Western Australian skilled migration strategy
Minister’s message

Western Australia has responded well to the recent slowdown in global economic activity and is now entering a new phase of economic growth. We have used the time to take stock, consolidate, and work with stakeholders to plan for the future and ensure we have the strategies to make the most of the opportunities that come our way.

One of the important areas that we need to focus on is the development of a skilled workforce. While our first priority is to encourage Western Australians to develop the skills required by industry, migration will be a necessary strategy to supplement our workforce.

The Western Australian skilled migration strategy outlines a range of actions to build a skilled workforce in Western Australia. It is one component of a multi-faceted and integrated policy approach to workforce development and will be implemented alongside Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia.

I commend the Western Australian skilled migration strategy to you and encourage you to work with us to implement its priority actions.

Hon Peter Collier MLC
Minister for Training and Workforce Development

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Overview

Western Australia’s economy continues to be the envy of many advanced economies, with all industry sectors experiencing significant growth over the past decade. Much of this growth is driven by the demand for the State’s resource commodities and subsequent investment in major resource and infrastructure projects. Western Australia currently has over $225 billion worth of resource and infrastructure projects under construction, committed or under consideration. Major projects include Gorgon, the Ord-East Kimberley Expansion project and the Oakajee Industrial Estate and Port project. These investments will help underpin the State’s economic activity over the coming decades.

This growth will present significant challenges for governments, industry and the community as the demand for skilled labour to service the State’s growing industries places pressure on many sectors of the economy. In responding to these challenges the State Government is committed to taking an integrated and cooperative approach to workforce planning and development to enable all Western Australians to both contribute to and benefit from opportunities that come from sustained economic growth.

As the lead agency for workforce development matters in Western Australia, the Department of Training and Workforce Development has developed Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia. Skilling WA provides a comprehensive whole-of-government framework for addressing the State’s future labour needs that focuses on building, attracting and retaining a skilled workforce.

A key principle of Skilling WA is to increase the capacity of the Western Australian workforce to meet the high skill needs of the State’s industries. It has a focus on the training of Western Australians in skilled occupations through measures which increase the accessibility of training to individuals, and equip enterprises with the ability to provide training to existing workers. Skilling WA also focuses on removing barriers to workforce participation with the aim of attracting more Western Australians into the workforce.

Research by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia (CCIWA) indicates that at the current level of population growth and workforce participation, the expected level of jobs growth will put increasing pressure on the State’s labour market. This research suggests that over 488,000 new workers will be required by 2020. Other forecasts also indicate the State’s labour market will grow significantly over the coming years. Independent research by Monash University forecast that nearly 239,000 new jobs will be created in Western Australia between 2009 and 2017. Compounding this labour demand is the need to replace an expected 186,000 workers who will leave the workforce due to retirement or permanent emigration.

In terms of labour supply, recent analysis by the Department of Training and Workforce Development indicates approximately 275,000 workers will be provided through natural population growth and migration. This suggests that Western Australia may experience a deficit of up to 150,000 workers by 2017.

This research confirms that maximising the benefits to Western Australia from the national skilled migration process will be essential.

The Western Australian skilled migration strategy sets out a range of initiatives aimed at supplementing the local workforce with the skills and expertise which are in high demand by the State’s industries but unable to be met by local workers. It provides a blueprint for managing Western Australia’s participation in the national migration program and attracting skilled labour from interstate and overseas to provide a flexible labour market, reduce pressure on wages and support the delivery of services.

Migration has long been a key driver for population growth in Western Australia with around 60% of the State’s population growth between 2005 and 2010 attributable to net overseas migration. The attraction of skilled migrants has been a central feature of the migration program over the last decade, with nearly 60% of all migrants entering Western Australia over the past ten years entering as skilled migrants.

In 2010, 33.7% of the Western Australian workforce was comprised of persons born overseas. This is well above the Australian average of 26.9%. This attraction of skilled migrants has helped Western Australia regularly achieve historically high workforce participation rates and low unemployment rates over the past decade.

Skilled migration will be an essential strategy in continuing these trends of strong economic and jobs growth, low unemployment and high workforce participation. This strategy will need to be managed however, with the cooperation and coordination of all stakeholders, especially industry and the business community.

The Western Australian skilled migration strategy has been developed to address Western Australia’s specific skill needs and is supported by research and workforce planning undertaken by the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

2 Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia June 2010, Building WA’s Workforce for Tomorrow, p 9.
3 Monash University, September 2009.
4 Ibid.
5 ABS, Cat 3101.0, Australian Demographic Statistics
6 Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2010, Immigration aspects 2008–09
7 ABS, Cat 6291.0, Labour Force, Australia.
It is also built on strong consultation with industry and other State Government departments.

To further assist with the strategy’s development, the Department commissioned the CCIWA to provide an independent industry perspective on skilled migration issues in Western Australia. The resulting *CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report* significantly informed the development of this strategy.

The report concludes that skilled migration has, and will continue to be, an invaluable source of skilled labour and has an important role if Western Australia is to build a skilled and sustainable workforce for the future. This view is supported by the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

Through this report and the Department’s extensive consultation, six main issues have been identified which will guide the State’s strategic migration initiatives:

- the approach to workforce planning and skilled migration between State and Australian Government agencies, industry and the community lacks consistency;
- migration programs are complex and create barriers for employers and prospective migrants to access high quality information on skilled migration;
- disparity in the quality of infrastructure and services between regions and the metropolitan area act as a disincentive for workers and their families to relocate to regional communities;
- the application and assessment process is complex and is difficult for employers and migrants to navigate;
- interstate and overseas migrants to Western Australia are unfamiliar with the local housing, health and education systems (among others) and find it difficult to locate and access services; and
- a better understanding of the specific and unique workforce needs of Western Australia would assist the State Government to develop appropriate policy solutions.

In addition to these issues Western Australia competes nationally and globally for skilled labour. This makes a flexible strategy that covers all aspects of attracting and retaining skilled migrants essential.

The *Western Australian skilled migration strategy* outlines how the State will use targeted skilled migration to assist Western Australia to achieve its workforce development outcomes by:

- delivering a more consistent and integrated planning approach to skilled migration;
- providing easily accessible, high quality information on skilled migration;
- developing attraction and retention strategies to ensure Western Australia has the skilled workforce needed to support sustainable economic growth;
- refining migration processes to support a more flexible and responsive migration program;
- implementing a range of settlement services to support skilled migrants to integrate into the local workforce; and
- maintaining an ongoing dialogue with the Australian Government to positively influence policy direction and ensure the needs of Western Australia are met.

