



Local Government Workforce and Future Skills Report Tasmania

September 2018

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Acknowledgement:

Funding to support the development of this report was provided by the Australian Local Government Association.

Introduction

The Local Government Workforce Development Group (LGWDG) comprises representatives from each state and territory Local Government Association and provides advice on workforce matters to the Australian Local Government Association. The LGWDG undertook this study to identify the current and emerging skill needs of local government to better position the sector for the future.

An accurate national employment profile of the local government sector is difficult to determine. The most accessible source of data comes from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing, but this is available only every five years and whilst it can highlight trends it does not provide an accurate record of total employment numbers for the local government sector.

It is estimated the Census under-reported the total number of council employees in Tasmania by 25% in 2016.¹ As the Census collects data on the “main job held last week”, it does not capture all part-time and casual council workers. In addition, as respondents are asked to nominate “the employer’s business name” related to this main job, the nominated name may not appear as the council name. Employment in swimming pools, contracted outdoor services and regional airports is most likely to be under-represented.

The tendency of each jurisdiction to collect their own variable data sets also makes it impossible to aggregate data to achieve a national profile of the local government workforce. The absence of a national profile impacts on the ability of the sector to determine current and future workforce needs and priorities. This is in stark contrast to other industry sectors that have been able to use national data to effectively attract and retain skilled and talented staff, attract funding for skills development and advocacy, and address skill shortages.²

It is with this context in mind that the LGWDG commissioned a set of national and jurisdictional reports which are expected to provide the evidence-base needed to support effective advocacy in workforce development matters at both a state and national level. This report features the findings and recommendations for local government in Tasmania.

In addition to ABS Census data, all national and state reports are underpinned by data from the National Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017 (*the Survey*) to which:

- 45% of councils across Australia; and
- 45% of Tasmanian councils responded.

The following map illustrates the location of Tasmania’s 29 councils. A list of the 13 councils that responded to *the Survey* is found in **Appendix 1**.

¹ Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

² Profile of the Local Government Workforce, 2014 Report, Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government

Executive Summary:

Workforce Profile

Local government in Tasmania features:

- A workforce of 3,269 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees or a headcount of 4,175 (June 2017) employed in 155 different occupations;
- Stability in employment, with less than 5% variation in the total workforce since 2011/12;
- A predominance of small councils with 69% employing less than 100 staff or just under 30% of the workforce, whilst two councils employ over 500 staff, or 30.6% of the total workforce;
- A workforce where 63% are full-time employees, 20% are part-time and 17% are casual;
- A low average unplanned turnover of 7.1% compared to 8.3% of councils nationally;
- A lower representation of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) employees than other sectors of government and the private sector in Tasmania;
- A much older workforce than the all-industries workforce in Tasmania, with 55.6% above 45 years of age in local government compared to an average of 46.6% across all-industries;
- An ongoing decline in representation of employees under 30 years of age;
- An increasingly qualified workforce, with 37.9% holding a Diploma or higher-level qualification in 2016 compared to 28.4% in 2006; and
- A significant decline in apprentices and trainees, falling from 5.0% of council FTEs in 2012 to 2.8% in 2017.

Current and emerging skills shortages and skills gaps

Findings from *the Survey* reveal:

- 69% of councils were experiencing a skill shortage and 50% were experiencing skills gaps;
- Engineers, Town Planners, Environmental Health Officers and Building Surveyors were the top five areas of skills shortage;
- The key reasons for skills shortages are location of the council; inability to compete with private sector on remuneration; lack of suitably qualified/experienced candidates; reputation and public image of councils; and lack of vocational education and training providers in Tasmania;

- Just under one half (46%) of councils reported unmet training needs arising from: limited provision of local tertiary and vocational education and training, cost of training and lack of management support;
- More could be done by councils to share resources and “*Grow their own*” through programs such as traineeships, apprenticeships and cadetships; and
- The greatest challenge in addressing skill needs is finding quality trainers to deliver locally and sourcing courses with relevant content.

Emerging Issues

- 69% of councils have done no analysis or forecasting of changing roles/skills requirements arising from digital disruption and technology changes;
- All councils responding to the survey indicated they need to improve their position in relation to soft skills, particularly design mind set, ability to understand concepts across multiple disciplines, digital skills and creativity and entrepreneurial skills;
- Leadership and resistance to change were the most commonly cited factors hindering staff in gaining soft skills; and
- In the future, councils are predicting a significant increase in the use of part-time and casual employees and volunteers, a moderate increase in full time employees, a small increase in independent contractors and a decrease in the use of service centres, freelance and labour hire arrangements.

Recommendations

1. That, for national and state comparative purposes, all councils report on employee headcount and the number of full-time, part-time and casual employees in the Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection (CDC) information.
2. That councils provide regular feedback to LGAT on local government skills shortages and training needs to inform the delivery of targeted training programs by Tasmania Training Consortium, universities, RTOs and other providers.
3. That LGAT collate and make available to councils' information which clearly describes employer and trainee benefits, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and the processes involved with employing school-based trainees and apprentices.
4. That councils increase their take up of cadetships in occupations experiencing skills shortages in Tasmania.
5. That councils continue to explore opportunities for resource sharing, particularly in regional areas, to address skills gaps and skills shortages.
6. That councils and LGAT seek to improve the supply of skilled personnel through enhanced coordination and collaboration in recruitment and training activities and advocate for improved funding to support this.

SECTION 1: Local Government Sector Profile in Tasmania

Industry Context:

Local government in Tasmania:

- Makes a direct contribution of \$685 million³ to the state economy and manages \$9 billion in infrastructure assets;
- Employs 4,185⁴ personnel and is a key driver of employment in regional and remote areas;
- Is comprised of 29 Councils, 10 of which are urban and 19 are rural;
- Ranges in employment size from the smallest council, Tasman Municipality, with 21 employees to the largest, Hobart Municipality, with 718 employees; and
- Has staff in smaller councils that are required to be multi-skilled and perform a range of functions for councils to meet their statutory obligations.

Councils and notably those in rural and remote areas of the State are the epicentre of communities and industry and provide the infrastructure and a wide range of services to sustain their communities. These services include the administration, management, maintenance, development, and in some cases, the construction of:

- Public Buildings
- Roads, bridges, footpaths, jetties
- Parks & Gardens
- Storm water drainage
- Regional Airports
- Caravan Parks
- Tourist Centres
- Community and Arts facilities
- Aquatic and Sports facilities
- Child Care
- Environmental Health
- Emergency Services
- Events
- Youth services
- Employment services

The scope of activities provided by councils in Tasmania encompasses 155 occupations.⁵

³ ABS 2016, Taxation Revenue, Australia, cat. no.5506.0

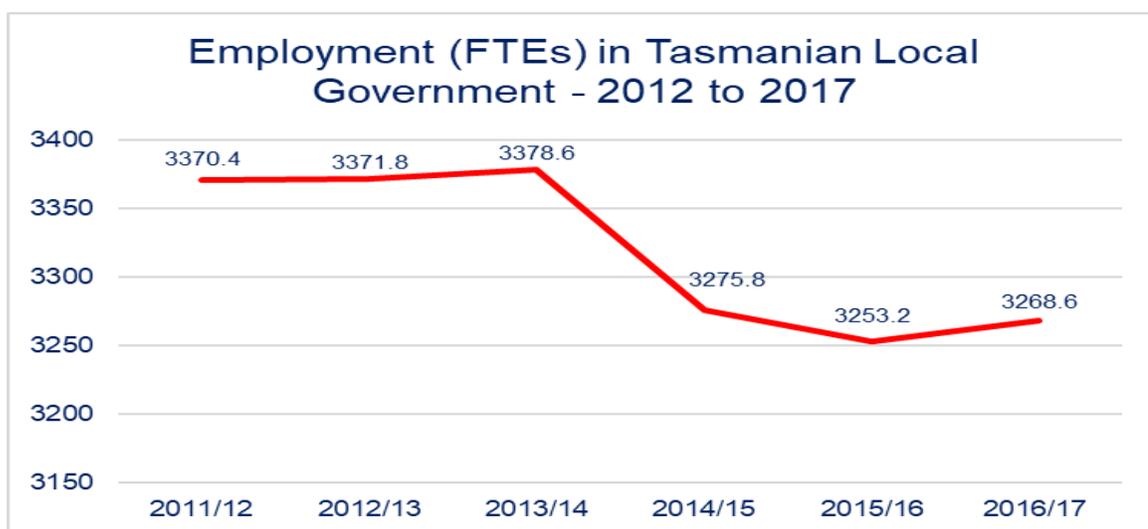
⁴ Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

⁵ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

Employment Number:

According to ABS data,⁶ the Tasmanian local government workforce was 3,349 as at June 2016.

However, the Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection which tracks workforce demographics based on annual reports submitted by individual councils, shows the number of **Full Time Equivalent** (FTE) employees to be 3,253 at June 2016 after a decline of 3.7% since 2013/14. This decline is likely to reflect the redundancies made by a small number of councils following changes in service provision. As illustrated in the chart below, the sector then grew slightly (0.5%) in 2016/17.



Source: Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection

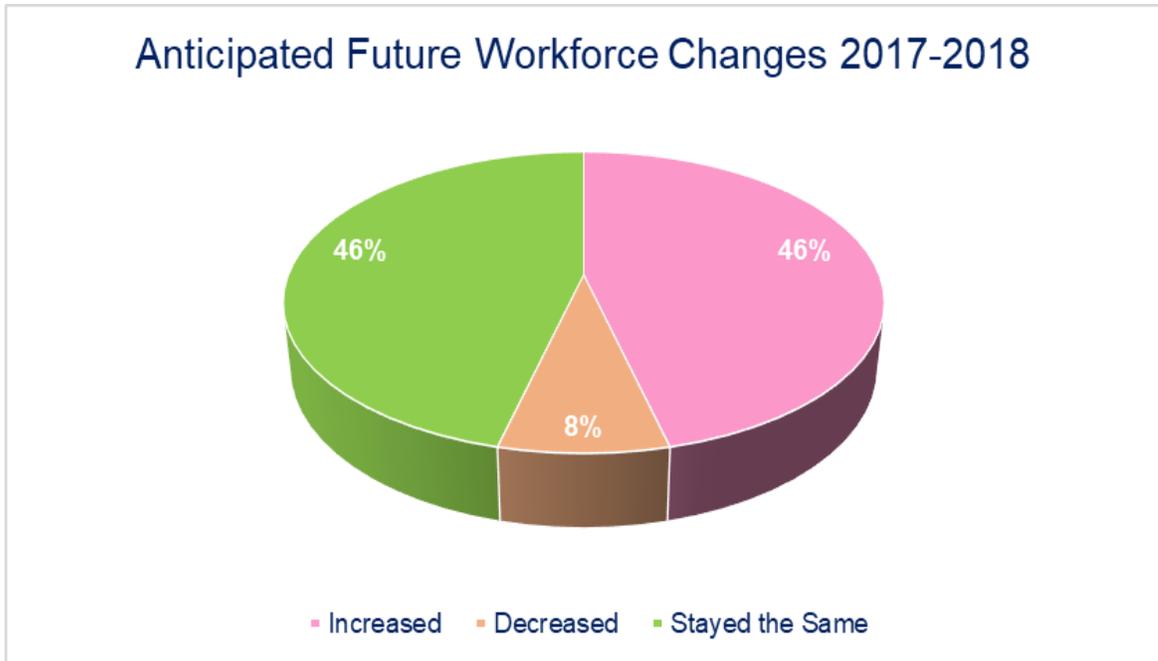
Headcount data was not able to be tracked consistently over time from the Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection. In some years, councils reported against the full suite of workforce data and in other years, only FTEs were reported. Whilst headcount was not available for all five council years, it was able to be estimated using a headcount/FTE ratio. Using this methodology, headcount was able to be extracted in two years, indicating a 2% decrease in employment numbers between 2011 (4,274) and 2017 (4,185).⁷

Data from *the Survey* indicates that growth in overall workforce numbers was expected to continue into 2018 with 92% of councils surveyed in Tasmania indicating that workforce numbers will either increase or stay the same in 2018.⁸

⁶ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

⁷ Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

⁸ Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Recommendation 1

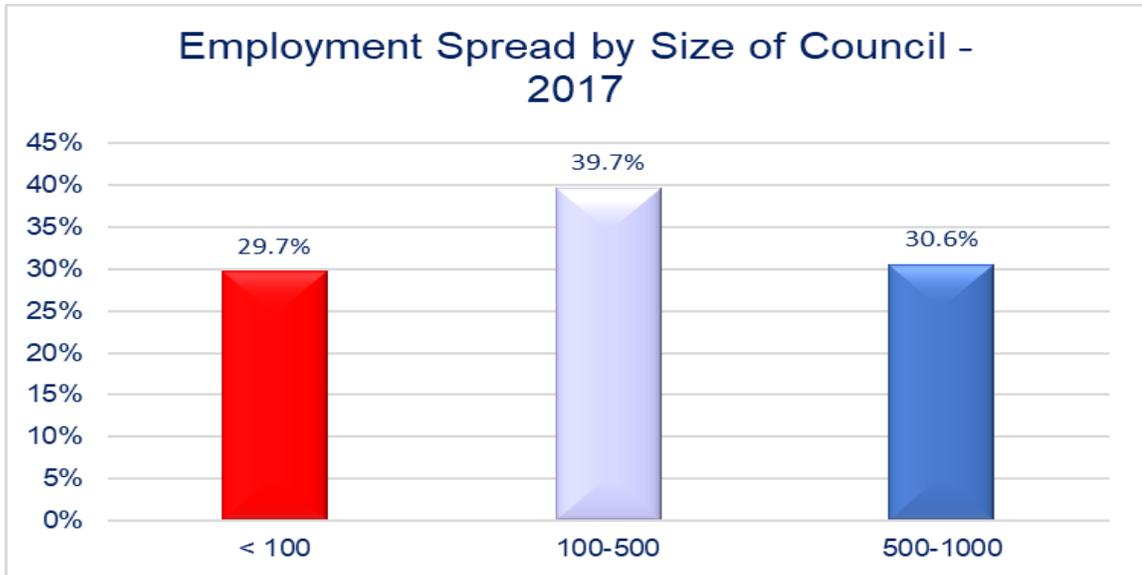
That, for national and state comparative purposes, all councils report on employee headcount and the number of full-time, part-time and casual employees in the Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection (CDC) information.

