

REGIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

for the

Southern Flinders Region

Annual Implementation Plan 2009-10
(Part 3)

South Australia Works in the Regions

ENDORSEMENT

The Network participated in local consultation in the development of this Workforce Development Network Plan. It is endorsed by the:

Signature

Chair Mark Malcolm

Date <Insert date signed>

South Australia Works in the Regions funds allocated to deliver this plan will be placed with <Insert Grantee's Name> and is endorsed by:

Signature

Chair <Name of the person endorsing name here>

Date <Insert date signed>

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GRANTEE/NETWORK INTRODUCTION

The Southern Flinders Ranges Development Board (SFRDB) exists as an independent incorporated organisation operating under a joint resource agreement between the State Government, the Port Pirie Regional Council, the Northern Areas Council and the District Council of Mount Remarkable.

The role of the SFRDB is to encourage economic development within the region with the primary outcomes sought by the board activities being new business investment and new employment.

As outlined in the SFRDB strategic directions for 2009/10 Workforce Development will be a key issue that the board will address in the year ahead particularly in the area of increased Workforce Participation. *South Australia Works in the Regions* is the primary funding source for the development of employment programs in this region and the board relies heavily on the project officer role to provide assistance to industry and the workforce when it comes to training, employment and workforce development.

While the board recognises the effects of the current global economic crisis on workforce demand, it also recognises the skills shortages that remain within the labour market and the need to ensure the retention of staff in the short term. The board is looking to target opportunities in the next year to up-skill the existing workforce and increase the skill level of

those not working through leveraging funding from the various State and Federal Government initiatives.

The board will encourage a more collaborative approach between the State & Federal Governments, local service providers and local industry so that the region can maximise the value of Government initiatives and continue to position itself for growth in the longer term.

The Southern Flinders Ranges Employment & Skills Formation Network (SFRESFN) is at the core of the board's activities in workforce development and training and through innovative and collaborative thinking they act as a leader within the region on these issues. The SFRESFN has approximately 30 members with 12-15 members in regular attendance at the monthly meetings. Members range from industry representatives and local employers, through a range of service providers including employment services and welfare agencies to representatives from the community and various Government departments.

The Network is looking to expand in 2009-10 with more members being encouraged to join from local employers and industry.

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OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS FROM 2006-09

Over the past three years the Southern Flinders Ranges Employment & Skills Formation Network (SFRESFN) has used its *South Australia Works in the Regions* funding to successfully deliver more than 30 projects in the region with over 800 participants receiving high level training that delivered over 150,000 hours of accredited training and achieved more than 350 employment outcomes.

Within this time the program engaged over 300 youth participants (15-24), 130 mature age participants (40+), over 80 participants with disabilities and 60 indigenous participants.

The most successful approach used by the SFRESFN has been pre-vocational training, predominantly delivered through TAFE SA. The partnership with the local TAFE campus has meant a greater flexibility and cost effective delivery with the use of FSI 500 hours. Examples of pre-vocational programs delivered from 2006-09 have been Industry Pathways - metal fabrication, electrical and carpentry, hospitality, retail, aged care and child care.

Another strategy used by the SFRESFN has been Targeted Interventions. Accredited training is delivered together with personal development and individual case management to engage participants that are not currently active within the workforce or further education and come from a particular cohort that experiences disadvantage. These programs have

included BoysTown- Skills for the Future - which targets youth and in particular indigenous youth, young offenders and youth with low literacy and numeracy levels and Uniting Care Wesley -Reconnections which targets more mature aged participants and parents returning to work and offers them a mixture of personal support, accredited training and work experience to try and re-engage them in the workforce.

More recently the SFRESFN has engaged with industry on specific pre -employment training programs that have yielded high levels of employment outcomes. Examples of such programs include the Kelly welding course which provided accredited welding training to a group of participants that then had the opportunity to gain employment with Kelly Engineering and the Laura Coffee Making course that provided barista training to prepare potential employees for the opening of 2 new coffee shops in the region.