This strategy will be implemented through the coordination of State services and the engagement of Australian Government, industry and community stakeholders.

Ongoing strong engagement with these stakeholders will be essential to the regular review of this strategy.

The State Government will continue to drive effective consultation with all stakeholders to ensure that Western Australia gains the full benefit from the national migration program.
Methodology

The Western Australian skilled migration strategy supports Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia by addressing those workforce development issues which impact, and are impacted upon by migration. The strategy has been shaped by the Department’s extensive consultation process. This involved calling for written submissions to a series of workforce development briefing papers and a number of information exchange sessions involving Government, industry and community stakeholders. The briefing papers are available from dtwd.wa.gov.au.

The information exchange sessions assisted in identifying the key issues impacting on the need for skilled migration, issues surrounding the application and assessment process, and suggested actions to address these issues.

Key negotiations were also conducted with the Australian Government, involving discussions on Western Australia’s allocation of the national skilled migration program. These negotiations, and continued engagement with the Australian Government, will ensure that Western Australia’s skilled migration initiatives take full advantage of the national skilled migration program.

To aid in the consultation process, the Department of Training and Workforce Development commissioned the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia (CCIWA) to provide an industry perspective on issues associated with skilled migration.

The CCIWA:

• established a working party comprising representatives from the Department of Training and Workforce Development, the CCIWA and the Chamber of Minerals and Energy to oversee the project, develop recommendations and provide guidance and feedback;
• developed a series of recommendations that considered how the State Government can address Western Australia’s future labour requirements;
• presented these recommendations at consultations, seeking feedback from 400 representatives from industry, regional businesses, unions, government and migration agents; and
• commissioned an online survey and received more than 200 responses.

The final CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report is available at dtwd.wa.gov.au.

The Department’s website also contains a number of other reports and discussion papers on workforce development which contributed to the development of this strategy.

Labour market outlook

Economic factors

Western Australia has weathered the global economic downturn in relatively sound shape and the economic outlook continues to improve. The Department of Treasury and Finance forecasts the Western Australian economy will grow by 4.0% in 2010-11, driven mainly by increased household consumption, exports and stronger housing and business investment. While this forecast is slightly lower than previous forecasts, underlying conditions are expected to strengthen over the medium term.9

In this context, the outlook for growth is predicted to rise to 4.75% in 2011-12 and moderate to 4.5% in 2012-13 and 4.0% in 2013-14.10

In comparison, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia (CCIWA) forecast that the State’s economy is expected to grow steadily, increasing from 5.0% in 2010-11 to 6.25% in 2012-13.11

Based on both assessments, it is clear that Western Australia’s economy is about to enter a sustained period of economic growth, largely due to a rebound in business investment driven by the strength of the resources sector.12

Currently there is more than $225 billion worth of projects under construction, committed or under consideration in Western Australia.13

According to the CCIWA14 the most pressing issue for the Western Australian economy, as it emerges from the downturn, is managing labour supply constraints to make the most of the current economic opportunities.

Labour market factors

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in November 2010, the Western Australian workforce comprised 1.28 million people with almost a third of the workforce employed in construction, healthcare and social assistance and retail.15

10 Ibid.
11 Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia 2010, Outlook, September Quarter 2010, p 3.
12 Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia 2010, Outlook, September Quarter 2010, p 3.
14 Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia June 2010, CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report.
15 ABS, Cat no. 6302.0.
In Western Australia, demand for labour is strongly associated with the resources sector. Growth in this sector results in a flow on effect to other industries, creating many additional jobs throughout the economy in other industries such as construction, manufacturing and retail trade.\(^{16}\)

CCIWA estimates that the Western Australian economy will require an additional 488,500 workers over the next 10 years and suggests that even with the current strong rates of population growth, there will still be a shortfall of more than 210,000 workers in Western Australia by 2020.\(^{17}\)

Independent labour market modelling also forecasts strong jobs growth. As shown below, Monash University forecast employment growth of 133,600 (11.4%) in the four years to 2013-14 while Access Economics forecast growth of 148,100 (12.6%) jobs over the same period.\(^{18}\)

Monash University forecasts indicate that some 239,000\(^{19}\) new jobs will be created by 2017. In addition to this, approximately 186,000 additional workers are expected to be required to fill jobs vacated by current workers leaving the workforce through retirements and permanent emigration.\(^{20}\)

As a result, it is expected approximately 425,000 new workers will be required by 2017. Recent analysis by the Department of Training and Workforce Development indicates approximately 275,000 workers will be provided through natural population growth and migration. This suggests that Western Australia may experience a labour deficit of up to 150,000 workers by 2017.

According to Monash University, managers, technicians and trades workers and professionals will dominate this employment growth and will collectively account for 56.4% of new jobs.

During the same period, the construction industry is forecast to experience the greatest jobs growth, creating 26,700 new jobs. The retail trade and health care and social assistance industries are forecast to grow by 12,000 and 11,700 new jobs respectively.\(^{21}\)

### Demographic factors

According to the ABS, Western Australia relies heavily on overseas skilled migration to supplement its workforce. Net overseas migration has been the key driver of the State’s population growth and has increased from approximately 18,200 persons in 1982 to over 28,200 persons in 2010.\(^{22}\)

The following chart demonstrates the components of population growth for the period 2000 to 2010.

As shown below, immigration has been a major contributor to Western Australia’s population growth.\(^{23}\) From 2005 to 2010, total overseas migration contributed around 60% of Western Australia’s population growth. In contrast, net interstate migration into Western Australia is a relatively modest contributor to population growth with only 7.4%.\(^{24}\)

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\(^{17}\) Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia June 2010, Building Western Australia’s Workforce for Tomorrow — Discussion Paper, p 3.


\(^{19}\) Monash University September 2009.

\(^{20}\) Based on analysis by the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Centre for the Economics of Education and Training, Monash and ABS data.

\(^{21}\) Monash University September 2009.

\(^{22}\) ABS Cat. 3101.0, Australian Demographic Statistics.

\(^{23}\) Ibid.

\(^{24}\) Ibid.
The ageing population is one of the most significant demographic trends affecting the structure of the future Australian labour market. According to the Australian Government’s Intergenerational Report 2010, the proportion of working age people in Australia is projected to fall significantly in the next few decades, with only 2.7 people of working age to support each Australian aged 65 years and over by the year 2050 (compared to 5 working age people per aged person in 2010 and 7.5 in 1970).25

Based on ABS projections, CCIWA estimate that the Western Australian workforce will decline by 4.6% between 2005 and 2025.26

**Skill shortages**

During the last period of economic expansion in Western Australia, skill shortages severely impacted on the capacity of the State’s industries to increase production. Key labour market indicators during this period revealed that the increasingly tight labour market and resulting skills shortages were driven by high levels of consumption, business activity, property market and construction activity and international demand for the State’s resource commodities. These trends are expected to re-emerge in the medium term.

