

**Forums:** When facilitated well, forums can deliver useful information about workforce challenges, future skills needs and potential solutions to fill a workforce gap, and source key elements of a workforce plan efficiently and effectively. A forum can often consist of over 20 representatives, discussing pre-determined questions to guide the consultation forum. Always consider the skills of the facilitator or moderator for the forum, including methods to be utilised for collection of information during the forum.

*Appendix B: An example of an invitation to a forum.*

*Appendix C: An example of an implied consent form. Obtaining consent at public gatherings is essential if you are taking photos.*



*Appendix D:* An example of pre-reading for a forum to maximise engagement and discussion. This should be sent out to all registered participants one week prior to the event.

*Appendix E:* An example of post-forum summary from discussions. This should be sent within one week post-forum to maximise collection of final consultation.

**Focus groups:** Focus groups help individuals provide you with information from their perspective on a specific topic. This is useful for workforce planning to uncover potential solutions to difficult challenges. Usually no more than 10 people are involved.

**1:1 discussion:** This approach may be more resource intensive to undertake; it can also provide opportunity to deep dive into specific challenges and discuss potential solutions. Generally used to gather information from strategic leaders who are less willing to speak openly in focus groups or forums but are essential to the consultation process.

Regardless of how you choose to undertake consultation, the priority is to gather a cross-section of information from a number of sources in a timely manner. It is good practice to provide a summary post-consultation to confirm with your stakeholders that the information gathered accurately reflects their input and provide an opportunity for their review and any final feedback on the process.



# Appendix A

## Survey design tips<sup>4</sup>

### Process tips

- Define the purpose and objectives of the survey.
- Get input from an Advisory Group about content, e.g. questions and question categories to reduce missing choices, asking about things you can't change or having too many questions on your survey.
- Document your survey, record all the questions and response options. It will help you later when you're testing the survey and when you're reporting the results.
- Test your survey to discover issues and how long the survey takes to complete.
- Test all hyperlinks to ensure none of them are broken.

### Question tips

*Things to consider:*

- Keep the survey short and to the point.
- If asking a global recommendation/satisfaction/helpfulness question, provide a space to write a response, allowing respondents to explain why.
- Use an active voice, be specific and use clear language.
- If a likely answer to a question is, I don't know or not applicable, then provide these as options. If it's not necessary, don't include at all.
- Use odd-numbered likert scales with equally spaced descriptors. 5-point likert scales suit most. If you need more nuanced answers, use 7-point scales. An example of 5-point is below:

### 5-point scales

Likelihood	Likelihood	Frequency	Quality	Satisfaction	Agreement	Success
Definitely yes	Very likely	Always	Excellent	Very satisfied	Strongly agree	Very successful
Probably yes	Likely	Very often	Good	Satisfied	Agree	Successful
Unsure	Neither	Sometimes	Average	Neither	Neither	Average
Probably no	Unlikely	Rarely	Poor	Dissatisfied	Disagree	Unsuccessful
Definitely no	Very unlikely	Never	Very poor	Very dissatisfied	Strongly disagree	Very unsuccessful

4. Department of Employment, Small Business and Training. (2024). *Survey Design Tips*. Unpublished. Brisbane: Queensland Government.





Ask questions that don't require much thinking time to answer. If your participant has to think too long, then they will likely exit the survey.

*Don't ask:*

- Questions for things that you don't intend to use or will influence change.
- Questions for which you already know the answers.
- Dual-purpose questions – stick to one issue per question – if a respondent could reasonably answer yes to one portion and not the other, the question should be split.
- Questions that the audience is unlikely to know the answer to.
- Vague questions.

### **Layout tips**

- Group your questions into sections with a heading.
- Let your participants know what to expect:
  - What is the survey about?
  - What will you use the data for?
  - How many questions are there and how long will it take to complete the survey?
- If it's a long survey, only show your participants a section at a time to help them not be overwhelmed.

### **Technical tips**

Limit the input of survey questions to only what you expect. If you're after a dollar amount, limit to numbers. If you need an Australian phone number, limit to those allowable formats (using regular expressions).