Employment Distribution:

Councils vary considerably in size from the smallest (rural council) with 21 employees to the largest (urban metropolitan) employing 718 staff.⁹

Local government in Tasmania is dominated by small councils with 69% of councils (20) employing less than 100 staff, or just under 30% of the Tasmanian local government workforce. A further seven councils employ between 100 and 500 employees, and two employ over 500 staff or 30.6% of the total workforce.

⁹ Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017



Source: Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

Employment Categories:

Data from the Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017 shows:

- 63.0% are full-time employees
- 20.0% are part-time employees
- 16.9% are casual employees

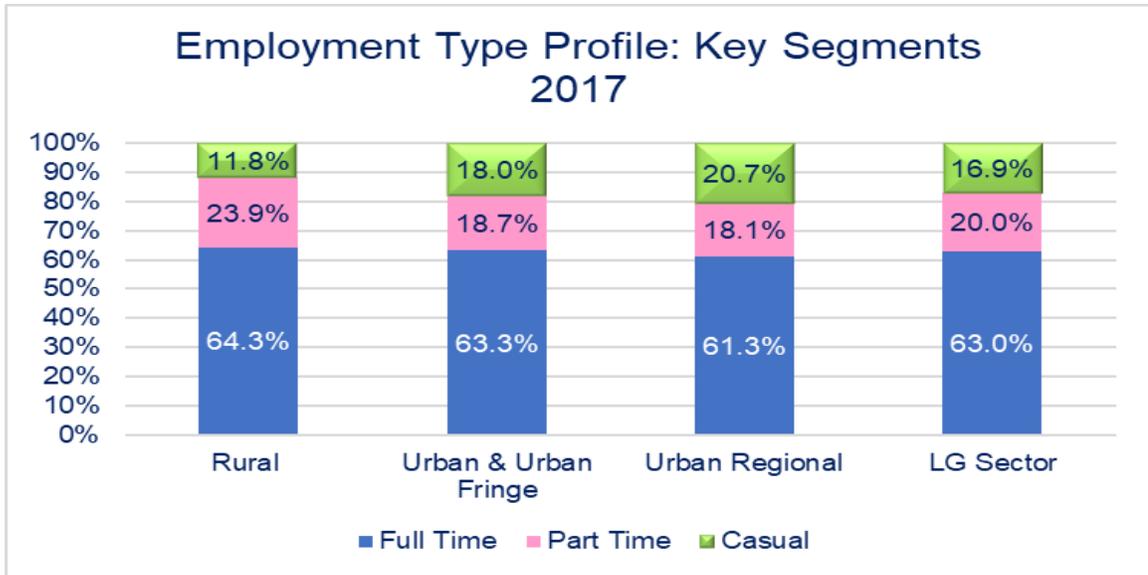
Within the Australian Classification of Local Government (ACLG), 22 classes of councils are defined. These have been grouped into three key segments for comparative purposes of this report:

- Rural
- Urban and Urban Fringe
- Urban Regional

This allows for comparisons of like to like across the states and territories. See **Appendix 1** for a breakdown of Tasmanian responding councils within each key segment.

When analysed by key segments, some minor variations emerge with the Rural segment employing a higher percentage of part time workers and the Urban Regional segment a greater percentage of casual workers.¹⁰

¹⁰ Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

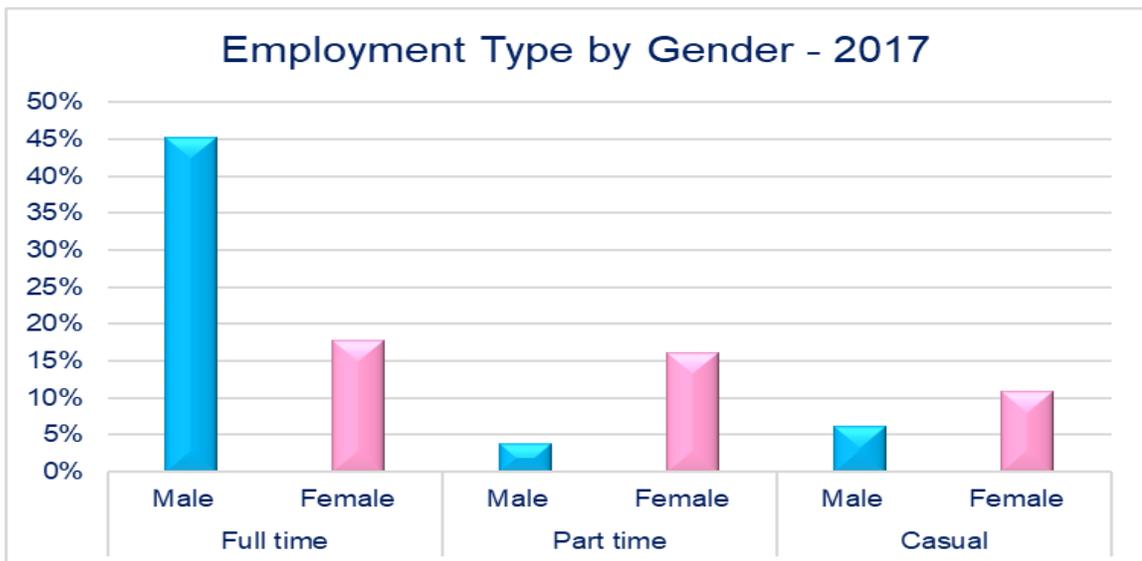


Source: Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

Employment Gender Profile:

In 2017, the Tasmanian local government workforce was comprised of 55.3% males and 44.7% females.

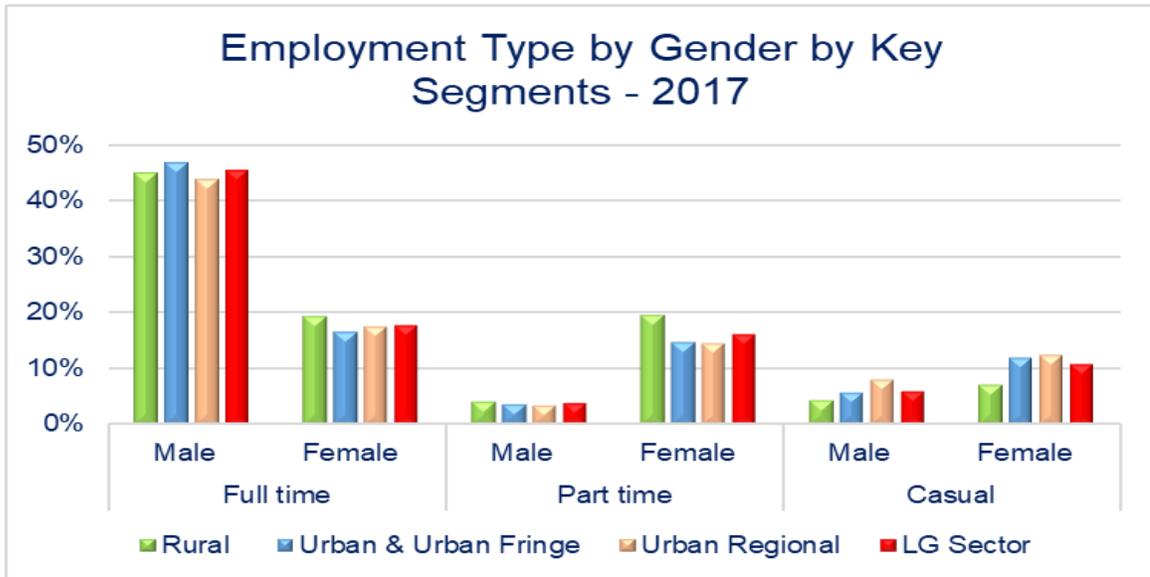
Significant variation does occur in the percentage of males/females employed in full-time, part-time and casual work, with women dominating the part-time and casual workforce.¹¹



Source: Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

¹¹ Source: Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

Only minor variation occurs across key segments with Rural employing more female part time workers than the other segments.



Source: Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection, 2016-2017

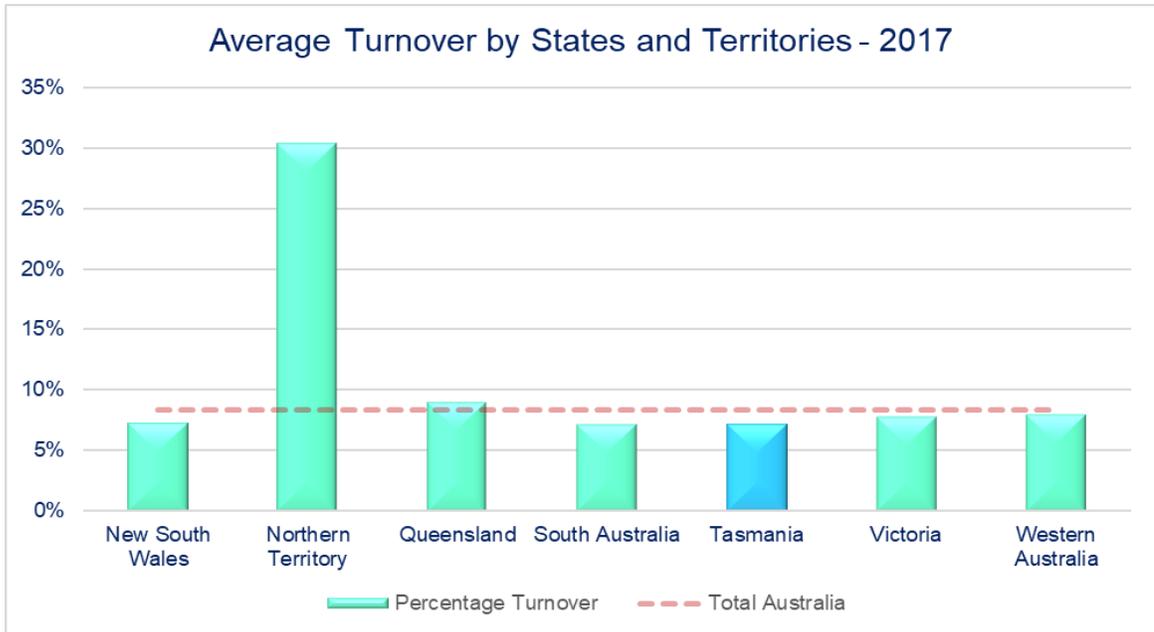
Employment Turnover:

The average unplanned turnover in Tasmanian councils (excluding casual, limited tenure, redundant and retiring employees) at June 30, 2017 was 7.1% compared to 8.3% for councils across Australia.

The range of turnover for Tasmanian councils is quite small compared to the range for councils across Australia as seen below:

- Range Tasmania: 1.7% to 12.0%
- Range Australia: 0.0% to 78.6%¹²

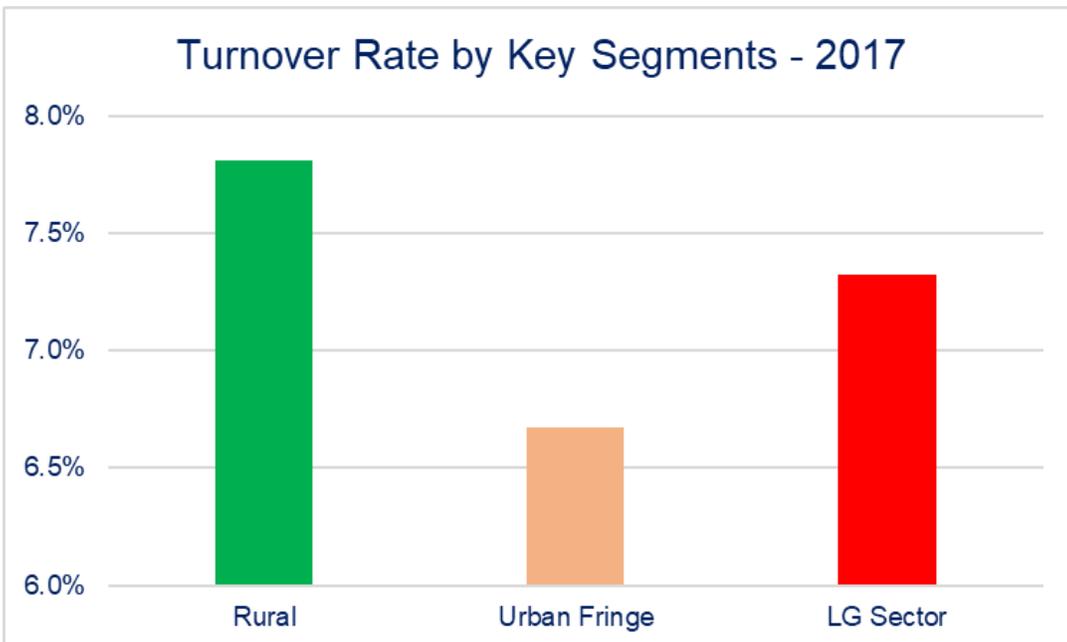
¹² Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Due to the number of Tasmanian councils who responded to the survey, data can only be broken down into two segments, Rural and Urban Fringe. Urban Fringe combines Urban Fringe and Urban Regional. See **Appendix 1** for a list of councils included in each segment.