A major issue during this period was the ‘crowding out’ effect caused by higher paying industries (such as mining and construction) attracting workers from lower paying industries and resulting in widespread skill and labour shortages.

These lessons from the State’s last expansion period plus the strong employment growth forecast over the next four years emphasises the need for a skilled migration strategy to assist in maximising the availability of skilled labour to the State’s industries.

**Skilled migration**

The Australian Government, through the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) is responsible for the management of the entry and settlement of people from overseas to Australia under a range of visa classes.

The Skill Stream of the Australian Migration Program is specifically designed to target migrants who have skills or outstanding abilities that will contribute to the Australian economy. The migration to Australia of people with qualifications and relevant work experience helps to address specific skill shortages in Australia and enhances the size and skill level of the Australian labour force.

**General skilled migration**

Visas available under the General Skilled Migration program include the skilled-independent and skilled-sponsored sub-classes. As well as meeting the general eligibility criteria, to meet the criteria for a skilled-independent visa an applicant’s nominated occupation must be specified on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship’s Skilled Occupation List (SOL).

While a skilled-independent visa does not require an applicant to be sponsored, a skilled-sponsored visa requires an applicant to be sponsored by an eligible Australian relative or to be nominated by a state or territory government.

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26 Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia June 2010, CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report.

27 Information in this chapter relating to the Australian migration program has been sourced from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. For more information on skilled migration to Australia please visit immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/24overview_skilled.htm.
Sponsorship under specific state or territory programs allows state and territory governments to nominate eligible occupations which are of importance in their state or territory. The list of occupations and the number of applicants available for sponsorship by each state and territory are facilitated through a respective Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) entered into with the Australian Government.

The Australian Government caps the number of migrants eligible to enter Australia via the General Skilled Migration category. The state and territory governments are allocated a percentage of this skilled migration pool based on need.

To be eligible for sponsorship by the Western Australian Government, an applicant’s nominated occupation will need to be identified on the Western Australian skilled migration occupation list (WASMOL). The WASMOL is available from dtwd.wa.gov.au.

Migrants sponsored by a state or territory government receive priority processing of their applications by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

**Employer nomination**

To gain entry into Australia, potential skilled migrants are also able to seek sponsorship by Australian employers under the Employer Nomination Schemes. These schemes require employers to nominate overseas workers for permanent residence in Australia to fill skilled vacancies in their business or region. To be eligible for sponsorship under these schemes, applicants must possess the skills, experience and qualifications for occupations listed on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship’s Employer Nominated Skilled Occupation List (ENSOL).

**Business skills migration**

The Business Skills Migration program encourages successful business people to settle permanently in Australia and develop new business opportunities. The majority of all business skills migrants enter Australia initially on a provisional (temporary) visa for four years and, after satisfactory evidence of a specified level of business or investment activity, may apply for permanent residence. These arrangements provide for the entry of business owners, senior executives and investors.

**Distinguished talent**

This category allows distinguished individuals with special or unique talents to gain permanent residence in Australia. The profiles of people who have been successful under this category generally include sports people, musicians, artists and designers, all of whom were internationally recognised as outstanding in their field.

**Other migration pathways**

The Temporary Business 457 visa class provides a mechanism for temporary additions to the labour market in periods of high labour demand. This employer sponsored visa allows migrants to work in Australia for a period of up to four years and is available to those migrants whose occupation is identified on the 457 Occupation List (available from diac.gov.au). In addition to providing an immediate source of labour, this visa also allows time for migrants to consider a long term future in Australia and employers to assess their skills for potential sponsorship under a permanent Employer Nominated Scheme.

The Temporary Business 457 visa class also provides for an arrangement where an employer is able to enter into a formal Labour Agreement with the Australian Government.

This allows employers to recruit groups of workers from overseas in response to identified labour shortages.

The Temporary Business 457 visa class is uncapped, flexible and suitable for meeting short to medium term labour needs.
Key themes and recommended priority actions

To meet the labour needs of Western Australia’s industries, the State Government’s plan for workforce development in Western Australia has five strategic goals:

1. Increase participation in the workforce particularly among the under-employed and disengaged, mature-aged workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other under represented groups (target groups);

2. Supplement the Western Australian workforce with skilled migrants to fill employment vacancies unable to be filled by the local workforce and address those factors which support a growing population;

3. Attract workers with the right skills to the Western Australian workforce and retain them by offering access to rewarding employment and a diverse vibrant community and environment to live in;

4. Provide flexible, responsive and innovative education and training which enables people to develop and utilise the skills necessary for them to realise their potential and contribute to Western Australia’s prosperity; and

5. Plan and coordinate a strategic State Government response to workforce development issues in Western Australia.

These strategic goals are the focus of the recently released *Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia* (see dtwd.wa.gov.au).

To achieve goal 2, and for Western Australia to take full advantage of the skilled migration program, a strategic and coordinated approach is required. This will focus on implementing activities which maximise the attraction and retention of high quality skilled migrants and the advocating for policy changes with the Australian Government. These policy changes will be targeted at increasing the flexibility of the national migration program as well as tailoring the skilled occupations available for sponsorship and the number of migrants awarded visas to better meet the needs of Western Australia.

This approach has two key objectives.

- Maximising the benefits of the state sponsored migration program — the number of skilled migrants available through the state sponsored program is capped by the Australian Government. To meet this objective, the priority actions recommended in this strategy are aimed at:
  - maximising the quality of applicants to the program through attraction and retention strategies and expediting the application and assessment process;
  - determining which occupations will qualify applicants for state sponsorship based on industry needs; and
  - ensuring Western Australia’s allocation of skilled migrant visas is appropriate to best meet the State’s needs.

- Providing additional skilled labour through temporary migration programs which meet the immediate and short term needs of Western Australian industry, while providing pathways to permanent migration for workers in occupations which cannot be filled by the local workforce. To meet this objective the priority actions recommended in this strategy are aimed at:
  - enhancing Western Australia’s reputation for a high quality work and living environment;
  - targeting potential migrants who possess the skills and experience in high demand by Western Australian employers;
  - maximising Western Australian employer’s use of the Temporary Business 457 visa scheme (including the use of Labour Agreements), and Employer Nominated Skilled Migration schemes; and
  - assisting both employers and applicants to access the national skilled migration program.