# Appendix B

## Invitation

Below is an example of a possible invitation layout, you can modify or use your own:

Heading	Example details
<b>Name of event</b>	GYO Cairns Maritime and Marine Workforce Planning Event
<b>Date and time</b>	Thursday 2 November 2023, 9:15am - 2:00pm AEST
<b>Location</b>	Bolands Officers and Conference Centre Cairns 14 Spence Street, Cairns City Qld 4870
<b>About this event</b>	The focus of this event is building a future ready workforce and we really want to hear from you! This is your opportunity to join the conversation with other maritime and marine industry representatives and provide your local knowledge and insights around the skills, workforce opportunities and challenges facing your industry.
<b>What to expect</b>	You will be participating in a series of interactive discussions with xx and other industry representatives to support the development of a workforce plan.  Register now to secure your spot!
<b>The Cairns Maritime and Marine Industry</b>	Supporting an estimated 4600 jobs, the Cairns maritime and marine industry is a cornerstone of the local economy. The Port of Cairns services approximately 15% of Australian registered vessels and 80% of North Queensland vessels more than 15 metres, as well as international vessels.
<b>Add details about your organisation or project</b>	Jobs Queensland provides strategic advice to government on future skills needs, workforce planning and development, and apprenticeships and traineeships. Our work brings together industry, regions, employers and the community to advise government on the skills needed for the future.





# Appendix C

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## Implied film and photo consent

You may choose to display the below at the entrance of the event. Note that this advice is general in nature and you should seek your own legal advice before proceeding.

The (insert your organisation's name) and invited media will be photographing, filming or otherwise recording this <insert name> event (the Event).

It may not be possible for our photographer and videographer to obtain every person's express consent, and your consent may be implied, particularly for staged, group, or participation related images and footage.

Images and recordings of the Event may be used, published or reproduced in any form (in whole or in part) by (insert your organisation's name) and media, in any medium, including but not limited to newspapers, magazines, brochures, television, advertisements, websites and social media to promote, publicise and report on the Event and/or the State.

If you do not want your image recorded or published, please notify the photographer or videographer, a (insert your organisation's name) staff member, or email (insert best contact for your organisation), and kindly step out of any photos or videos being recorded.



# Appendix D

## Contribute to the development of the Cairns Region Workforce Plan with a focus on Maritime and Marine.

### Pre-consultation Reading

Through targeted engagement, Jobs Queensland is collaborating with industry to gain insights on the future workforce direction of the Cairns Region, focusing on the Maritime and Marine Industry.

#### Who is Jobs Queensland?

Jobs Queensland provides strategic advice to the Queensland Government on future workforce planning and development.

Our future-focused and place-based work and engagement brings together industry, regions, employers and the community to identify and address future workforce demands.

#### Why the Cairns Region?

As an outcome of the first Action Plan (2022-2025) under the *Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032*, Jobs Queensland is partnering with regions to develop workforce plans and/or initiatives to support 'grow your own' (GYO) workforces and cross-sector skills development.

The 'Grow Your Own' (GYO) Regional Workforce Program enables key local stakeholders and industry representatives to identify workforce needs and plan what skills are required to meet the needs of their sector and support their region's economic goals. It's all about using local workforce approaches, connected to local economic opportunities.

The Cairns Region workforce plan aims to:

- map out strategic needs of the future workforce in region with a focus on the Maritime and Marine Industry;
- provide advice regarding qualifications required to gain employment and further career development within the industry; and
- provide advice on attraction, retention, diversity and business capability.

For more information on Jobs Queensland work, visit <https://jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/projects/grow-your-own-regional-workforce/>

#### Why we need your input

It is important to develop a workforce plan which is reflective of the needs of your industry, within your region. To achieve this, it is important we tap into industry knowledge and experience to gain the input of key employers and industry representatives.

We would like to hear first-hand your insights into the workforce and skills priorities for your organisation, and your industry more broadly.

#### What will be discussed?

During the forum we will present the findings from our research and analysis conducted earlier in the year and discuss actions to move forward and grow the industry. The industry snapshot on the following page provides an overview of this research.



Some of the questions that may be explored during our forum will include:

1. What are the workforce skills that are emerging or exist for your organisation now, and in the future?
2. What are the skills that should be planned for?
3. What support does the industry need to attract people into the industry?
4. How can diversity be improved in the sector?
5. How can under-represented groups be supported in the workplace?
6. What is missing in existing training programs?
  - a. Formal
  - b. Informal
7. How can we encourage a life-long learning mindset?
8. What strategies have you seen in place to retain people in the industry that work?
9. What support (training and skills) is most needed for businesses operating in your industry to thrive?

We look forward to meeting you at the forum and hearing your views.

## Cairns Maritime and Marine workforce

The Maritime and Marine industry in the Cairns region supports approximately 4600 jobs. Industry stakeholders are optimistic for the future, with plans to grow the industry and region into a powerhouse of the north and address challenges such as a tight labour market driven by low unemployment and population growth head on.