It has been the role of the SFRESFN over the past three years to seek continuous improvement through reviewing and assessing all projects and pursuing alternative funding partners to add value to the program. This has seen many projects delivered on more than one occasion with service providers displaying an ability to adapt the projects each year to improve the outcomes achieved.

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HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

This plan was developed by members of the Southern Flinders Ranges Employment & Skills Formation Network (SFRESFN) through a series of four workshops held from January 2009 - April 2009.

The initial discussion focussed on a review of previous performance and current trend data for the region, and the state, in relation to workforce participation and unemployment.

During the review process and discussion of current relevant issues, many themes were found to be similar to those that had been identified in the past such as youth & indigenous engagement strategies and the use of pre-vocational training.

From the first planning session, the network compiled a list of issues that will be important in influencing future growth opportunities within the region, but there was no commitment made to roll over any existing projects. While previously run projects will be considered for approval in the next financial year, all successful applications will be required to demonstrate the ability to combine positives from previous experience with alternative funding partners and more industry engagement.

The second session co-ordinated members of the SFRESFN into smaller groups and allowed discussion on the list of issues in further detail with members asked to provide comment and feedback.

It was these two sessions that were used to contribute to the Yorke and Mid North three year strategic plan which incorporates the Yorke, Mid North and Southern Flinders Employment & Skills Formation Networks.

Once a draft plan had been developed by the DFEEST Regional Co-ordinator in partnership with the three networks, the plan was sent out to all SFRESFN members for final comment, before being submitted to DFEEST.

The third planning session used the strategic plan as a guide to hold further discussion on the implementation of *South Australia Works in the Regions* program in the Southern Flinders for 2009-2010.

Discussion focussed on new strategies such as Career Development Services, the need to increase industry engagement in our programs and the network and the continued importance of pre-vocational training.

At a fourth and final consultation meeting with the network, a draft of the implementation plan budget was provided to members and discussion was held about the allocation of funds to each initiative. Members were given the opportunity to identify any gaps in the proposed implementation or areas from the planning that had not been addressed and it was a chance to provide direction on where the funding should be targeted to give the network the best possible chance of achieving the program objectives.

The initiatives that have been outlined in the implementation plan allows enough direction to stay focussed on achieving objectives while still being broad enough to allow for flexibility of the projects that will be delivered.

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OBJECTIVE 1 - Increasing Workforce Participation

The regional profile for the Southern Flinders Ranges indicates that the majority of people that remain unemployed are those that are disadvantaged in some way.

It is the role of the network in this region to lead in co-ordinating collaborative and innovative programs that target people from within identified disadvantaged cohorts, providing personal support and skills that will lead to sustainable employment outcomes and achieve a higher percentage of workforce participation.

While the network acknowledges that many assistance programs exist for disadvantaged individuals already, it is recognised that forming partnerships between service providers and local industry is important in ensuring that resources are used effectively and reflect industry demand.

Strategy 1.1 Assist disadvantaged people to make an effective transition to employment

With many of the participants targeted for *South Australia Works in the Regions* program coming from one or more of the disadvantaged cohorts, it is important that programs provide flexible strategies to assist candidates to engage in training & education that suits individual needs and encourages the transition into employment or further education.

Initiative 1- Engagement Programs

Youth Engagement

Youth unemployment remains the biggest challenge for the network with youth unemployment at 21.9 % (2006 census) well above the state average of 12.4%. The network recognises it is important to continue to develop programs that engage youth and provide pathways from mainstream education into further education and employment. It is the strategy of the network to create early interventions for youth and avoid youth becoming disengaged for longer periods of time through partnering with youth orientated organisations that can deliver flexible learning options and provide links to employment opportunities.

Indigenous Engagement

Indigenous unemployment is 20.45% which is much higher than the state average of 16%. While the network is continually trying to create more opportunities for indigenous participants in main stream employment it is just as important to develop engagement strategies that provide individual case management and support to address personal and cultural issues. The network will review and assess existing partnerships to provide opportunities for indigenous participants in the building & construction industry in particular and will continue to develop flexible engagement strategies for indigenous youth.