The recommended priority actions in this strategy are aligned to the six key themes below:

1. Planning — delivering a more consistent and integrated planning approach to skilled migration;

2. Information — providing easily accessible, high quality information on skilled migration;

3. Attraction — developing attraction and retention strategies to ensure Western Australia has the skilled workforce needed to support sustainable economic growth;

4. Process — refining migration processes to support a more flexible and responsive migration program;

5. Settlement services — implementing a range of settlement services to support skilled migrants to integrate into the local workforce; and

6. Advocacy — maintaining an ongoing dialogue with the Australian Government to positively influence policy direction and ensure the needs of Western Australia are met.

These themes and the associated priority actions recommended are detailed in the following pages. A summary of the recommended priority actions is attached in Appendix 1.
1 Planning — delivering a more consistent and integrated planning approach to skilled migration.

Workforce planning is a complex process. Policies from all tiers of government, private sector activities and the community all impact on workforce planning. Determining the level of skilled migration required to supplement the State’s workforce and planning to provide the necessary infrastructure and services to support these migrants is equally as complex, involving many stakeholders.

To ensure the State receives the maximum benefit from the national migration program, an effective planning framework that integrates policy initiatives across all levels of government is essential. This key issue was raised in the CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report and the consultation process used to inform this strategy.

Additionally, the complex nature of skilled migration necessitates an inclusive policy development process which ensures the diverse range of issues and views of all stakeholders are considered.

The need for policies to ensure the local community has appropriate infrastructure, both social and economic, to support new arrivals was a key recommendation of the CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report. It is essential that Western Australia takes into account workforce development issues including the development of infrastructure identified in the CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report and the consultation process used to inform this strategy.

An industry reference group consisting of peak employer and industry groups will meet regularly to assist the Department of Training and Workforce Development in reviewing the progress of strategies and initiatives in the Western Australian skilled migration strategy. The group will also provide advice to the Department on emerging issues impacting on migration to Western Australia and suggested solutions and strategies. This will include providing advice on Australian Government migration policy issues.

1.2 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will establish regional workforce development alliances to lead workforce development initiatives in regional areas.

Regional alliances comprising local industry, community and government stakeholders will be established to undertake the planning and implementation of a range of workforce development initiatives in regional areas.

1.3 The Western Australian skilled migration strategy and regional workforce development plans will inform the work of the Western Australian Planning Commission’s Infrastructure Coordinating Committee in the planning of physical and social infrastructure in Western Australia.

This will be done through the development and implementation of regional workforce development plans.

1.1 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will establish an industry reference group to regularly review skilled migration strategies and initiatives.

Industry and business have an ongoing interest in being able to source skilled labour from a variety of sources including migration. A number of these industry and business stakeholders also participated in the development of the Western Australian skilled migration strategy. It is essential that government and stakeholders from a range of sectors and interest groups continue to work together to maximise the outcomes from the national migration program.

Outcomes — Planning

• Industry involvement and commitment in the planning, implementation and review of skilled migration strategies and initiatives.
• Planning and support for skilled migration in regional areas.
• Infrastructure planning in Western Australia takes into account workforce development issues including that of skilled migration.

Priority actions

1.1 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will establish an industry reference group to regularly review skilled migration strategies and initiatives.

Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia will inform the State Planning Strategy and the work of the State Planning Commission’s Infrastructure Coordinating Committee in providing the necessary infrastructure and services for the State’s growing workforce, especially in regional areas.

This integration which includes the Western Australian skilled migration strategy will leverage existing planning mechanisms and inter-agency coordination by ensuring industry, government and the community work together to plan for social and physical infrastructure and services that support economic development and maximise the availability of skilled labour.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development is the lead agency in this process and will work collaboratively across government, industry and the community to implement the recommendations of Skilling WA.

Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia will inform the State Planning Strategy and the work of the State Planning Commission’s Infrastructure Coordinating Committee in providing the necessary infrastructure and services for the State’s growing workforce, especially in regional areas.

The framework includes regional, industry and Aboriginal workforce planning and collectively forms the basis for Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia.

Regional planning information from the Western Australian Planning Commission’s Infrastructure Coordinating Committee in the planning of physical and social infrastructure in Western Australia.

This will be done through the development and implementation of regional workforce development plans.

The issues and initiatives relating to infrastructure identified in Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia and regional workforce development plans will be considered by the Western Australian Planning Commission through the Infrastructure Coordinating Committee.

Regional alliances comprising local industry, community and government stakeholders will be established to undertake the planning and implementation of a range of workforce development initiatives in regional areas.

An industry reference group consisting of peak employer and industry groups will meet regularly to assist the Department of Training and Workforce Development in reviewing the progress of strategies and initiatives in the Western Australian skilled migration strategy. The group will also provide advice to the Department on emerging issues impacting on migration to Western Australia and suggested solutions and strategies. This will include providing advice on Australian Government migration policy issues.

Regional alliances comprising local industry, community and government stakeholders will be established to undertake the planning and implementation of a range of workforce development initiatives in regional areas.

The role of the regional workforce development alliances will be to contribute to strategies that will:

• address barriers to participation in regional workforces (in particular under represented groups);
• improve the attraction and retention of a skilled workforce in regional areas;
• support the settlement of skilled migrants; and
• enhance training opportunities that meet local needs.
2 Information — providing easily accessible, high quality information on skilled migration.

To build a sustainable workforce, government, industry and the community requires access to accurate information on labour market trends, economic conditions and industry needs. The gathering and utilisation of accurate qualitative and quantitative data is strongly advocated for in the CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report. The Department of Training and Workforce Development has begun to address this by collecting and analysing workforce, economic and population data and information from a range of sources.

This information is shared through the dedicated workforce development website dtwd.wa.gov.au.

To maximise the benefits to the State of the national migration program, more information is required on a number of different levels.

Information on both the number and types of jobs which cannot be filled by the local workforce is essential in determining future migration needs. A list of occupations eligible for sponsorship under the State Sponsored Skilled Migration program is needed to assist both employers and prospective skilled migrants.

Western Australia competes with other states and territories and other developed economies to attract high quality skilled migrants. However the wide range of migration programs and their complexity act as a barrier to attracting these skilled migrants.

This is compounded by the many different agencies and organisations that provide migration information across a number of websites. A central point is required for employers and prospective skilled migrants to access comprehensive information on skilled migration and settlement issues. This includes information on skills in demand, visa options, housing and state services, useful details about Western Australia and links to employment and training providers.

Information on employer’s obligations under the migration scheme as well as best practice initiatives to attract and retain skilled migrants will also assist employers to understand their responsibilities and manage their future labour needs.