The Cairns region serves as a leading maintenance, repair and overhaul destination for Defence and recreational vessels, including superyachts, in Australia.

As the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef, tourism vessels and recreational fishing industry provide

an unforgettable experience to domestic and international travellers alike.

Regardless of on the water or supporting water activities, the industry is united in wanting to address local workforce challenges together.

### Your Industry

With approximately 15 per cent of all Australian vessels and close to 80 per cent of all North Queensland over 15 metres using the CMP, the region relies heavily on its skilled workforce to deliver the services requested of its customers.

As Tourism recovers and Defence continues to grow in the region, planning for the future workforce the region needs in order to leverage these future opportunities has never been more important.

### Anticipating Future Skills

Jobs Queensland's Anticipating Future Skills Series projects that the Cairns Maritime and Marine industry will require an additional 631 workers between 2021-22 and 2025-26

### Workforce composition

Diversity across the Maritime and Marine industry would benefit from additional focus. It is important to have balance reflective of your community.

At the last Census, 31.9 per cent of the Cairns Maritime and Marine work force were female.

- 20.7 per cent are culturally and linguistically diverse.
- 4.3 per cent are Aboriginal peoples and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples (in comparison of 10.6 per cent for your region overall)
- 0.4 per cent require additional support due to a disability



### Education and training profile: Cairns Region

- Over 58 per cent of the population have completed year 11-12.
- Only 23 per cent have a VET qualification.
- With over 16 per cent holding a Bachelor degree or above.

Highest level of education, Cairns Region



We look forward to sharing with you further insights from our research and hearing directly from you what your future skills needs are as we develop a workforce plan that is reflective of the needs of your industry, unique to your region.

# Appendix E

## Post consultation summary

As an action within the Queensland Workforce Strategy, Jobs Queensland is partnering with regions like Cairns to develop workforce plans to support 'grow your own' workforces for target industries.

There will be a focus on industry-led, community centred approaches to drive local solutions to workforce challenges. The Grow Your Own Regional Workforce model is about looking at the workforce that is available locally and upskilling, reskilling and developing them to address the workforce needs collaboratively and locally.

### Why a workforce plan for Cairns?

The development of a workforce plan is an important step in ensuring the region remains competitive and local workers have access to the training they need to live and work locally.

### The Journey so far

Jobs Queensland has been working with the Maritime and Marine industry in Cairns since early 2023 to discuss the workforce challenges and opportunities for the industry's future:

- A Project Champion Group was established locally to provide industry oversight and inputs into the project, with monthly meetings hosted locally and online.
- A region and industry scan was developed to provide an evidence base to consultation with the industry.

## Cairns Maritime and Marine Industry Summary of the conversation so far



[https://jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/\\_resources/files/pdf/GYO-Cairns-maritime-and-marine-e-Scan.pdf](https://jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/_resources/files/pdf/GYO-Cairns-maritime-and-marine-e-Scan.pdf)

### Consultation Event

The region and industry hosted a local consultation event on 2 November 2023 to bring together industry leaders to discuss the future of the industry.

We recognise not everyone could be present and we are extending an opportunity for those who were not in the room to also have their say via a survey which can be accessed here or via the QR code on the back of this document.

Consultation outcomes to date have covered a wide variety of challenges and opportunities. Following is only a summary of what over 38 industry representatives have told us so far:







- Strengthen linkage between.
- Industry to request increased consultation with AMSA.
- Co-design of local training delivery within national framework where possible.

### **Business Capability: Challenges**

- Employers need to know how to plan for their own workforce.
- Unsure of where to go for business support and assistance.
- Leadership capability (culture, soft skills) need updating.

### **Business Capability: Opportunities**

- Workforce Planning course offered locally.
- eNews to provide information specific to industry directly to employers.
- Business and leadership mentoring programs to be promoted locally.

*What does 'cross-sector' mean?*

Skilled workers may move between industries and stay living locally.

### **Cross-Sector Work Security: Challenges**

- Gap training is required to move between industries locally.
- HR infrastructure to support staff moving between the sectors to stay employed locally.
- Perspective of employers re: work security vs job security.

### **Cross-Sector Work Security: Opportunities**

- Develop micro-credentials to enable skills development and fill training gaps.
- Investigate a group training organisation model.
- Promote cross-sector as an opportunity to retain skills locally, rather than poaching.

### **Have your say by scanning the QR code below:**

Insert your own QR code as relevant.

Consultation for this project has closed and the QR code has intentionally been removed.