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Disability Engagement

People with a disability make up 7.8% of the total population in the Southern Flinders while they represent 15.3% of the unemployment numbers, this is higher than the State averages of 5.3% total population and 11.5% of total unemployed. The network has been actively supporting initiatives for this cohort and through increased partnerships, further efforts will be made to increase workforce participation in this region. Development of projects that can offer direct links to employment, such as paid work experience through a social enterprise model, will be pursued and the network will be trying to support organisations that can provide training and employment opportunities to people with disabilities.

Long Term Unemployed Engagement

The network will work closely with Jobs Services Australia providers to provide accredited training packages that can assist long term unemployed participants back into the workforce. Projects will provide innovative and flexible engagement strategies to break the cycle of unemployment for the long term unemployed through creating new opportunities. This could include involvement in social enterprises and the development of community projects that allow participants to gain work experience.

Strategy 1.2 Provide pathways for skills in growth industry sectors

Developing programs that provide real opportunities for employment is an integral part of the success of *South Australia Works in the Regions*. Through this strategy the aim is to ensure that the network identifies areas of growth and is able to develop programs that can lead participants into employment opportunities within these areas. A number of initiatives will ensure that pathways to meet workforce demand in growth sectors will be provided.

Initiative 1- Pre-Vocational Training

The use of pre-vocational training as a pathway to employment can be split into the following 3 areas:

Productivity Places Program (PPP) Support

The network has formed an alliance with the other networks in the Yorke & Mid North region and signed a memorandum of understanding with Tafe SA Regional with an aim to maximise PPP training for job seekers. The use of PPP will provide leveraged funding for full certificate training in key industry sectors that have a demand within the labour market. Funding applications have been submitted for 224 places to meet known industry demand in retail, community services, horticulture, hospitality and children services. The network's commitment is to provide participants with work placement opportunities and case management in support of the accredited training delivered through PPP.

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Trades Training

The mineral processing and engineering sector is an important sector for the Southern Flinders and supporting projects that will provide opportunities for our target groups to take up available apprenticeships in these areas remains a key focus. The SFRESFN plans to continue to use trades based pre-vocational training in the year ahead to assist participants into these industries. There will be a continued focus on youth and a high level of industry involvement in developing projects in this area.

Other Pre-Vocational Training

Pre-Vocational training has been at the core of the *South Australia Works in the Regions* program in the Southern Flinders and will continue to provide high level accredited training in specific vocations. Many of the past pre-vocational programs will be considered for delivery in relation to the demand within the labour market. This initiative will provide assistance in any areas that are not covered through PPP or trades training but still require part or full certificates to be delivered. An example of this includes hybrid courses offering modules from several different certificates such as a combination of business administration, retail, hospitality and tourism.

Strategy 1.3 Assist people to up-skill and re-engage in the workforce

Given the current economic climate and the likelihood that the region will be further effected by job losses in the short term, the network supports the need to up-skill people that become unemployed to give them an opportunity to transition back into employment within the region. This includes providing training and skills as well as job search assistance that can lead into alternative suitable employment.

Initiative 1- Short Course Tickets and licences

There are certain training elements that have been identified by industry as being skills in demand and having potential to lead into employment, but they do not always form part of a broader certificate. These types of training programs are often developed as a reaction to industry demand and include tickets & licensing. The network will target some of this training as a way of engaging a broader range of participants and meeting industry needs.

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Initiative 2- Career Development Services

With the new Job Services Australia model, it is anticipated that there will be a larger cohort of people that will be trying to access Career Development Services but will be ineligible in the new system for any case management or one to one assistance. The SFRESFN will use *South Australia Works in the Regions* funding and a Careers SA grant to provide support for anyone that is not eligible for existing assistance and requires advice on how to up-skill and move back into meaningful employment. Targeted participants include disengaged youth, parents returning to work, retrenched workers and short term unemployed. The services delivered will be provided by a Career Development Officer who will undergo training in Certificate IV Career Development Services and will link directly into the Careers SA framework for quality and consistency of services delivered. The proposed model for the Southern Flinders is to have a Career Development Officer employed by a service provider that will be decided through a tender process. Participants will be able to access services via a shop front located in Port Pirie and 2 days a month via outreach services in 2 selected regional areas.