Overseas workers are attracted to Western Australia through a number of visa programs, including the State Sponsored Skilled Migration program, the Skilled Independent and Employer Nominated schemes, the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme and the Temporary Business 457 visa programs.

To maximise the benefits from these programs, it is essential that employers and potential migrants have access to up to date information on the employment opportunities available, the availability of prospective skilled migrants and the visa programs which best suit their needs.

Priority actions

2.1 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will develop and use the Western Australian skilled migration occupation list to address the State’s skill needs through the state sponsored General Skilled Migration program.

Using labour market research and advice from industry, the Department of Training and Workforce Development will develop the Western Australian skilled migration occupation list that reflects those occupations that will be in high demand or critical to the State. This list will be broader than the Australian Government’s Skilled Occupation List and will allow Western Australia to target those skills it needs through the state sponsored General Skilled Migration program.

The Western Australian skilled migration occupation list will form part of the Memorandum of Understanding currently being negotiated with the Australian Government on the levels of state sponsored migration to Western Australia and will be updated regularly to reflect the current workforce needs, with a major review being conducted annually.

2.2 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will establish a Western Australian skilled migration information portal that supports employers and prospective migrants.

Outcomes — Information

- The Western Australian skilled migration web portal will be developed by the Department of Training and Workforce Development in conjunction with relevant government agencies and industry stakeholders.
- The web portal will provide a central point of information for skilled migration matters in Western Australia, linking information from the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Small Business Development Corporation, the Office of Multicultural Interests, Regional Development Commissions, Perth Education City and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

The web portal will:

• support prospective migrants to gain an understanding of Western Australia, the migration opportunities available and settlement and support services; and
• provide employers with a greater understanding of skilled migration options, especially the state sponsorship, employer nominated and Temporary Business 457 visa programs.

2.3 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will promote a greater awareness of the State’s employment opportunities, the availability of high quality skilled migrants and visa pathways to prospective migrants and employers to enable improved utilisation of the national migration program and better employment outcomes.

Outcomes — Information

• The State Sponsored General Skilled Migration program will be based on the priority occupational needs of Western Australia.
• Better informed employers, prospective and current skilled migrants and greater utilisation of state-sponsorship and temporary migration programs.
Attraction — developing attraction and retention strategies to ensure Western Australia has the skilled workforce needed to support sustainable economic growth.

While Western Australia has experienced a strong period of economic growth, many regions around the world have also experienced similar growth and increases in productivity. Like Western Australia, these regions have a strong demand for labour and compete with Western Australia for skilled migrants. To continue to be competitive in attracting skilled migrants, Western Australia must continue to build an environment which appeals to overseas migrants.

To create the environment which supports an attractive lifestyle, the State will continue to work with industry and the community to support the development of the necessary hard and social infrastructure, especially in the regions.

The CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report recommends that this environment, the growing job opportunities and the State’s high quality working conditions must also be marketed both interstate and overseas, to ensure Western Australia continues to be a destination of choice for skilled migrants. The focus of the program will be on migrants with skills identified on the State Government’s State priority occupation list as critical to Western Australia’s needs.

In addition, for overseas migrants, there will be an emphasis given to promoting the Temporary Business 457 visa pathway.

Priority actions

3.1 The State will support regional building initiatives such as Pilbara Cities that provide for the formation of sustainable regional communities and which deliver the amenities required for skilled workers to both work and live in regional Western Australia.

This will require the development of policy and frameworks which support the attraction and retention of skilled workers to regional Western Australia through improving the availability of social infrastructure and services.

3.2 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will work with Tourism Western Australia, other Government agencies and industry to develop a comprehensive marketing program to promote Western Australia as the destination of choice for potential migrants.

A proposal will be developed to undertake a comprehensive marketing program to promote Western Australia to overseas and interstate migrants.

Outcome — Attraction

• Western Australia is considered a destination of choice for overseas and interstate migrants.

Advice from industry will also be sought.

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29 Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia June 2010, CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report, p 54.
4 Process — refining migration processes to support a more flexible and responsive migration program.

Feedback from the Department of Training and Workforce Development consultations and findings in the CCIWA WA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report suggest that the complexity and processing times for temporary visas pose significant challenges to enterprises needing to employ skilled workers for limited periods of time. This highlights the need to streamline the migration application process to meet the needs of employers and migrants.30

The State Government has responsibility for the state sponsored skilled visa application process and is committed to reviewing and simplifying the process for applying for state sponsorship. Improving electronic processes through the use of an online database website is aimed at reducing the processing time.

The State Government will also engage with the Australian Government to streamline national skilled migration processes. This will include advocating for a reduction in the number of visa classes to reduce the complexity of the application process.

A key component of the processing of the state sponsored skilled migration applications is the assessment of overseas qualifications. The CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report suggests that the current requirements for skills assessments and qualifications recognition are unnecessary and place a considerable burden on applicants, especially those from poorer countries.31

To address this, alternative models for the processing of applications for overseas qualification recognition which improve timeliness and outcomes for business and migrants will be investigated. Further, the Department of Training and Workforce Development will work with industry to provide appropriate gap training to assist on-shore skilled migrant applicants to transition into the workforce.

4.1 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will review the administrative processes for state sponsorship of applicants to the General Skilled Migration program to improve processing times and migration outcomes.

The Department will undertake a project which will identify opportunities to improve administrative processes in relation to state sponsored General Skilled Migration applications.

The Department will establish an online application system and develop a new database to facilitate the streamlining of the assessment and processing of state sponsored applications.

The Department will consult with relevant stakeholders in validating proposals for enhancing the administrative processes of the Skilled Migration WA unit.

4.2 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will investigate alternative models for processing the recognition of skilled migrant qualifications to improve timeliness and outcomes for business and migrants.

The Department will undertake a project involving relevant stakeholders to identify alternative models to enhance the process in recognising overseas qualifications.

The project will also identify how gap education and training can be facilitated if an applicant cannot attain or demonstrate the required level of qualification standards.

4.3 The State Government will work with the Australian Government to influence the streamlining and improvement of immigration processes.

The State Government through the Minister for Training and Workforce Development and the Department will influence the streamlining and improving of the Australian Government migration process in a range of areas including the:

- number of visa classes;
- complexity of application and assessment processes;
- requirements for Temporary Business 457 visa and Labour Agreements; and
- provision of appropriate data to the State to support workforce planning and development.

Outcomes — Process

- Improved responsiveness and processing of the State Sponsored General Skilled Migration program in Western Australia.
- Opportunities for enhancing the process for recognition of overseas qualifications are implemented where appropriate.
- A responsive migration program to meet Western Australia’s skilled labour needs.
5 Settlement services — implementing a range of settlement services to support skilled migrants to integrate into the local workforce.