The following table shows that Rural councils reported higher staff turnover than Urban Fringe councils in 2017.



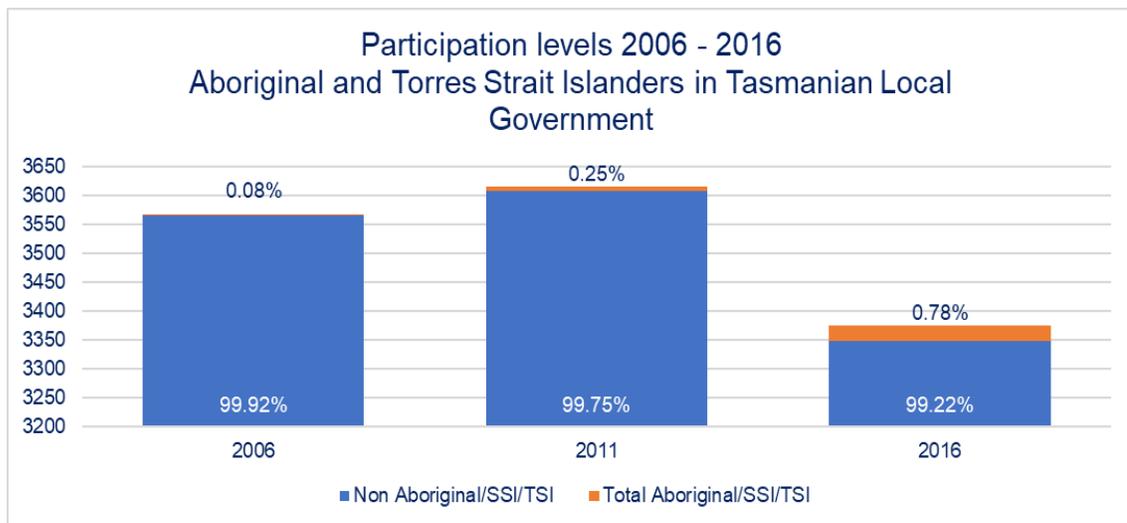
Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation Levels:

Councils in Tasmania were asked to report on the level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation within their workforce. Establishing an accurate picture of participation levels is difficult because identification is voluntary.

Only two of the 13 Tasmanian councils that responded to *the Survey* reported employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons. These Councils employed 4 persons identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander equating to **6.3%** of their workforce.

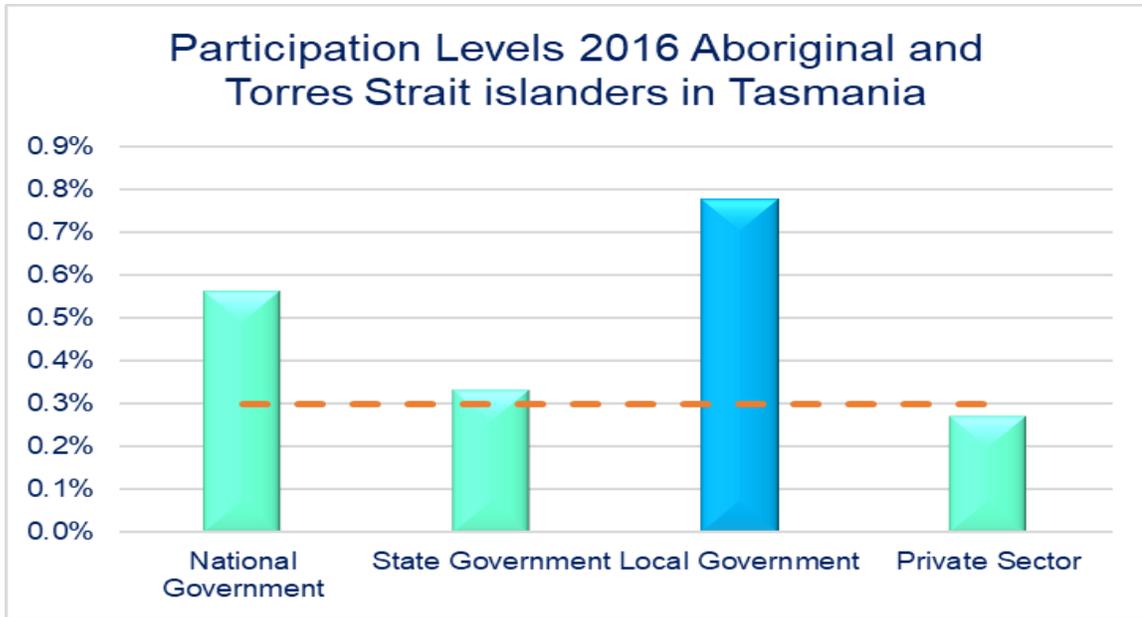
ABS Census data for 2016 shows that within the Tasmanian local government sector, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up **0.78%** of the working population aged 15 and over.¹³



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2011, 2016

Local government in Tasmania has the greatest level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worker participation than other levels of government and the private sector. At 0.78%, it is over twice as high as the state average participation level (0.3%).

¹³ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016



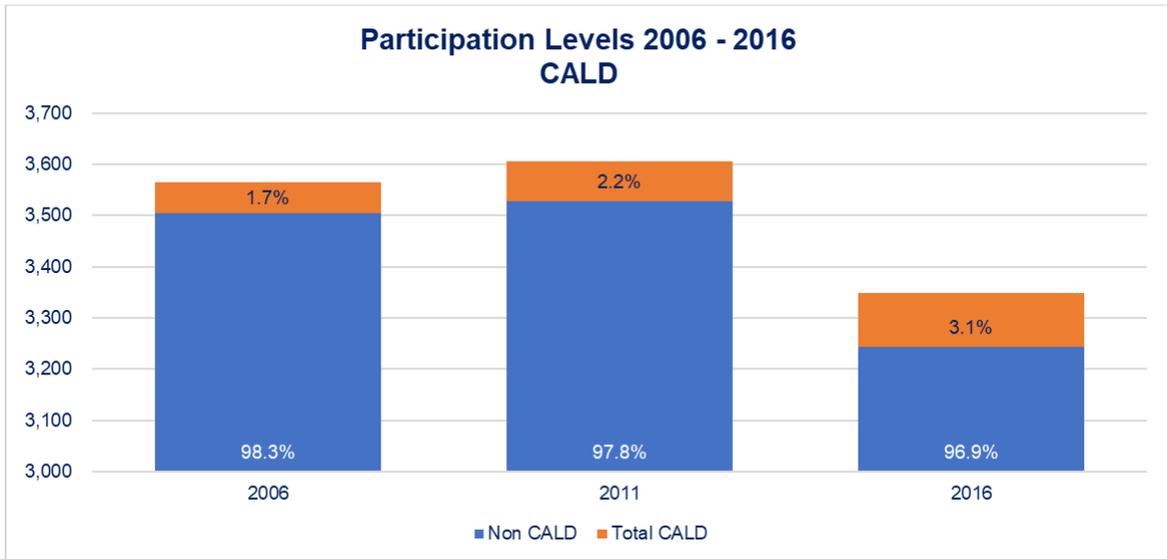
Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a much younger age profile and structure than the non-Indigenous population. In 2016, more than half (53%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were under 25 years of age. In comparison, almost one in three (31%) non-indigenous people were aged under 25.

For the local government sector with an ageing workforce, increasing the intake of young indigenous workers offers significant benefits for the council, community and young people concerned.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Workers:

The following chart shows the participation rate of persons aged 15 and over, who speak a Language other than English at home, within the Tasmanian local government workforce.



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2011, 2016

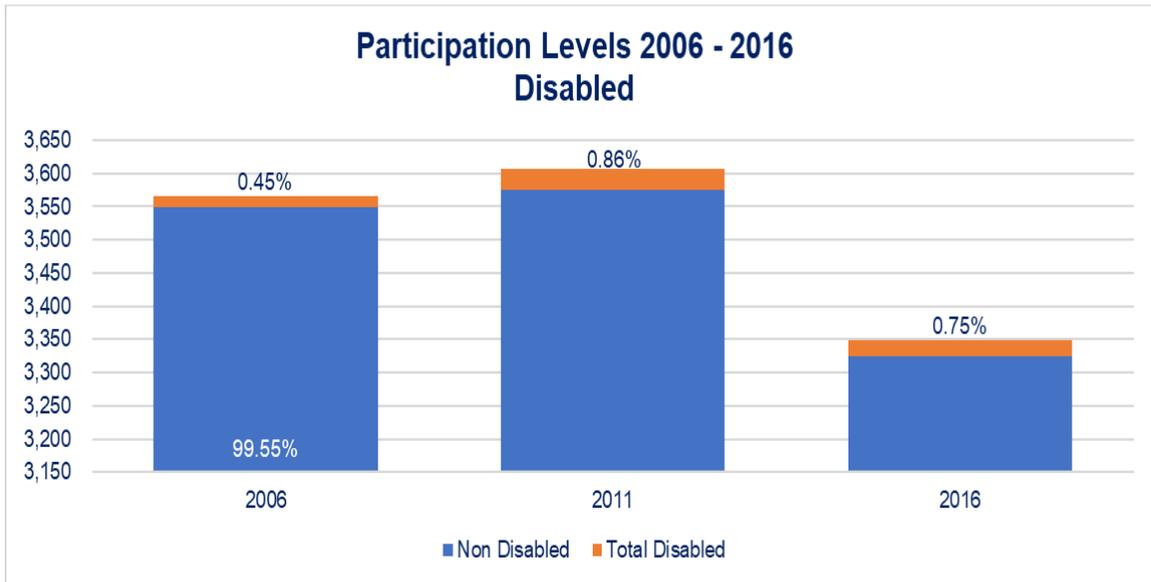
Whilst the proportion of CALD employees in councils has increased from 1.7% in 2006 to 3.1% in 2016, their participation remains lower than other government sectors and industries in Tasmania, as shown below.

- 5.6% National Government
- 4.9% State Government
- 3.1% Local Government
- 5.2% Private Sector
- 5.1% State All-industries

Only one Tasmanian Council who responded to *the Survey* reported employing CALD persons. This Council employed 1 person who had identified as CALD.

People with a Disability:

The below chart below shows the participation level of persons aged 15 and over who have need of assistance with core activities within the Tasmanian local government sector.

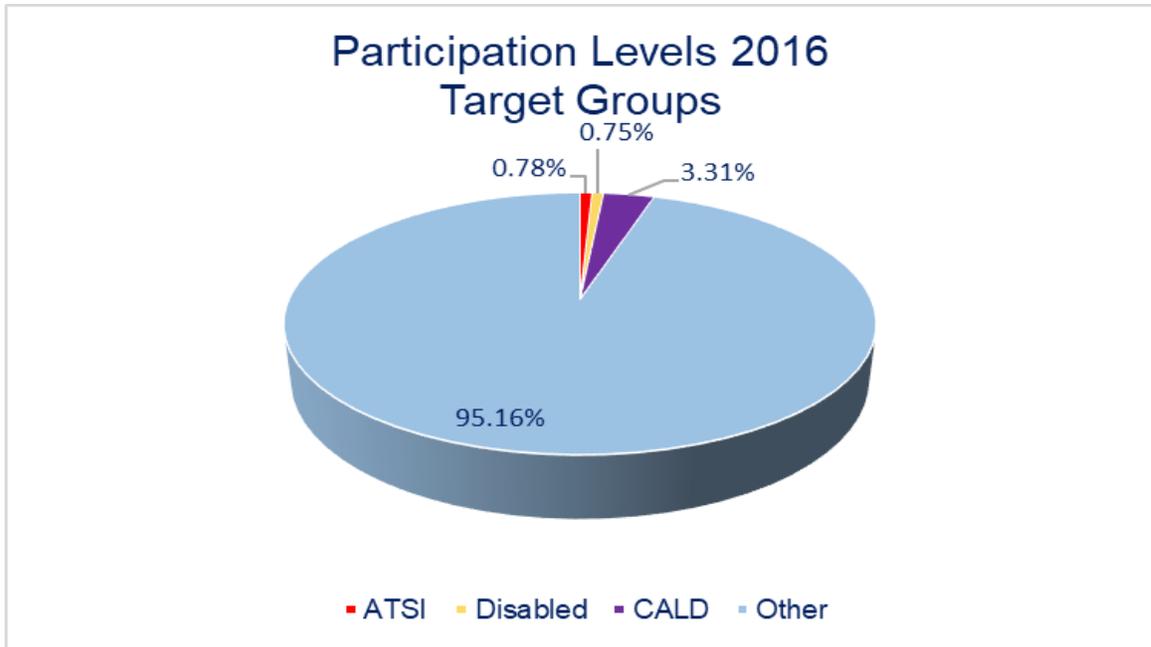


Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2011, 2016

As shown below, representation of disabled workers in councils in 2016 was slightly lower than Commonwealth agencies in Tasmania, the private sector and the all-industries average in Tasmania:

- 1.3% National Government
- 0.7% State Government
- 0.8% Local Government
- 1.0% Private Sector
- 1.0% State All-industries

No Tasmanian council who responded to *the Survey* reported employing disabled persons.



