

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

THE INDUSTRY & WORKFORCE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA 2019



## THE INDUSTRY <sup>1</sup>

The Local Government Administration industry employs close to 12,700 West Australians. Local government manages local issues and plans for its community's specific needs, infrastructure and assets such as roads, bridges, town halls, recreation and leisure facilities, drains, libraries and parks.

Core operational areas include: provision of services across infrastructure, property, building, recreational, cultural, health, community; provision and administration of facilities; and planning and development approval. Local governments also play significant roles in the implementation of public safety and water supply.



## KEY WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS <sup>2</sup>

### Gender



50% female

### Age



26% <35 years of age

### Nationality



32% born outside Australia

### Employment



70% employed full time

### Education



25% tertiary qualified  
69% vocational & secondary qualified

### Weekly Income



32% earn <\$1,000  
29% earn \$1,500+

## WORKFORCE PRIORITIES <sup>3</sup>

1

Projected employment growth with anticipated skills/occupational shortages particularly for building surveyors and town planners. Other shortage areas include environmental health, engineering, project management, asset/facilities management, community engagement, accounting, plant operation and IT.

2

Building capacity and establishing positive cultures in teams undergoing reform will rely on highly developed skills in change management, workforce planning, people management, learning and development, problem solving and project management.

3

Career options, mentoring, leadership development programs and exchanges with other councils can further address staff attrition, support skills development in an increasingly digital environment and promote lifelong learning.

4

Effective leadership will rely on the ability to work in an increasingly digital world of work. Training availability, budget constraints and time are most commonly cited factors hindering staff gaining soft skills.

## OCCUPATIONS & CAREERS



General Clerk  
Office Manager  
Practice Manager  
Program Administrator  
Project Administrator



Human Resource Manager  
Environmental Health Officer  
Urban Planner  
Regional Planner



Labourer  
Earth Moving Plant Operator  
Life Science Technician  
Inspector  
Regulatory Officer

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

THE INDUSTRY & WORKFORCE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA 2019



## INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS<sup>4</sup>



**REFORMS** Local government reforms are driving improved service delivery for the community and the ability for local councils to meet priorities now and into the future. Areas for reform have focused on community and public expectations, capacity building through administrative efficiencies, and a review of ICT systems and digital processes. The new Local Government Legislation Amendment Act 2019 will better prepare council members for their role, strengthen governance, empower councils to communicate with residents using modern technology and expand the amount of information available to the public online.



**TECHNOLOGY** Local governments will rely on advanced technologies to support reform activities, shaping how they operate, enabling automation of processes, digitisation of data collection, cloud-based processing, data storage and service delivery. There is a growing focus on system implementation to streamline workflow and business processes, improve capability and performance, and strengthen direction and outcomes. The aim is to drive efficiencies and improve governance, accountability and transparency. Sector wide digital reform will improve service delivery, inform decision making and strategic direction.



**TRANSFORMATION** Local governments are focused on assessing traditionally supplied services, infrastructure and resources to improve operational efficiency and governance, improve customer experience and minimise cost while delivering on the needs of the community and the organisation. This requires a structured, comprehensive and customer-centric end-to-end approach with technical improvements at back end operations to support and underpin full service delivery. Core areas for success include having the right leadership, resources and skillsets to deliver on the transformation, bringing the broader executive team on the transformation journey and allocating enough investment for delivery of effort across all resources.



**EMPLOYEE CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK** Local governments will need to adjust the skills composition of their teams to ensure outcomes are achieved. The reform agenda recognises the need to ensure a capable, high performing workforce to deliver on government and community priorities in a changing landscape. Capability building will require a shift in culture to support purposeful collaboration, a systematic approach to workforce capability development and talent management, and greater mobility across the sector for employees. A well-developed employee capability framework can lead to improved recruitment outcomes, targeted learning and development, clarity in performance management, effective career planning, and more strategic workforce planning.

## TRAINING<sup>4,5</sup>

The new Local Government Legislation Amendment Act 2019 (passed by Parliament in June 2019) includes the introduction of universal training (candidate induction, elected member training and continued professional development), changes to the Local Government Standards Panel processes and the publication of material on local government websites for accountability and transparency.

The Local Government Training Package is currently undergoing a full update to ensure it is fit for purpose and aligned to current and future industry skill needs. It contains 6 traineeships ranging from Certificate II to Certificate IV qualifications including administration, planning and regulatory services. These provide vocational training through a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job training. Financial incentives exist for eligible employers.

Micro-credentialing, using short pieces of training delivery and skill-set acquisition can support up-skilling and cross-skilling of local government staff to address skill-gaps in a flexible, affordable and timely manner. Similarly, traineeships (including school-based traineeships) can support local recruitment strategies to counter the rapidly ageing local government workforce and provide sustainable solutions to meet occupational gaps once new Training Package products become endorsed.