Evidence suggests that migrants adjust to living and working in a new country if they have access to quality settlement services that allow them to access appropriate social support services and high quality infrastructure.

Migrants generally rely on a range of factors when choosing a settlement location, such as the location and availability of job opportunities, availability and cost of housing, cost of living expenses, quality of schools, health services and lifestyle facilities.

To support migrants and their families to settle into the community and workforce, planning that allows for integrated service delivery and considers the full range of settlement issues is required. Better settlement outcomes are achieved by delivering services that complement and connect to each other, rather than providing a range of isolated services.

Plans for these services should incorporate specific objectives for key centres, based on potential industry labour demand for the region and consider the demographic profile and community expectations.

The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (now Department of Immigration and Citizenship) has identified the following challenges and issues facing culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers:

- lack of recognition of overseas skills for employment;
- lack of recognition of overseas experience;
- lack of local work experience;
- registration/licensing requirements for entry to the labour market for some professions and trades;
- real or perceived English language proficiency shortfalls; and
- perceptions by employers of unacceptable attitudes and behavioural and performative traits of qualified/skilled migrants.32

To address these issues, the Department of Training and Workforce Development is broadening the role of the Career Centre and Workforce Development Centres to include the provision of support to migrants and employers to maximise participation of skilled migrants, particularly in regional areas of Western Australia.

In addition to the issues identified by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, the CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report highlights the lack of awareness of the services available to migrants or temporary residents as an issue for industry and prospective migrants alike. The report also identifies access to affordable housing, healthcare, training and education as barriers to migrants attaining or sustaining employment.31

In response to these issues, the State Government will continue to work in partnership with employers, governments and stakeholders to provide a range of infrastructure and support services to improve the liveability of regional centres and support the attraction and retention of migrants in Western Australia, including the development of a Western Australian migration settlement program.

Priority actions

5.1 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will expand the role of the Career Centre and Workforce Development Centres to provide support to migrants and employers. This support will be focused on improving the skills and workforce participation of migrants, particularly in regional areas of Western Australia.

The Career Centre and regional Workforce Development Centres will provide information relating to training and employment to migrants and facilitate linkages with training providers and employment service providers.

5.2 The State Government, in conjunction with the Australian Government, will develop a Western Australian migration settlement program to provide a range of support services to facilitate permanent and temporary worker settlement in the community and the workplace.

A proposal will be developed for a joint State–Australian Government initiative to facilitate the provision of settlement services for migrants. The Western Australian migration settlement program will facilitate access to housing, education and training, childcare, employment, recreation and community services and facilities. This program would not only apply to primary visa holders but also secondary visa holders and other residents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Outcome — Settlement services

- Improved workforce participation of migrants.

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32 Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2005, Submission to the Productivity Commission study into the economic impacts of migration and population growth, p 14.

31 Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia June 2010, CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report, p 82.
6 Advocacy — maintaining an ongoing dialogue with the Australian Government to positively influence policy direction and ensure the needs of Western Australia are met.

The CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report suggests the State Government has an important role in influencing policy decisions on the national skilled migration program. Similarly the State Government recognises the need for a focus on advocating for changes to Australian Government policy and will continue to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Australian Government to positively influence policy direction and ensure the needs of Western Australia are met.34

The demand for skilled labour significantly differs among Australia’s states and territories. The forecast demand for labour in Western Australia and Queensland is significantly higher than that of the other states, especially in the trades and technical sectors.35 A flexible and responsive skilled migration system is required which is able to cater for these differences, providing for variations in the number of skilled migrant visa allocations.

The complexity of the visa application process presents a barrier to some potential skilled migrants. To maximise the pool of potential skilled migrants applying to come to Australia, a streamlining of the visa application and assessment process is required. The State Government will continue to work with the Australian Government to influence changes to the migration system to reduce the complexity of the system and make the system more accessible.

The state sponsored visa scheme caps the number of skilled migrants who are granted visas. However, the Temporary Business 457 visa program is uncapped, allowing employers to identify overseas workers who meet their requirements and sponsor them for a period of up to four years. In periods of strong labour demand this program provides the State with the best mechanism for addressing an immediate and temporary skills and labour shortage. To gain the maximum benefit from the program, changes to the visa requirements and the application process are required, including changes to the requirements regarding Labour Agreements.

In addition to the state sponsored and Temporary Business 457 visa programs, workers are also attracted to Western Australia through the Skilled-Independent and Employer Nominated schemes and the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme. While these programs are managed solely by the Australian Government, an opportunity exists for Western Australian employers to gain greater benefit from them.

To capitalise on these opportunities, the State Government will continue to work with the Australian Government to advocate for changes which result in Western Australia maximising its return from the national migration program.

Priority actions

6.1 The State Government will advocate for policy changes that encourage greater flexibility in the national migration program to meet the needs of Western Australia.

The State Government will advocate for policy changes to:

• adjust the caps on permanent skilled migration to Western Australia (particularly in the state sponsored General Skilled Migration program and Employer Sponsored Scheme) to increase the responsiveness of the program to Western Australia’s needs;
• enhance the responsiveness of the Temporary Business 457 program to meet the labour market needs of the State; and
• increase the take up of Labour Agreements for specific industries and occupations which have difficulty in attracting skilled and semi-skilled workers.

Advocacy on migration issues will be supported through the development of Western Australian migration policies, led by the Department of Training and Workforce Development and informed by the Industry Reference Group (Priority Action 1.1) and the Regional Workforce Development Alliances (Priority Action 1.2).

6.2 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will advocate for a skilled migration allocation, through the Memorandum of Understanding on the state sponsored General Skilled Migration program, that better meets the specific needs of Western Australian employers.

The Department has developed a Western Australian skilled migration occupation list that identifies required skilled occupations used for sponsoring applicants for the following state sponsored visa sub classes:

• 176 Skilled — Sponsored (permanent);
• 886 Skilled — Sponsored (residence);
• 475 Skilled — Regional Sponsored (provisional); and
• 487 Regional Sponsored (provisional).

This list will reflect those priority skilled occupations that are critical to the Western Australian economy and industry.

The State Government has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Australian Government for state sponsored visas, underpinned by the Western Australian skilled migration occupation list.

Through this MOU, the Department will negotiate on an annual basis for the best possible number of nominations for Western Australia’s state sponsored General Skilled Migration program.

Outcomes — Advocacy

• Increased flexibility of the national skilled migration program which meets the needs of Western Australia.
• Western Australia has a State Sponsored General Skilled Migration program that is responsive to the labour needs of Western Australia.