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

Age Profile of the Workforce:

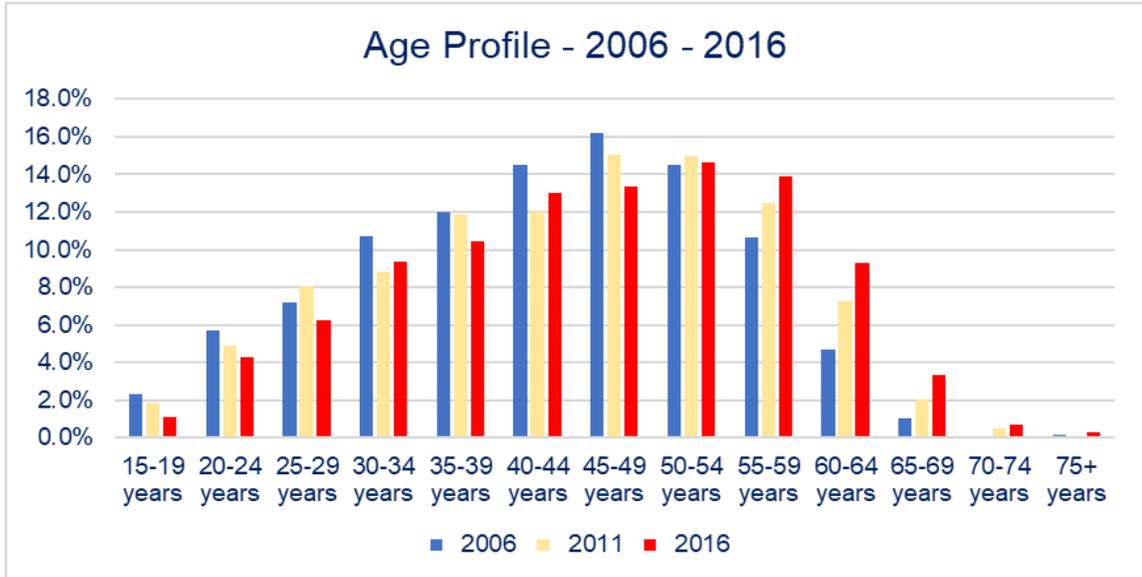
The Australian local government workforce is older than the all-industry average. In 2016, 53.7% of the Australian local government workforce was over the age of 45 compared to 40.7% of the Australian all-industries workforce.¹⁴

In 2016, 55.6% of the Tasmanian local government workforce was over the age of 45 compared to 46.6% of the Tasmanian all-industries workforce.¹⁵

The chart below shows the Age Profile of the Tasmanian local government sector over the last 10 years. It illustrates a declining proportion of employees under the age of 30 and a growing proportion of staff aged over 55, over this time.

¹⁴ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2011, 2016

¹⁵ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2011, 2016



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2011, 2016

This chart shows that employees in the 50-54 age bracket now represent the highest proportion of the workforce, closely followed by those aged 55-59.

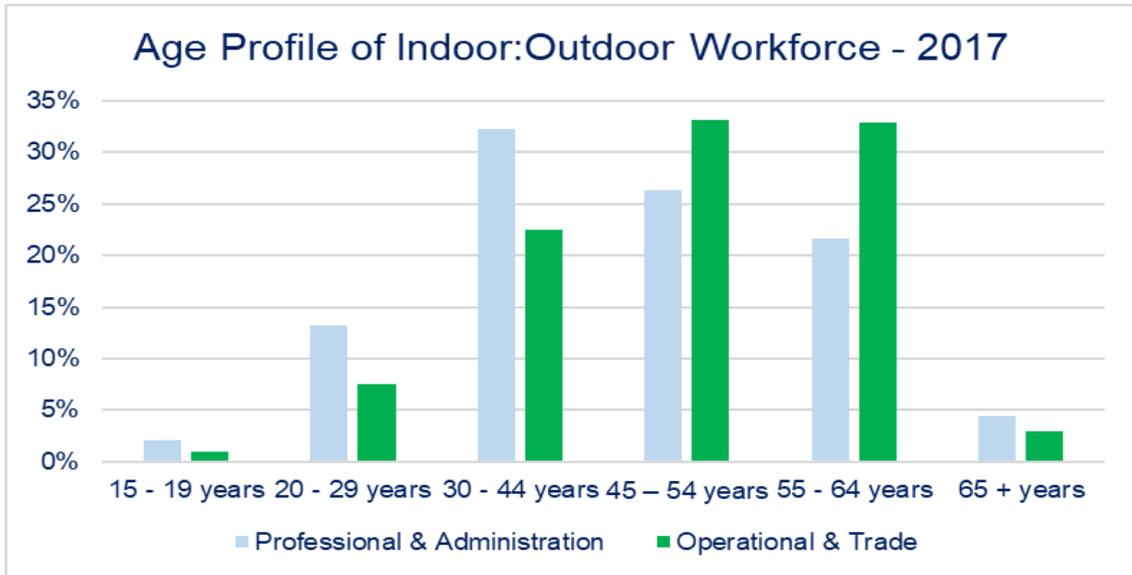
In August 2016, employees over 65 years of age represented:

- 4.4% for Tasmanian local government
- 4.6% for all employees across the Australian local government sector
- 4.7% for All-industries across Tasmania
- 4.2% for All-industries across Australia

This suggests that the Tasmanian local government workforce is retiring at a slightly older age than the Australian workforce.

The following chart shows the age profile of the Indoor (Professional and Administrative) and Outdoor (Operational and Trade) local government workforce where 69.0% of the outdoor workforce are now over 45 years of age.¹⁶

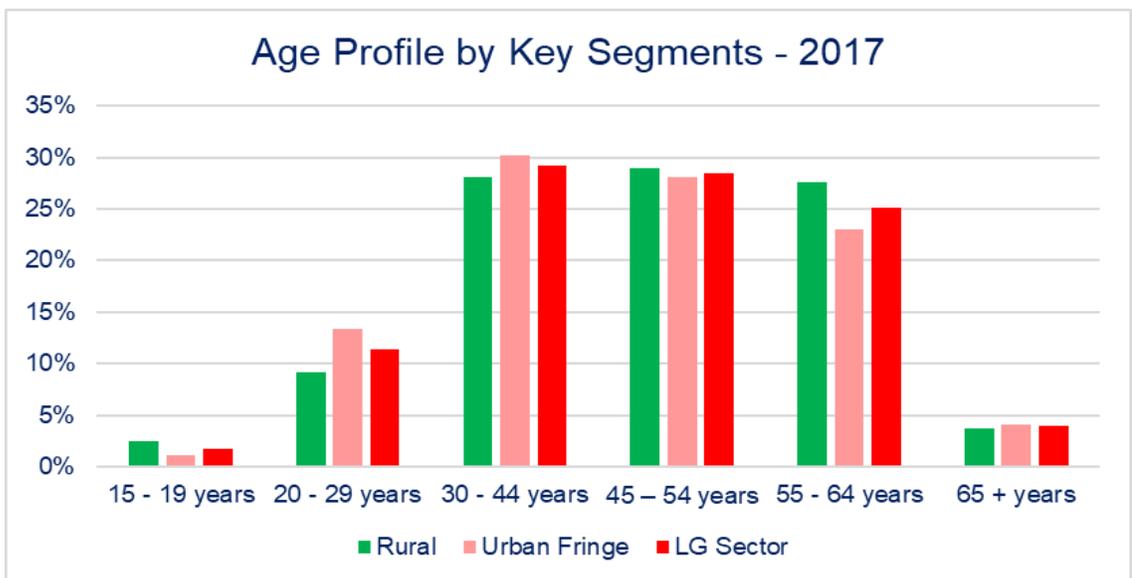
¹⁶ Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Outdoor employees are predominately male, working full time in physically demanding jobs, with lower levels of education. Transitioning older workers to other roles when they are physically unable to continue their traditional work can be a challenge for council management, particularly with large numbers of employees requiring skills development in an increasingly digital environment.

The below chart shows the age profile for key segments in Tasmania.



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

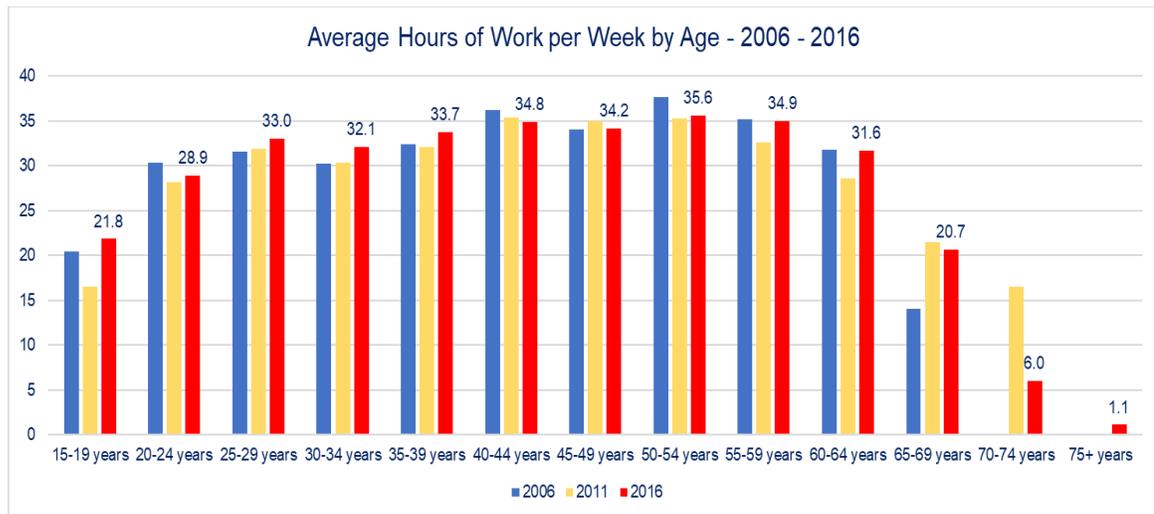
The Rural segment generally has a lower proportion of younger employees relative to Urban Fringe councils and a higher proportion of staff aged over 45 years.

Average Hours Worked:

The proportion of older people aged 65 years and over has been steadily increasing over the last decade, from 8% in 2006 to 13% in 2016.¹⁷ This trend is expected to continue.

A way for the government to address the costs associated with this ageing demographic is to increase the age at which people become eligible for the Age Pension – effectively extending their working life. From July 2017, the Age Pension age is 65, from then it rises in stages up to 67 in July 2023. If current Government proposals are accepted, the Age Pension age will be 70 by 2035. This applies to both men and women. Due to this shift in the Pension Age, Australians are increasingly forced into working to older ages.

The chart below shows the average hours worked per week for the local government sector in Tasmania.¹⁸



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2011, 2016

The average hours worked per week are very consistent over the past 10 years for most age brackets. The exception is the above 65 years of age group where the trend is towards increasing hours worked.

The implications of managing a larger older workforce are complex., particularly for large numbers of employees who are less able to perform physically demanding roles.

Councils will need to:

- identify and address work health and safety risks for older workers;
- help older employees embrace new ways of working with new technology;
- manage the transfer of knowledge of older workers before they retire; and
- manage productivity levels and employee expectations.

¹⁷ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2016

¹⁸ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2011, 2016

Occupational Profile:

There are approximately 155 different occupations employed across local government in Tasmania,¹⁹ representing 33% of all occupations within Australia.

Occupations in demand by local government change over time as can be seen in the table below. Major shifts in employment numbers between 2006 and 2016 have been highlighted. Responsibility for water and sewerage services shifted during this period from local government to state government, possibly influencing the decline in employment recorded below.