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OBJECTIVE 2 - Increasing Industry Engagement

As previously stated within this Implementation Plan, the importance of industry engagement by the network has been identified as a key target area for the next 12 months. It is the aim of the network to have increased membership from local employers and industry representatives and to seek industry participation in all projects that are delivered.

Strategy 2.1 Gather relevant labour demand data and skills requirements from local industries to inform initiatives

The network will work closely with SFRDB in liaising with key industry to understand workforce demand and skills sets required to ensure that appropriate training can be provided to match employer's needs

Initiative 1- Research

The SFRESFN has identified the need to increase the knowledge of the local labour market in terms of skills in demand, areas of growth and existing skills in the labour pool. Through the use of research the network will establish links with existing data sources, conduct local research and develop a database for the ongoing collection of data to inform future strategic planning. Research will be conducted in the form of targeted questionnaires for both employers and job seekers and through holding forums that engage industry representatives and other key stakeholders involved in workforce development.

Initiative 2- Marketing and promotions

During strategic planning it was identified by the SFRESFN that the current level of community awareness is not as high as it needs to be to maximise the effectiveness of the network. It has been decided that in the year ahead, the SFRESFN will become more proactive with marketing & promotion of network activities including *South Australia Works in the Regions*. Marketing activities will include promotion of the three year strategic plan and annual implementation plan, a network membership recruitment drive, an increase in employer & stakeholder forums & workshops and a more frequent presence in the local media.

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Strategy 2.2 Engage local industry to support and participate in local initiatives

The network is constantly looking to involve local Industry to assist with the development of projects and to be involved in providing employment opportunities for participants. Through previous experience and through the condition of the current labour market, the SFRESFN is putting more emphasis on engaging industry in all projects that we deliver to ensure the program remains successful in delivering tangible outcomes.

Initiative 1- Industry Driven Projects

The aim of this initiative is to involve pre-vocational training and core skills training together with case management, but will rely on the direction and involvement of industry to help create suitable projects. The projects developed under this initiative will have direct employment opportunities linked through industry involvement and the skills delivered will be specific to those employers needs as with Kelly Welding or Laura Coffee Making in the past. The aim is for *South Australia Works in the Regions* to pro actively get involved in bulk recruitment opportunities and through providing targeted skills, assist in the creation of sustainable employment.

Initiative 2 -Up-skilling existing employees

Up-skilling has a dual focus of assisting those that are underemployed to gain skills that will lead into sustainable employment opportunities and to up-skill existing employees in an attempt to create entry level positions below them as they move into roles of higher responsibility.

In the first part of this initiative the network will be targeting industry sectors with high levels of casual and part time employment, such as agriculture and tourism/hospitality, to assist employees who are financially disadvantaged and require training to move into more sustainable employment.

In the second part of this initiative the aim will be to work with industry to provide targeted training that will lead existing staff to take further opportunities within local organisations and increase business performance and regional capacity.

Initiative 3- Workforce development workshops

In the 2009/10 financial year the SFRESFN will use workshops, targeted at engaging industry, to identify areas of priority and to establish improved communication to gain industry participation in local initiatives. The workshops will provide an industry perspective and allow industry to lead the strategic thinking of the network so that all programs will have a stronger link to employment opportunities.

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OBJECTIVE 3 - Supporting State wide Economic Directions by Building Regional Capacity

The network is designed to use information sharing and partnerships to strengthen and build regional capacity in business and employment. The aim of the network is to see improved opportunities within the region that are brought about through being proactive in the search for funding and resources that contribute to new business investment opportunities and employment & training strategies.

Strategy 3.1 Encourage partnerships and cross collaboration

A feature of the network approach is to address regional employment and training needs by engaging the community and forming partnerships with key stakeholders. The network hosts regular events, and forums aimed at stimulating discussion on labour market issues and promoting a collaborative approach to labour market intervention. Two-way flow of information and ideas gained from engagement has contributed to the quality of network planning and implementation. Opportunities to collaborate with industry, skills councils, service providers and other networks will be pursued.