34 Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia June 2010,
CCIWA Skilled Migration in Western Australia Report, pages 7, 11;
33; 53; and 63.
The way forward

The **Western Australian skilled migration strategy** outlines the State’s strategy for maximising the benefit to Western Australia of the national skilled migration program. It sets out the actions which will help both refine and improve the state sponsored skilled migration process as well as enabling migrants to reach their full employment potential within the Western Australian workforce. The desired outcome of the actions within this strategy is to supplement the skills of the local workforce with the skills of overseas born workers to help meet the growing labour needs of the State’s industries.

The **Western Australian skilled migration strategy** complements the **Memorandum of Understanding State Sponsored Skilled Migration 2010–2014** and forms part of the integrated **Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia**.

This integrated approach will see a seamless implementation of workforce development initiatives across the State.

As the lead agency on workforce development matters, the Department will work with State Government agencies, the Australian and Local Governments, industry and the community to progress the actions contained within this strategy.

The Department will be responsible for:

- obtaining the active support of all stakeholders;
- identifying strategies, policies and initiatives that will have the greatest positive impact for Western Australia;
- identifying gaps in the effectiveness of the actions in the **Western Australian skilled migration strategy**; and
- ensuring sustainability of workforce development planning in Western Australia over the next decade.

In addition, using existing resources the Department will also establish a specific migration policy unit to provide policy advice and direction on a wide range of migration issues.

This unit will have a particular focus on the following:

- interacting with the Australian Government on matters relating to migration issues and policy changes;
- critical analysis of Australian Government migration policy and its impact on the Western Australian workforce; and
- working with the industry reference group outlined in the **Western Australian skilled migration strategy** to provide policy comment and advice to the Department.

The Department invites feedback from all interested stakeholders. Feedback can be provided to:

- W: dtwd.wa.gov.au
- E: swp@dtwd.wa.gov.au

Appendix 1 — list of recommended actions

The **Western Australian skilled migration strategy** includes a number of recommended actions that are linked to the key themes where stakeholders can work cooperatively to deliver a range of positive outcomes in the development of Western Australia’s workforce. Where appropriate, key agencies have been identified. 36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Planning — delivering a more consistent and integrated planning approach to skilled migration.</th>
<th>Key agencies</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will establish an industry reference group to regularly review skilled migration strategies and initiatives.</td>
<td>DTWD</td>
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<td>1.2 The Department of Training and Workforce Development will establish regional workforce development alliances to lead workforce development initiatives in regional areas.</td>
<td>DTWD, RDC</td>
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<td>1.3 The <strong>Western Australian skilled migration strategy</strong> and regional workforce development plans will inform the work of the Western Australian Planning Commission’s Infrastructure Coordinating Committee in the planning of physical and social infrastructure in Western Australia.</td>
<td>DTWD, WAPC, DoP</td>
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36 Department of Training and Workforce Development DTWD
Department of the Premier and Cabinet DPC
Department of Regional Development and Lands DRDL
Department of Commerce DoC
Department of Housing DoH

Department of Planning DoP
Office of Multicultural Interests OMI
Western Australian Planning Commission WAPC
Small Business Development Corporation SBDC
Regional Development Commissions RDC
## 2 Information — providing easily accessible, high quality information on skilled migration.

**2.1** The Department of Training and Workforce Development will develop and use the *Western Australian skilled migration occupation list* to address the State’s skill needs through the State Sponsored General Skilled Migration program.

**Key agencies**: DTWD

**2.2** The Department of Training and Workforce Development will establish a Western Australian skilled migration information portal that supports employers and prospective migrants.

**Key agencies**: DTWD, OMI

**2.3** The Department of Training and Workforce Development will promote a greater awareness of the State’s employment opportunities, the availability of high quality skilled migrants and visa pathways to prospective migrants and employers to enable improved utilisation of the national migration program and better employment outcomes.

**Key agencies**: DTWD

## 3 Attraction — developing attraction and retention strategies to ensure Western Australia has the skilled workforce needed to support sustainable economic growth.

**3.1** The State will support regional building initiatives such as Pilbara Cities that provide for the formation of sustainable regional communities and which deliver the amenities required for skilled workers to both work and live in regional Western Australia.

**Key agencies**: DoP, DRDL, DoH

**3.2** The Department of Training and Workforce Development will work with Tourism Western Australia, other Government agencies and industry to develop a comprehensive marketing program to promote Western Australia as the destination of choice for potential migrants.

**Key agencies**: DTWD, SBDC, OMI, RDC

## 4 Process — refining migration processes to support a more flexible and responsive migration program.

**4.1** The Department of Training and Workforce Development will review the administrative processes for state sponsorship of applicants to the General Skilled Migration program to improve processing times and migration outcomes.

**Key agencies**: DTWD

**4.2** The Department of Training and Workforce Development will investigate alternative models for processing the recognition of skilled migrant qualifications to improve timeliness and outcomes for business and migrants.

**Key agencies**: DTWD

**4.3** The State Government will work with the Australian Government to influence the streamlining and improvement of immigration processes.

**Key agencies**: DTWD, DPC

## 5 Settlement services — implementing a range of settlement services to support skilled migrants to integrate into the local workforce.

**5.1** The Department of Training and Workforce Development will expand the role of the Career Centre and Workforce Development Centres to provide support to migrants and employers. This support will be focused on improving the skills and workforce participation of migrants, particularly in regional areas of Western Australia.

**Key agencies**: DTWD

**5.2** The State Government, in conjunction with the Australian Government, will develop a Western Australian migration settlement program to provide a range of support services to facilitate permanent and temporary worker settlement in the community and the workplace.

**Key agencies**: DTWD, DPC, SBDC, OMI, DoC
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**Glossary of terms**

**Ageing of the population** is the consideration of the proportion of the population aged 65 years and over, and the way this proportion is continuing to increase, mostly due to persistent low fertility rates and declining mortality rates.

**ANZSCO** is the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations which has been developed for use in collection, analysis and dissemination of occupation statistics in Australian and New Zealand.

**Census** of Population and Housing is the largest statistical operation undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). It aims to accurately measure the number of people in Australia on census night, their key characteristics and the dwellings in which they live. The scope of the census is all people in Australia on census night, other than foreign diplomats and their families. Visitors to Australia are counted regardless of how long they have been in the country or how long they plan to stay. Australian residents out of the country on census night are not included.

**Crowding out effect** is caused when workers are attracted to higher paying industries (such as mining and construction) and move away from lower paying industries. The result is that the lower paying industries are unable to recruit and retain the workforces they need and skill shortages materialise.