The occupations where numbers have declined significantly are:

- Machine and Stationary Plant Operators (-111)
- Construction Trades Workers (-71)
- Construction and Mining Labourers (-67)
- Office Managers and Program Administrators (-40)
- Mobile Plant Operators (-35)

The occupations where numbers have increased significantly are:

- Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists (+30)
- Carers and Aides (+28)
- Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators (+27)
- Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals (+25)

<i>Occupation (ANZSCO) 2006</i>	2006	2016	Difference
10 Managers, nfd	17	8	-9
11 Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators	73	100	27
12 Farmers and Farm Managers	0	0	0
13 Specialist Managers	223	232	9
14 Hospitality, Retail and Service Managers	67	74	7
20 Professionals, nfd	3	4	1
21 Arts and Media Professionals	4	5	1
22 Business, Human Resource and Marketing Professionals	139	146	7
23 Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals	227	252	25
24 Education Professionals	9	10	1
25 Health Professionals	71	84	13
26 ICT Professionals	35	36	1
27 Legal, Social and Welfare Professionals	45	45	0
30 Technicians and Trades Workers, nfd	6	3	-3
31 Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians	195	165	-30
32 Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers	55	49	-6
33 Construction Trades Workers	108	37	-71
34 Electrotechnology and Telecommunications Trades Workers	10	6	-4
35 Food Trades Workers	3	12	9

¹⁹ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

36 Skilled Animal and Horticultural Workers	131	147	16
39 Other Technicians and Trades Workers	21	3	-18
40 Community and Personal Service Workers, nfd	0	3	3
41 Health and Welfare Support Workers	86	82	-4
42 Carers and Aides	146	174	28
43 Hospitality Workers	10	9	-1
44 Protective Service Workers	3	3	0
45 Sports and Personal Service Workers	81	73	-8
50 Clerical and Administrative Workers, nfd	0	3	3
51 Office Managers and Program Administrators	150	110	-40
52 Personal Assistants and Secretaries	55	50	-5
53 General Clerical Workers	166	166	0
54 Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists	124	154	30
55 Numerical Clerks	78	91	13
56 Clerical and Office Support Workers	85	57	-28
59 Other Clerical and Administrative Workers	128	124	-4
60 Sales Workers, nfd	0	0	0
61 Sales Representatives and Agents	3	3	0
62 Sales Assistants and Salespersons	8	9	1
63 Sales Support Workers	24	18	-6
70 Machinery Operators and Drivers, nfd	12	12	0
71 Machine and Stationary Plant Operators	142	31	-111
72 Mobile Plant Operators	156	121	-35
73 Road and Rail Drivers	111	107	-4
74 Storepersons	4	5	1
80 Labourers, nfd	108	117	9
81 Cleaners and Laundry Workers	71	76	5
82 Construction and Mining Labourers	200	133	-67
83 Factory Process Workers	3	8	5
84 Farm, Forestry and Garden Workers	56	60	4
85 Food Preparation Assistants	3	3	0
89 Other Labourers	77	54	-23
09 Inadequately described	35	70	35
Not stated	5	3	-2
Total	3565	3349	-216

Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2016

The table on the following page shows the gender profile of each occupation within the Tasmanian local government sector. It is clear from this, that certain occupations have a gender bias.

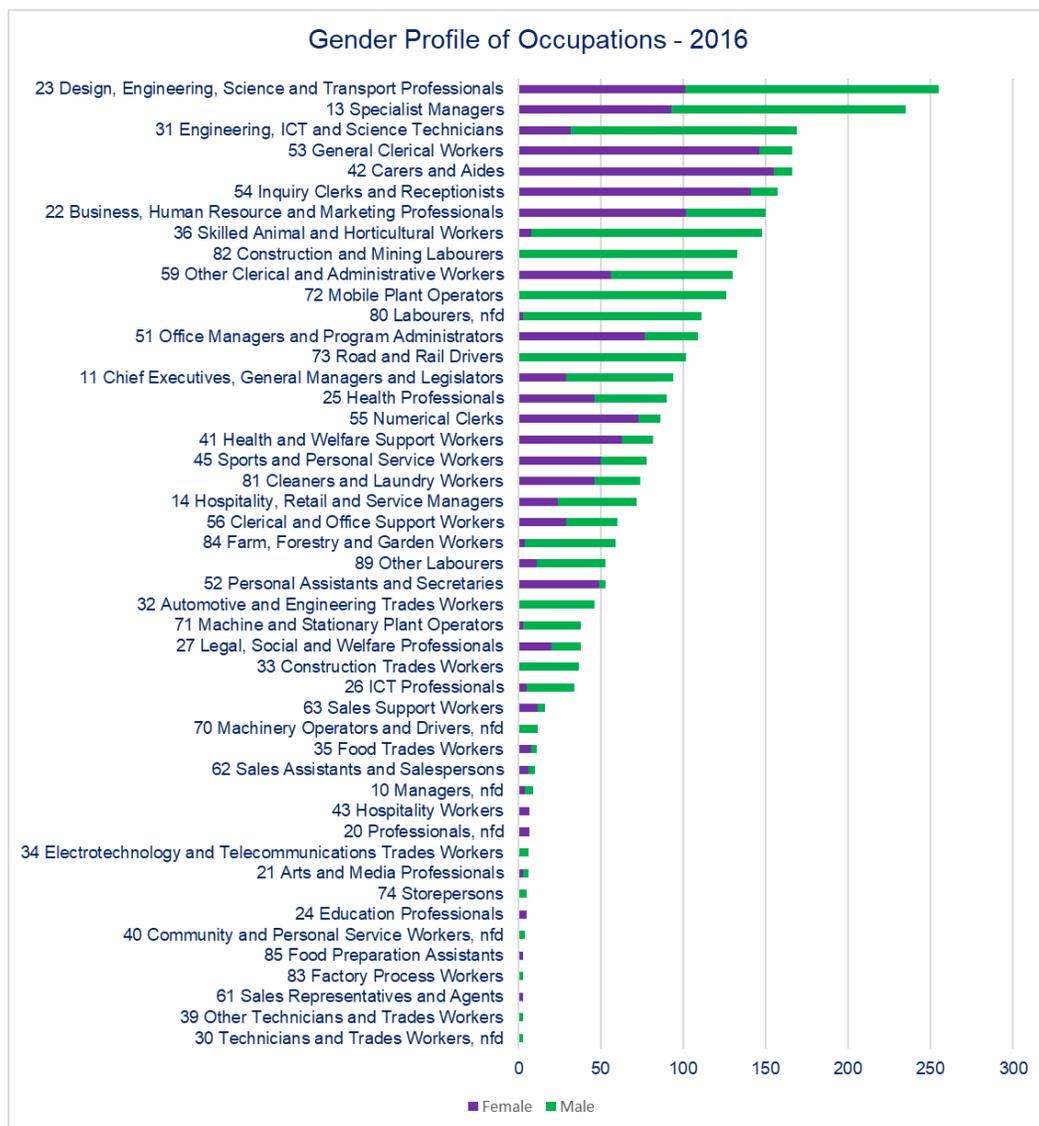
For example, women have a greater representation in occupations such as:

- General Clerical Workers
- Carers and Aides
- Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists
- Business, Human Resource and Marketing Professionals
- Office Managers and Program Administrators

- Numerical Clerks
- Health and Welfare Support Workers
- Sports and Personal Service Workers

Whilst men have a greater representation in occupations such as:

- Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals
- Specialist Managers
- Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians
- Skilled Animal and Horticultural Workers
- Construction and Mining Labourers
- Road and Rail Drivers
- Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators²⁰



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

²⁰ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

There are a number of occupations where women have increased their level of representation over the 10 years to 2016. Some of them are listed below together with the percentage by which the number of females has increased:

- Professionals, nfd (133%)
- Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators (107%)
- Health Professionals (70%)
- Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals (51%)
- Hospitality, Retail and Service Managers (50%)
- Specialist Managers (35%)
- Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians (33%)²¹

Occupation (ANZSCO)	Women in 2006	Women in 2016	% Difference
10 Managers, nfd	3	4	33.3%
11 Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators	14	29	107.1%
13 Specialist Managers	69	93	34.8%
14 Hospitality, Retail and Service Managers	16	24	50.0%
20 Professionals, nfd	3	7	133.3%
22 Business, Human Resource and Marketing Professionals	87	102	17.2%
23 Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals	67	101	50.7%
24 Education Professionals	6	5	-16.7%
25 Health Professionals	27	46	70.4%
26 ICT Professionals	10	5	-50.0%
27 Legal, Social and Welfare Professionals	25	20	-20.0%
31 Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians	24	32	33.3%
35 Food Trades Workers	3	8	166.7%
36 Skilled Animal and Horticultural Workers	8	8	0.0%
41 Health and Welfare Support Workers	62	63	1.6%
42 Carers and Aides	141	155	9.9%
43 Hospitality Workers	8	7	-12.5%
45 Sports and Personal Service Workers	57	50	-12.3%
51 Office Managers and Program Administrators	99	77	-22.2%
52 Personal Assistants and Secretaries	49	49	0.0%
53 General Clerical Workers	141	146	3.5%
54 Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists	109	141	29.4%
55 Numerical Clerks	59	73	23.7%
56 Clerical and Office Support Workers	42	29	-31.0%
59 Other Clerical and Administrative Workers	46	56	21.7%
63 Sales Support Workers	4	6	50.0%
70 Machinery Operators and Drivers, nfd	17	12	-29.4%
81 Cleaners and Laundry Workers	3	3	0.0%
82 Construction and Mining Labourers	46	46	0.0%
85 Food Preparation Assistants	3	4	33.3%
89 Other Labourers	3	3	0.0%

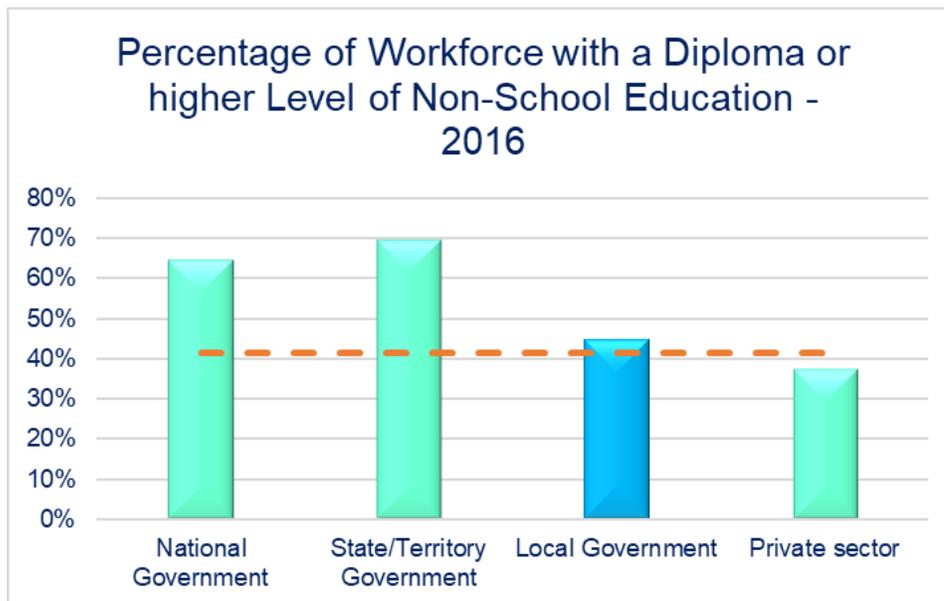
Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2016

²¹ Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2006, 2016

SECTION 2: Vocational Education and Training (VET) Uptake

Qualification Profile:

In 2016, 44.7% of employees in the Australian local government workforce held a Diploma or higher-level qualification – slightly above the average (41.3%) for all-industry within Australia.²²

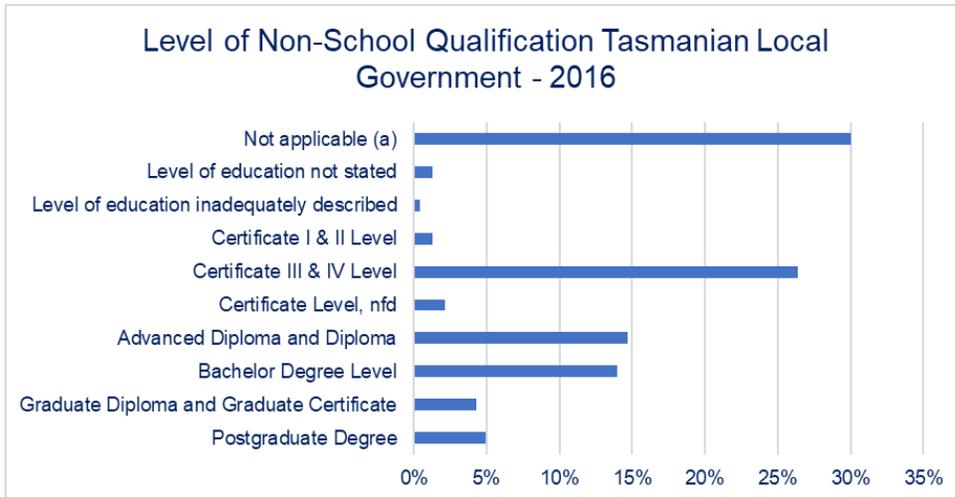


Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

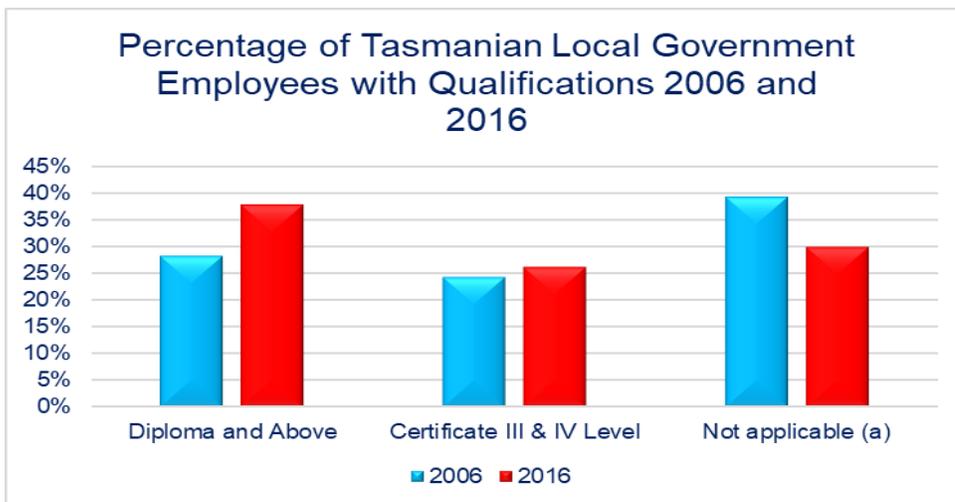
Between 2006 and 2016, there has been significant growth in the percentage of Tasmanian local government employees with qualifications. In 2016, 37.9% of employees in the Tasmanian local government workforce held a Diploma or a higher-level qualification compared to 28.4% in 2006, whilst the number of employees with no qualification decreased from 39.5% in 2006 to 30.0% in 2016.