Initiative 1 - Network Operations

The co-ordination of network operations is the responsibility of the SFRDB and requires assistance from *South Australia Works in the Regions* to ensure that the network is able to engage members, provide support in the development and implementation of projects and continue to work collaboratively with other key stakeholders.

Strategy 3.2 Provide targeted and responsive solutions that build regional capacity

A small amount of funds has been set aside to facilitate any response to projected business closures or impacts from the drought. This funding will allow the network to leverage other support and respond in a timely manner.

Initiative 1-Targeted solutions

This initiative will allow the network to respond to unanticipated labour market incidents such as significant business closures or employee retrenchments. Targeted solutions can also respond to employment growth opportunities associated with business expansion or major government initiatives such as stimulus spending. Examples of projects that may fit into this initiative include using RPL to transition retrenched workers back into the workforce or providing support for training needs that are identified through the Career development Services.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<i>Accredited Training</i>	Training unit competency that forms part of a national training package
<i>Community Capacity</i>	Community capacity consists of the networks, organisations, attitudes, leadership and skills that allow communities to manage change and sustain community-led development
<i>DFEEST</i>	The Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, acting through Employment and Training Services
<i>Employment and Skills Formation Action Plan</i>	The plan to be developed at the commencement of the funding period which details the Grantee's proposed learning and work programs for any one (1) year of the funding period
<i>Employment Outcomes</i>	Any paid work (including, but not limited to apprenticeships, traineeships, group training and self-employment)
<i>Further Education and Training Outcomes</i>	Where following completion of South Australia Works in the Regions activity, the participant moves onto further education and training (eg: TAFE, RTO, University)
<i>Network</i>	The mechanism for leading and informing locally identified solutions to employment and skills formation issues
<i>Non-accredited Training</i>	All other training not covered by a national training package
<i>Participant</i>	(i) High Level Participant Outcome

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Jobseekers out of work, out of training, out of school (aged at least 16 years of age) and those employed but who meet the upskilling criteria are engaged in training, job search, case management project or similar activity

- (ii) Low Level Participant Outcome
Persons attending activities in the nature of ‘careers expos’, workshops, or conferences for the purpose of career planning / preparation or participants. Those employed but who meet the upskilling criteria

Southern Flinders Regional Development Board The grantee for the delivery of the plan

Southern Flinders Employment and Skills Formation Network The network that works with the SFRDB to deliver the program

South Australia Works in the Regions The South Australia government initiative intended to facilitate employment and skills formation outcomes for South Australians within their local communities

Social Inclusion Social inclusion is experienced by individuals, families and communities when they have access to the opportunities they need to live rewarding and secure lives

Upskilling An employee undertakes training or other skills development in a skill shortage area that will lead to additional income, more secure employment or the creation of another vacancy.

Upskilling criteria:

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- (i) Existing employees self-assesses as being underemployed and that upskilling will lead to additional income / more secure employment (high level participant, employment outcome)
- (ii) Filling of a vacancy created through the upskilling of an employee. Contingent on employer contributing funding for training (high level participant, employment outcome)
- (iii) Upskilling assistance may be provided to an employer that deems its staff 'at risk' of losing jobs (low level participant)

Volunteering Outcome

Where following completion of *South Australia Works in the Regions* activity, the participant moves into volunteering (unpaid voluntary service to the community)

Workforce Development

Those activities, including skills development, workforce participation, and workforce planning, which increase the capacity of individuals to participate effectively in a highly skilled workforce throughout their whole working life, enabling access to learning and employment, and which increase the capacity of firms to adopt high-performance work practices that support their employees in the use and renewal of skills in the workplace

Workforce Participation

A key component of workforce development, workforce participation is the active involvement of all people in the labour market, supported through education, training, skills development and life-long learning opportunities which increase people's ability to access education, training and employment. Workforce participation is measured by the rate of participation, expressed as a proportion of the population aged 15-64 who are working or who are willing and able to look for work