**Employer Nominated Skilled Occupation List (ENSOL)** is the list of eligible occupations for visa applicants applying under the Employer Nomination Scheme. It is controlled by the Australian Government’s Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

**Employer nomination** is whereby employers may nominate (or ‘sponsor’) personnel from overseas through the following categories:

- The **Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS)** allows Australian employers to nominate overseas workers for permanent residence in Australia to fill skilled vacancies in their business; and
- The **Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)** is one of several government initiatives which are designed to encourage migration to regional and low population growth areas of Australia. Employers in these areas can nominate overseas workers for permanent residence to fill skilled vacancies in their business.
General Skilled Migration program has a range of visa options for skilled workers who want to live in Australia and who do not have an employer sponsoring them.

Independent migrants are selected on the basis of their nominated occupation, age, skills, qualifications, English language, ability and employability so they can contribute quickly to the Australian economy. They are not sponsored by an employer or relative in Australia.

For those unable to meet the independent criteria, sponsorship by an eligible Australian relative or nomination by a state or territory government is also possible under general skilled migration.

Labour Agreements are a formal contract between the Commonwealth and an employer which allows the temporary or permanent migration for the employment of an individual or group of persons from overseas who have semi-skilled occupations.

Labour force is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as any group or persons who were employed or unemployed.

Labour force status is a classification of the civilian population aged 15 years and over into employed, unemployed or not in the labour force, as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The definitions conform closely to the international standard definitions adopted by the International Conferences of Labour Statisticians.

Labour markets refers to the interaction of workers and employers as suppliers of labour services (workers) and the demanders of labour services (employers) and the resulting pattern of wages, employment and income.

Labour shortages are deficits in the number of people participating in the workforce.

Labour supply refers to the availability of suitable human resources in a particular market. In economic theory it is the number of total hours that workers wish to work at a given real wage rate.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a document describing a bilateral or multilateral agreement between parties. It expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action.

Migrant is defined as a person who was born overseas and has obtained permanent Australian resident status prior to or after their arrival. The scope of several ABS surveys restricts the definition of migrants to include only migrants who arrived in Australia in the last 20 years and who were aged 15 years or more on arrival.

Net Interstate Migration (NIM) is interstate arrivals minus interstate departures during the year. Net interstate migration rate expresses this as a proportion (per cent) of the population at the beginning of the year.

Net Overseas Migration (NOM) is the addition to the Australian population arising from the difference between long term arrivals and long term departures.

Population of Australia is based on the concept of residence. It refers to all people, regardless of nationality or citizenship, who usually live in Australia, with the exception of foreign diplomatic personnel and their families. It includes usual residents who are overseas for less than 12 months. It excludes overseas residents who are in Australia for less than 12 months. Estimated resident population is an estimate of the Australian population obtained by adding to the estimated population at the beginning of each period the components of natural increase (on a usual residence basis) and net overseas migration. For the states and territories, account is also taken of estimated interstate movements involving a change of usual residence.

Population growth is measured as the sum of natural increase and net overseas migration. For dates prior to 1996, differences between growth and the sum of natural increase and net overseas migration arise from retrospective adjustments to population estimates (which are made after each census) to compensate for intercensal discrepancy. Population growth rate expresses the increase as a proportion (per cent) of the population at the beginning of the year.

Population projections take the base year population for each sex by single years of age and advance it year by year by applying assumptions about future mortality and migration. Assumed age-specific fertility rates are applied to the female populations of child-bearing ages to provide the estimates of new births for each year. The ABS produces several series of population projections based on different combinations of assumptions about mortality, fertility and migration. The assumptions underlying Series B most closely reflect prevailing trends and comprise: declining rates of mortality; the total fertility rate for Australia falling to 1.6 by 2011, and then remaining constant; low levels of overseas migration (annual net gain of 100,000 from 2005-2006); and medium levels of interstate migration. The base year for these projections is 2002.

Skilled migration is one of the three streams in the Australian Government's Migration Program. The skilled stream is specifically designed to target migrants who have skills or outstanding abilities that will contribute to the Australian economy. The Australian Government continues to emphasise skilled migration, while maintaining a commitment to family reunion and humanitarian-based migration.
The migration to Australia of people with qualifications and relevant work experience helps to address specific skills shortages in Australia and enhances the size and skill level of the Australian labour force.

**Skilled Occupation List** is the list that identifies high value occupations and is controlled by the Australian Government’s Department of Immigration and Citizenship. It is used for the overall General Skilled Migration program.

**Skills shortages** exist when employers are unable to fill or have considerable difficulty in filling vacancies for an occupation, or specialised skill needs within that occupation, at current levels of remuneration and conditions of employment, and reasonably accessible location. Shortages are typically for specialised and experienced workers. An occupation may be in shortage even though not all specialisations are in shortage. Occupations may be in shortage in particular geographical areas and not in others. Skills shortages generally involve skills that require a significant period of training and/or experience.

**State priority occupation list** is compiled by the Department of Training and Workforce Development in consultation with key stakeholders including the State’s ten Training Councils. The list is an annually produced list of jobs that are in high demand or considered industry critical in Western Australia. The list is used to inform Skilling WA — A workforce development plan for Western Australia, the development of the Western Australian skilled migration occupation list and the preparation of the State training plan which guides the funding of training.

**Western Australian skilled migration occupation list** is attached to the Memorandum of Understanding State Sponsored Skilled Migration 2010–2014. It forms the basis of a bilateral agreement with the Australian Government which identifies those skilled occupations used for sponsoring applicants for the following state sponsored visa sub classes:

- 176 Skilled — Sponsored (permanent);
- 886 Skilled — Sponsored (residence);
- 475 Skilled — Regional Sponsored (provisional); and
- 487 Regional Sponsored (provisional).

**Workforce development** is an outcome of workforce planning and is linked to the broader economic context and in particular, involves building and supporting a skilled workforce to meet economic need.

**Workforce planning** is a management technique used to effectively manage workforce demand and supply. It aligns the needs of a business with those of its workforce, seeking a balance between both.

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**Abbreviations**

- **ABS**  - Australian Bureau of Statistics
- **CCIWA**  - Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia
- **CME**  - Chamber of Minerals and Energy
- **DIAC**  - Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- **DTWD**  - Department of Training and Workforce Development
- **ENSOL**  - Employer Nomination Skilled Occupation List
- **GSM**  - General skilled migration
- **MOU**  - Memorandum of Understanding
- **SOL**  - Skilled Occupation List
- **SPOL**  - State priority occupation list
- **WASMOL**  - Western Australian skilled migration occupation list