The full breakdown of non-school qualifications is listed on the following page.

²² ABS 2018, Customised Report



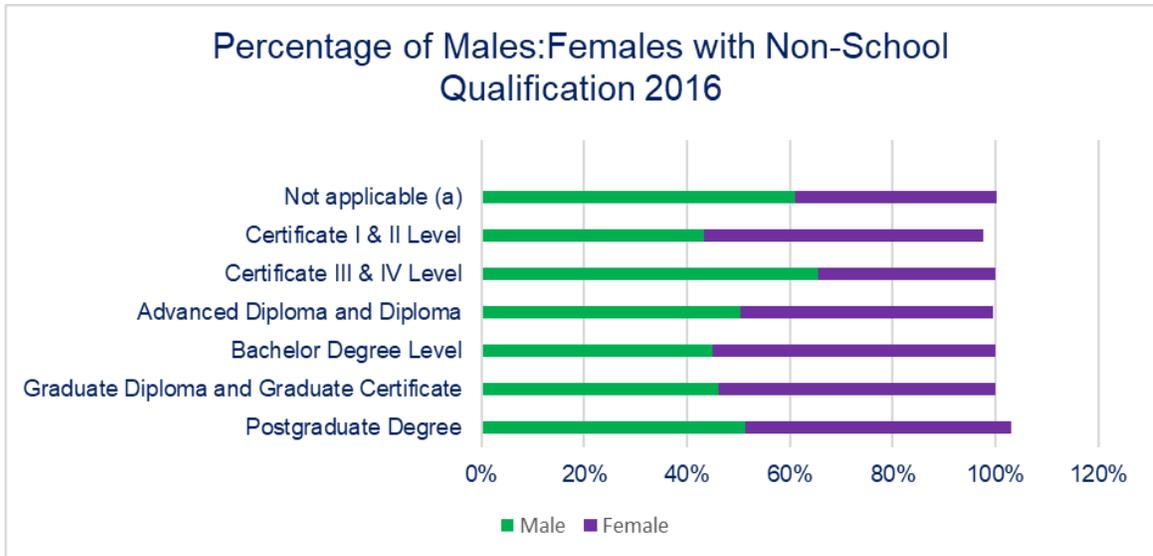
Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

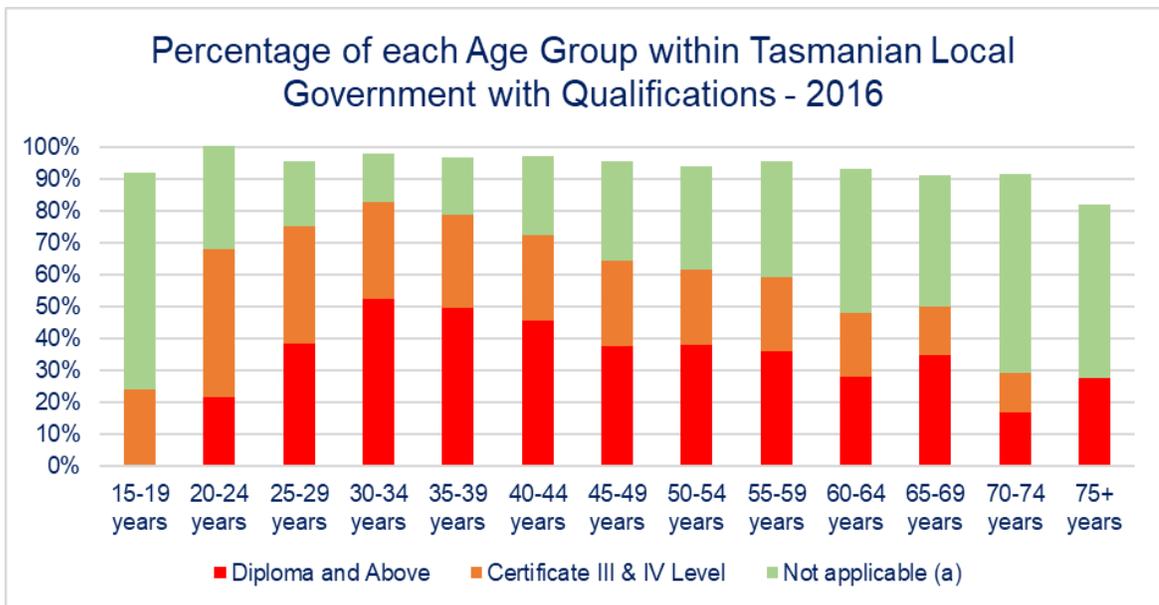
The gender breakdown of qualifications held by Tasmanian local government employees varies, as shown in the following chart. It reveals that:

- More females than males hold higher level qualifications;
- One and half times as many males than females hold no qualifications; and
- Almost twice as many males than females hold Certificate III and IV level qualifications.



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

The chart below lists the percentage of each age group within Tasmanian local government that hold qualifications. It shows that the level of qualification peaks at around the 30-34 age bracket and then declines. To ensure the workforce has the skills required to effectively perform their roles and to adapt to new service demands, ongoing access to qualifications (where qualifications are appropriate) is essential for a productive and innovative local government sector.



Source: Based on ABS Census Customised Report Data, 2016

Issues Sourcing Training:

As part of *the Survey*, councils in Tasmania were asked to outline the key challenges faced when sourcing and delivering VET to their workforce. Their main concerns were:

Key Challenges in Sourcing Training	LG Sector
Finding quality trainers to deliver locally	63.6%
Sourcing courses with relevant content	63.6%
Lack of time for staff to attend training	54.5%
Cost of sending staff away to attend training (travel cost) is too high	45.5%
Lack of support from managers/supervisors to send staff on training courses	36.4%
Course Cost too high	27.3%

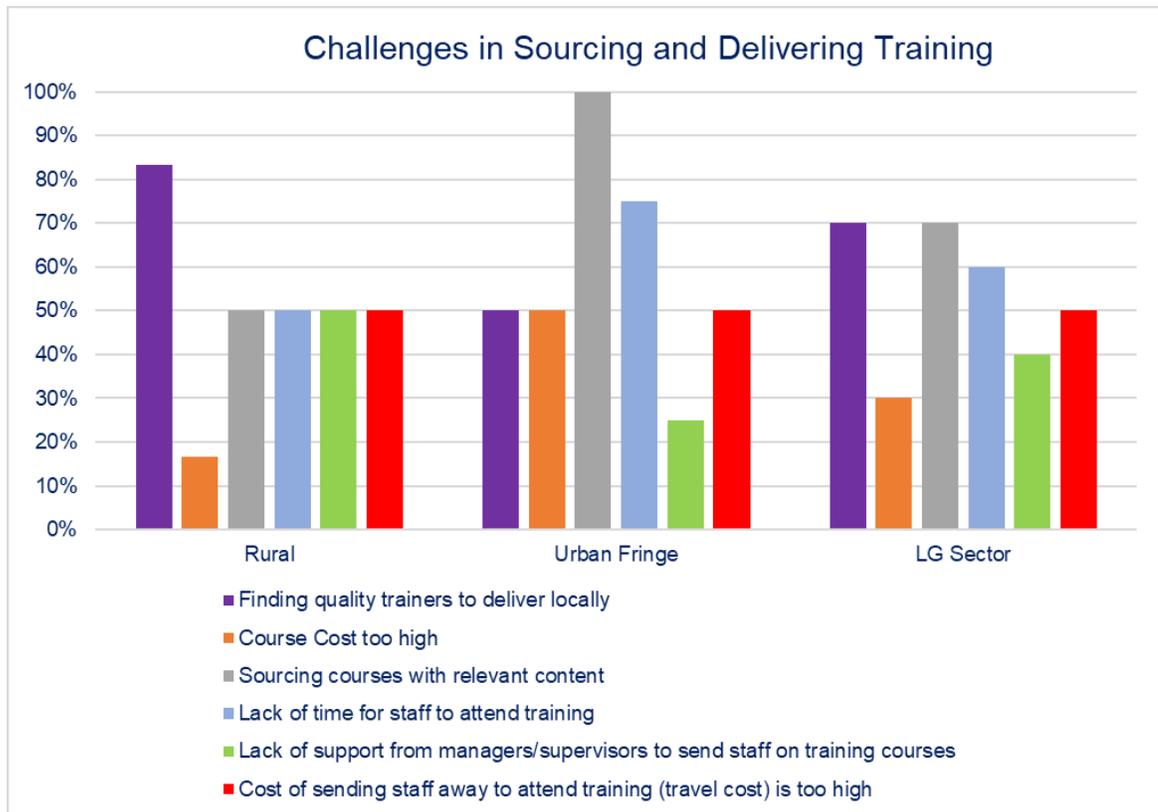
Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

These key challenges are inter-related. *Finding quality trainers available to deliver locally* means councils are required to outlay considerably more on bringing in trainers or sending staff away to training. Tasmanian councils report limited or no choice of local training providers as the local government market is often too small to be viable and providers have difficulty sourcing trainers and assessors with appropriate backgrounds. Coordination of training currently occurs informally between neighbouring councils or through The Training Consortium, a collaboration between state and local government and education partners.

63.6% of Tasmanian councils and 45.5% of councils across Australia are saying that *Sourcing courses with relevant content* is an issue. This is a cause for concern and suggests that:

- The process for designing/reviewing national qualifications is not recognizing the sector as a key end user of the product. Local government qualifications make up only a small percentage of the qualifications accessed by councils and it is unlikely that councils are invited to comment on the wide breadth of qualifications utilised by the sector. The capacity of councils to do so is also limited, particularly given the narrow consultation mechanisms, tight timeframes and restricted funding associated with managing training packages.
- Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) may not be customising the training to a local government context.

The following chart shows the challenges in sourcing and delivering training in Rural and Urban Fringe councils.



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Recommendation 2

That councils provide regular feedback to LGAT on local government skills shortages and training needs to inform the delivery of targeted training programs by Tasmania Training Consortium, universities, RTOs and other providers.

Apprenticeship/Traineeship Uptake Levels:

46% of councils in Tasmania who responded to *the Survey* are employing Apprentices/Trainees.

2017 Apprenticeship/Traineeship data indicates that **nine qualifications** from four Training Packages were accessed by councils in Tasmania in the following fields:

- Horticulture
- Aboriculture
- Automotive
- Project Management
- Leadership and Management
- Civil Construction

The table below shows the range of Training Packages that apprenticeships and traineeships are being drawn from across the local government sector in Tasmania.²³

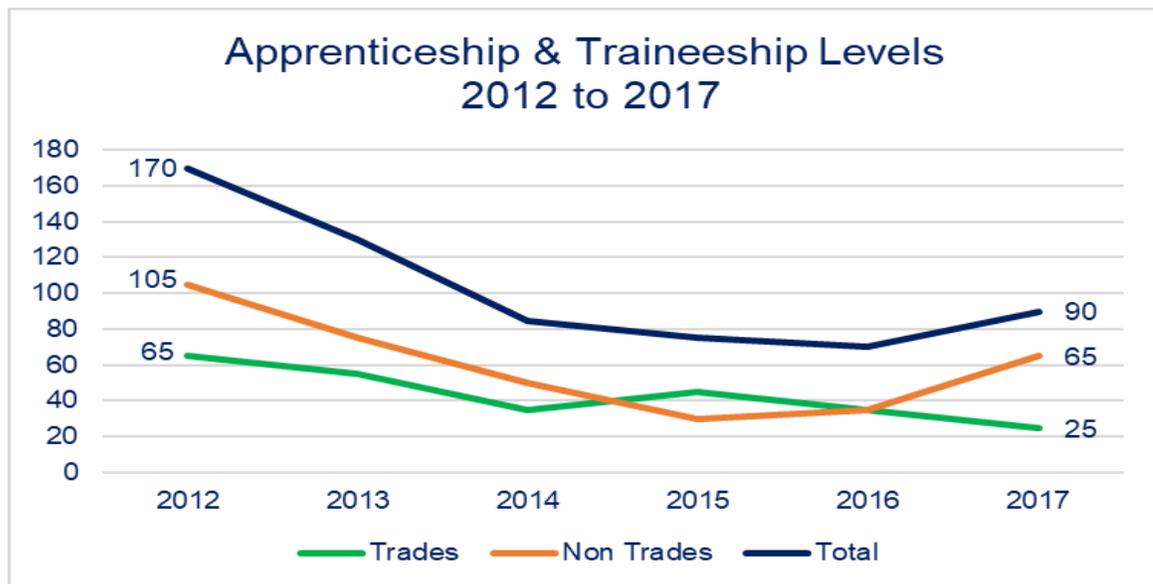
Training Package	Trades	Non-Trades	Total
AHC - Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management (includes AGF, AGR, RTD, RTE, RTF, RUA, RUH)	15	5	20
AUR - Automotive Industry Retail, Service and Repair	5	0	5
BSB - Business Services (includes BSA)	0	30	30
RII - Resources and Infrastructure (includes BCC, DRT, MNC, MNM, MNQ)	0	25	25

Source: Based on NCVER Customised Report Data, 2018

In July 2017 there were 170 local government employees *“in training”* under Apprenticeship/Traineeship arrangements across councils within Tasmania.²⁴ This data includes only those employed directly by councils and not apprentices and trainees hosted by councils under group training arrangements.

However, since 2012, apprenticeship and traineeship numbers across all-industries and in local government, have been in decline:

- **Apprenticeship** numbers in local government have decreased by **61.5%** compared to a fall of 27.7% in trades across all-industries in Tasmania
- **Traineeship** numbers have decreased by **38.1%** compared to a fall of 49.9% across all-industries in Tasmania.

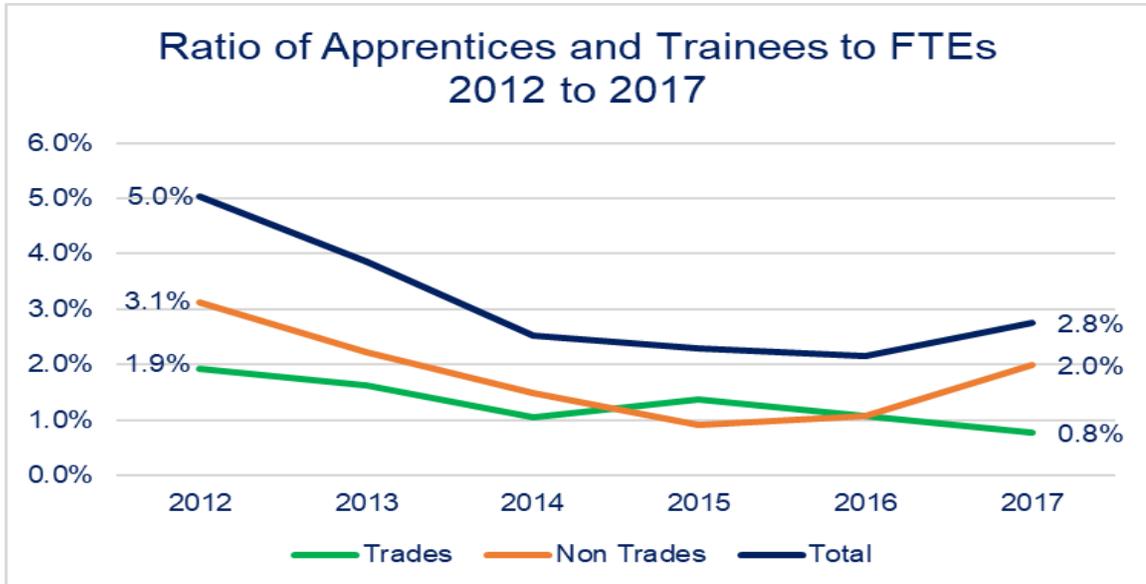


Source: Based on NCVER Customised Report Data, 2018

²³ NCVER 2018, Australian vocational education and training statistics: apprentices and trainees - September 2017 estimates, NCVER, Adelaide.

²⁴ NCVER 2018, Australian vocational education and training statistics: apprentices and trainees - September 2017 estimates, NCVER, Adelaide

In 2012, trainees and apprentices were 5.0% of the Tasmanian local government workforce. In 2017, this figure had decreased to 2.8%. In 2017, apprentices/trades made up just 0.8% of the workforce.



Source: Based on NCVER Customised Report Data, 2018 and Tasmanian Local Government Consolidated Data Collection

30.8% of Tasmanian Councils surveyed in 2017²⁵ indicated they did not have enough trainees/apprentices to meet their future skill needs.

These respondents listed the following key factors constraining the employment of additional trainees/apprentices:

- Lack of funding/financial limitations
- Lack of understanding and buy in from management
- Preference to host rather than employ trainees

One council indicated that they were about to employ three new apprentices.

²⁵ Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017

School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeships Program (SBATs):

Between 2012 and 2016 there was no uptake of SBATs by the Tasmanian local government sector. In 2017, five School Based Trainees were employed.

	In Training					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
School Based	0	0	0	0	0	5

Source: Based on NCVET Customised Report Data, 2018

Given the scope of occupations encompassed by the local government sector it is ideally placed to support SBATs as it is a way of “*growing your own*” staff locally. SBATs should be used as a key recruitment strategy to counter the rapidly ageing local government workforce.

Recommendation 3

That LGAT collate and make available to councils’ information which clearly describes employer and trainee benefits, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and the processes involved with employing school-based apprentices and trainees.

SECTION 3: Skill Shortages

Top Skill Shortage Occupations:

69.2% of councils who responded to *the Survey* in Tasmania are currently experiencing a skill shortage.

Councils were asked to list their top five skill shortage areas. Rural and Urban Fringe councils listed Engineers as the top skill shortage occupation. The table below shows little variation in skill shortage occupations across the two segments.²⁶

Segments	Top Skill Shortage Occupations		
	1	2	3
Rural	Engineers	Town Planners	Environmental Health Officers
Urban Fringe	Engineers	Town Planners	Environmental Health Officers Building Surveyors

Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Councils were asked to consider a list of key Professional and Technical/Trade occupations and to list against each if they are experiencing a current shortage, and given this shortage, if they were forced to recruit less skilled applicants. Thirdly councils were asked to indicate if this skill shortage occupation would be a critical issue in the future.

The top skill shortage occupations listed by councils are listed below:

Rank	Professional Occupations	Percentage of Councils		
		Current Shortage	Forced to Recruit Less Skilled Applicants	Critical Future Issue
1	Engineers	38.5%	7.7%	30.8%
2	Engineering Technicians	30.8%	7.7%	15.4%
3	Urban & Town Planners	23.1%	7.7%	23.1%
4	Surveyors	23.1%	7.7%	7.7%
5	Surveying Technicians	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%
6	Environmental Health Officer	15.4%	7.7%	23.1%
7	Building Surveyors	7.7%	7.7%	15.4%
8	Building Surveying Technicians	7.7%	0.0%	23.1%
9	Computing/ICT Technicians	0.0%	7.7%	23.1%
10	Computing/ICT Professionals	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%

Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

²⁶ Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Shortages in technical and trade occupations were not as commonly reported as those in the professional areas, however shortages of IT/ICT Technicians, Plumbing Inspectors and Youth Support Workers still represent a critical issue for the future for some councils.

Rank	Technical & Trade Occupations	Percentage of Councils		
		Current Shortage	Forced to Recruit Less Skilled Applicants	Future Shortage
1	IT/ICT Technicians	7.7%	0.0%	15.4%
2	Plumbing Inspectors	7.7%	0.0%	23.1%
3	Draftsperson	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%
4	Customer Service Worker	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%
5	Youth Support Worker	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%

Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

There are some new skill shortage areas emerging in Tasmanian councils. They are:

- Emergency Management Specialists
- Sporting Field Curator

Councils in Tasmania expect that shortages will increase beyond 2017 levels in the next 18 months in the following key areas:

- Engineers/Engineering Technicians
- Urban & Town Planners
- Environmental Health Officers
- Building Surveyors/Building Surveying Technicians
- Computing/ICT Professionals/Technicians

The key drivers/reasons behind the current skill shortages, in order of importance are:

- Location – rural and regional locations
- Inability to compete with the private sector on remuneration
- Lack of suitably qualified/experienced candidates
- Reputation and public image of councils
- Lack of vocational and higher education training providers in Tasmania

Recruitment Strategies:

To fill vacancies in the top five skill shortage occupations, Tasmanian councils have attempted to recruit from:

- Within the local area – 91% of councils
- State Wide – 100% of councils
- Interstate – 91% of councils
- Internationally – 0% of councils

On average it is taking just over 2 to 2.5 months for councils to fill vacancies in both Professional and Skilled/Technical positions. The range across responding councils was 1 – 4 months.

To help combat skill shortages, councils across Australia employ staff on employment sponsored visas to fill vacancies. None of the responding councils of *the Survey* in Tasmania were employing staff under this type of arrangement.

38.5% of Tasmanian councils are **growing their own** to combat skill shortages, employing a total of 7 cadets in the following occupations:

Number of Councils Employing Cadets	Occupational Area
3	Town/Statutory Planning
2	Administration
1	Engineering
1	Environmental Health
1	Accounting/finance
1	Works/Operations

Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Recommendation 4

That councils increase their take up of cadetships in occupations experiencing skills shortages in Tasmania.

SECTION 4: Unmet Training Needs

Skill Gaps:

A skill gap is the gap between the skill level of the employee and the skills needed to perform their job role, as desired by their employer.

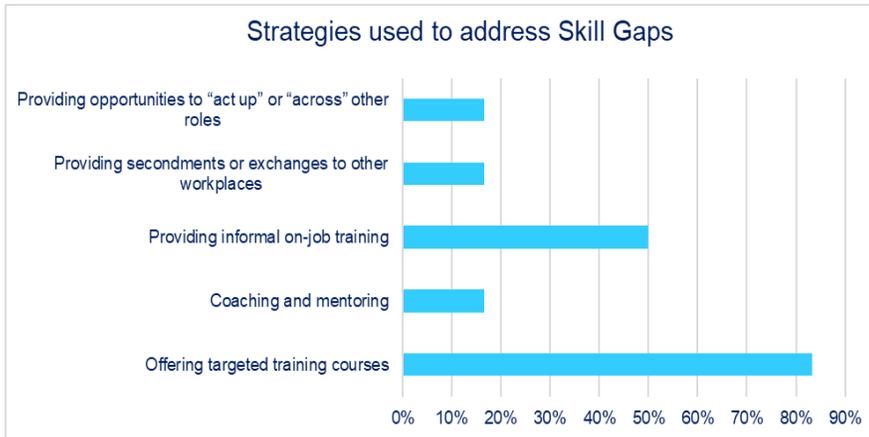
50% of Tasmanian councils who responded to *the Survey* were experiencing skill gaps. Key areas listed by councils as being the most critical in terms of skills gaps were:

Occupations with Critical Skill Gap	What new skills are required	Drivers behind the skills gap
Urban & Town Planners	- Higher qualification levels needed	- Inability to find suitable course via distance education
Environmental Health Officers	- IT skills	- Limited training options
Supervisors/team leaders	- Team building - Communication skills - Leadership training - Technological skills	- Rapid changes in technology
Engineering Manager	- Mentoring and experience	- Limited resources
Maintenance Workers	- High risk / licences	- Legal requirement
Labourers/Plant Operators	- Literacy and Numeracy	- Poor level of education
Engineering Technicians	- GIS and asset management skills	- Rapid changes in technology
Children Services	- Higher qualification levels required	- Limited training options

Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Councils are using a combination of strategies to address skill gaps including opportunities to act up, secondments, on-the-job training, coaching and mentoring and provision of targeted training programs. Councils in Tasmania also report the wide use of resource sharing as an economically efficient means of providing services when there are scarce resources.

The following chart shows that most councils (83%) are using targeted training programs and informal on-job training to address identified skill gaps.



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Recommendation 5

That councils continue to explore opportunities for resource sharing, particularly in regional areas, to address skills gaps and skills shortages.

Unmet Training Needs:

46% of councils who responded to *the Survey* reported unmet training needs.

The table below provides an overview of some of the key areas of unmet needs and the reasons listed by councils for this gap. The key reasons given were:

- Training not delivered locally/not offered in Tasmania
- Limited opportunity via distance education
- Lack of training providers
- Cost of training
- No support from management
- Fragmentation of profession into specialties

Each of the unmet training needs listed in the following table was raised by one council, with the exception of Planning, which was listed by two councils.

Unmet Training Need	Reason
Bachelor Urban/Town Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not delivered locally - Limited opportunity via distance education - Fragmentation of profession into specialties
Environmental Health Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No training courses offered in Tasmania
Certificate IV in Government (Statutory Compliance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not offered in Tasmania - Very limited providers offering this course
Technology Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of training providers and cost
Competency of Equipment/plant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No support/understanding by management of the need

Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Recommendation 6

That councils and LGAT seek to improve the supply of skilled personnel through enhanced coordination and collaboration in recruitment and training activities and advocate for improved funding to support this.

SECTION 5: Emerging Issues

Emerging Issues that will impact on Council's Future Skilling Needs:

Councils were asked to provide details of any internal or external factors that will impact on their future skill needs – things like changes to legislation or major new infrastructure projects planned in their region.

The table below gives an overview of the key factors listed by Tasmanian councils.

Internal/External Factors	Impact
Council Amalgamations/Mergers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource Sharing - Integration of IT Platforms - Change in service level and workload / Staff satisfaction - Subject experts will be required
New Legislation/Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change to Planning Legislation – impact unknown as yet
Ageing Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of knowledge and expertise/skills
Major Infrastructure Projects (e.g. Kingston Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for Project Management, marketing and facilities management
Technological Change and Digitisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost of equipment, - Expertise to implement - Development of the workforce skills - Change in the make up of the workforce - IT and digital literacy skills needed
Adult Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding
Lack of Educational planning in the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of qualified personnel in specific professions
Climate Change and Emergency Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New skills in climate adaptation, risk assessment and compliance

Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Whilst there is no indication that council amalgamations are likely beyond voluntary mergers, some councils anticipated a major impact on internal systems, service levels and staff engagement, should amalgamations occur in the future. Impacts on skilling arising from new legislation relate primarily to changes resulting from amendments to the *Building Act 2016* and the *Land Use Planning and Approval Act 1993*.

Councils were asked if they had undertaken any analysis or forecasting of changing roles and skills requirements of their workforce, specifically due to the impact of digital disruption or to advances in technology.

- 69.2% answered No
- 15.4% answered Yes
- 15.4% did not answer

Councils were asked to identify new skills emerging over the next three years as a result of technological advances/digital disruption. They were also asked to specify how they intended to address these new skills.

As shown in the following table, ICT implementation and application, along with asset management and communication, are areas requiring further investment in staff development.

New Skills Emerging Over Next 3 Years	Strategies to Address Skill Need
Specialist IT Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None to date - Training needed in new software and hardware
Computer Literacy Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to lift skills of Outdoor workforce - Formal and Informal training - 26 Ten Literacy Program
GIS and Asset Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None yet
Cyber Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a management framework - None yet
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upskill staff

Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

How well positioned are you?

The way we do business, connect, socialise, travel, and live is changing.

The CSIRO predicts that the world of work in the next two decades will be shaped by five key trends: technological advances, digital connectivity, globalisation, the ageing population and emerging economic structures. These mega trends are driving the speed of change and are expected to lead to the restructuring of labour markets throughout Australia.²⁷

The Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA)²⁸ predict that almost five million jobs, or 39.6% of the Australian workforce, will face a high probability of being replaced by computers in the next 10-20 years, and a further 18.4% face a medium probability of having their roles eliminated.

The nature of work is expected to shift and redefine the composition of the workforce. The number of permanent employees is expected to diminish as organisations outsource non-core work to freelancers, part-timers and casuals, so as to enable firms to be more agile and accommodate accelerating changes in business strategy.

Advances in computer technologies will influence how workers perform work, allowing them to work remotely, and to be connected to colleagues using Cloud technologies. New skills are expected to emerge, to create roles that do not yet exist.

Skill-sets will change, and career paths centred on a specialisation within a narrow stream will offer less resilience than career paths that develop a worker's

²⁷ Hajkowski et al (2016: 18)

²⁸ CEDA (2015: 24) Australia's future workforce, Melbourne

competence in generic/soft skills such as project management, digital skills, adaptive thinking, team work and problem solving etc.

It is expected that organisational structures will be flatter, and workers will be assigned to teams based on their skills and potential to learn. The role of leaders will be to attract and nurture talent; coach, develop and inspire teams to innovate, improve work processes and build the organisation's adaptive capacity.

Assumptions that determine how an organisation is structured, and the effectiveness of human capital strategies to attract and develop talent and build the organisational culture to maintain competitive advantage will need to be reviewed.

As new technologies emerge in the future the demand for some skills will wain while others will increase.

It is expected that soft skill intensive occupations will make up almost two-thirds of the workforce in the future.²⁹

These soft skills are:

- Creativity and entrepreneurial skills
- Cross cultural awareness
- Social intelligence
- Novel and adaptive thinking
- New media literacy (e.g. social networking)
- Ability to understand concepts across multiple disciplines
- Critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving
- Design mind-set
- Ability to discriminate and filter information for importance)
- Ability to work productively, drive engagement, and demonstrate presence as a member of a virtual team³⁰

It is in this context that councils were asked how well positioned they were in regard to soft skills and how they intended to address this emerging skills gap.

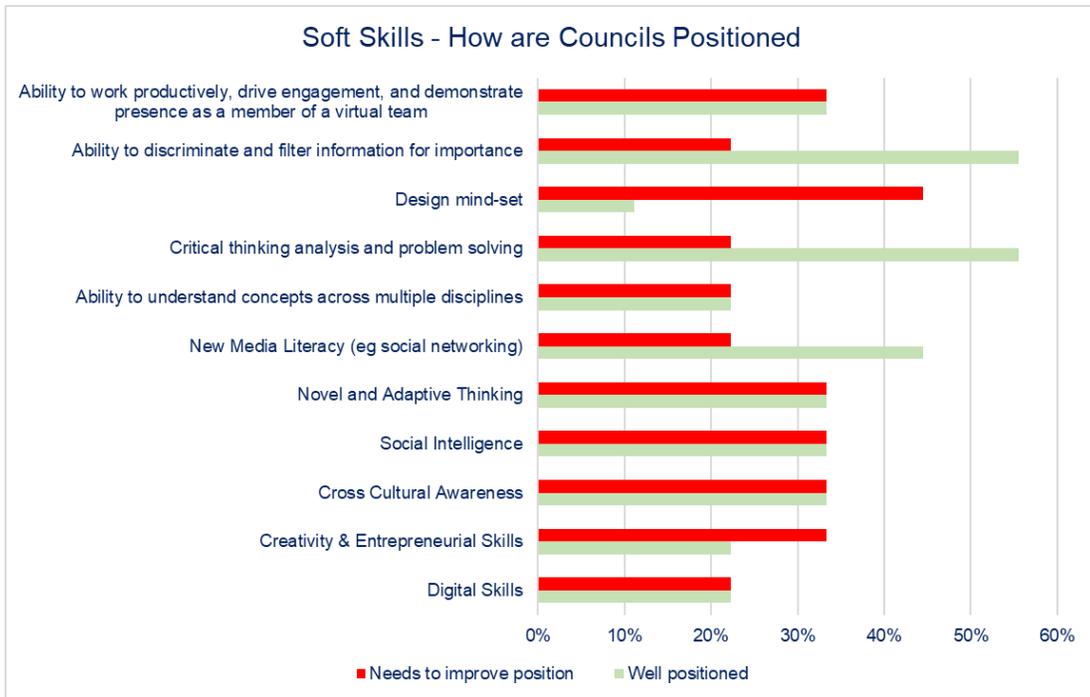
31% of Tasmanian councils (9) responded to this question and 100% of councils who responded said they needed to improve their position in all 11 soft skill areas listed in the following chart. The top four areas in which councils were least well positioned were:

- Design mind set
- Ability to understand concepts across multiple disciplines
- Digital Skills
- Creativity and entrepreneurial skills

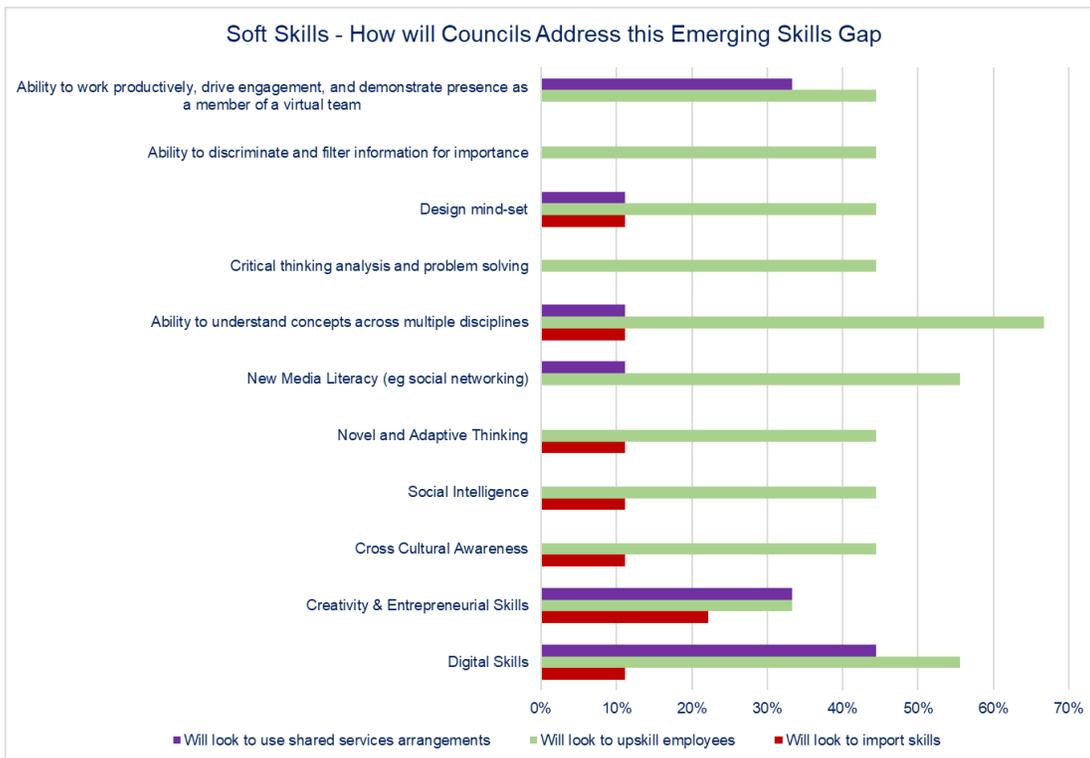
²⁹ Deloitte Access Economics, *Soft skills for business success*, (2017: 8), Deloitte Australia

³⁰ Deloitte Access Economics, *Soft skills for business success*, (2017: 8), Deloitte Australia

To address these emerging skills gaps, councils will mainly be looking to upskill existing staff. To a lesser extent they will look to import skills/recruit externally. Very few will be seeking to use shared service arrangements to address skill gaps.



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

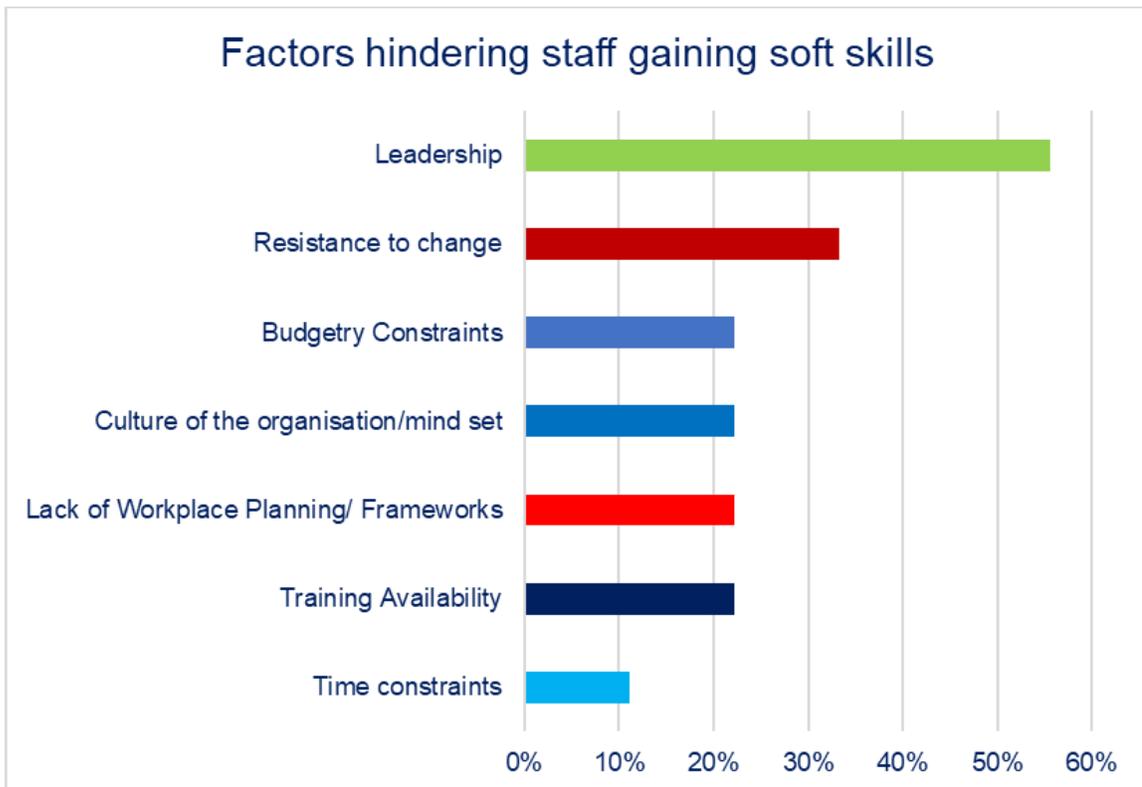


Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

What might hinder staff gaining emerging skills?

Councils were asked to list the key factors that might hinder staff gaining these emerging soft skills needed in the future. The table below shows the range of factors listed.

The majority (56%) of Tasmanian councils cite Leadership as the key factor hindering staff gaining soft skills. If *Resistance to Change* (33%) and *Culture of the organization/mindset* (22%) are also included, it is evident that internal factors are shaping up as the biggest hinderance.



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Future workforce profile:

44.8% of councils (13) who responded to this question employ full-time, part-time and casual workers. A significant number use:

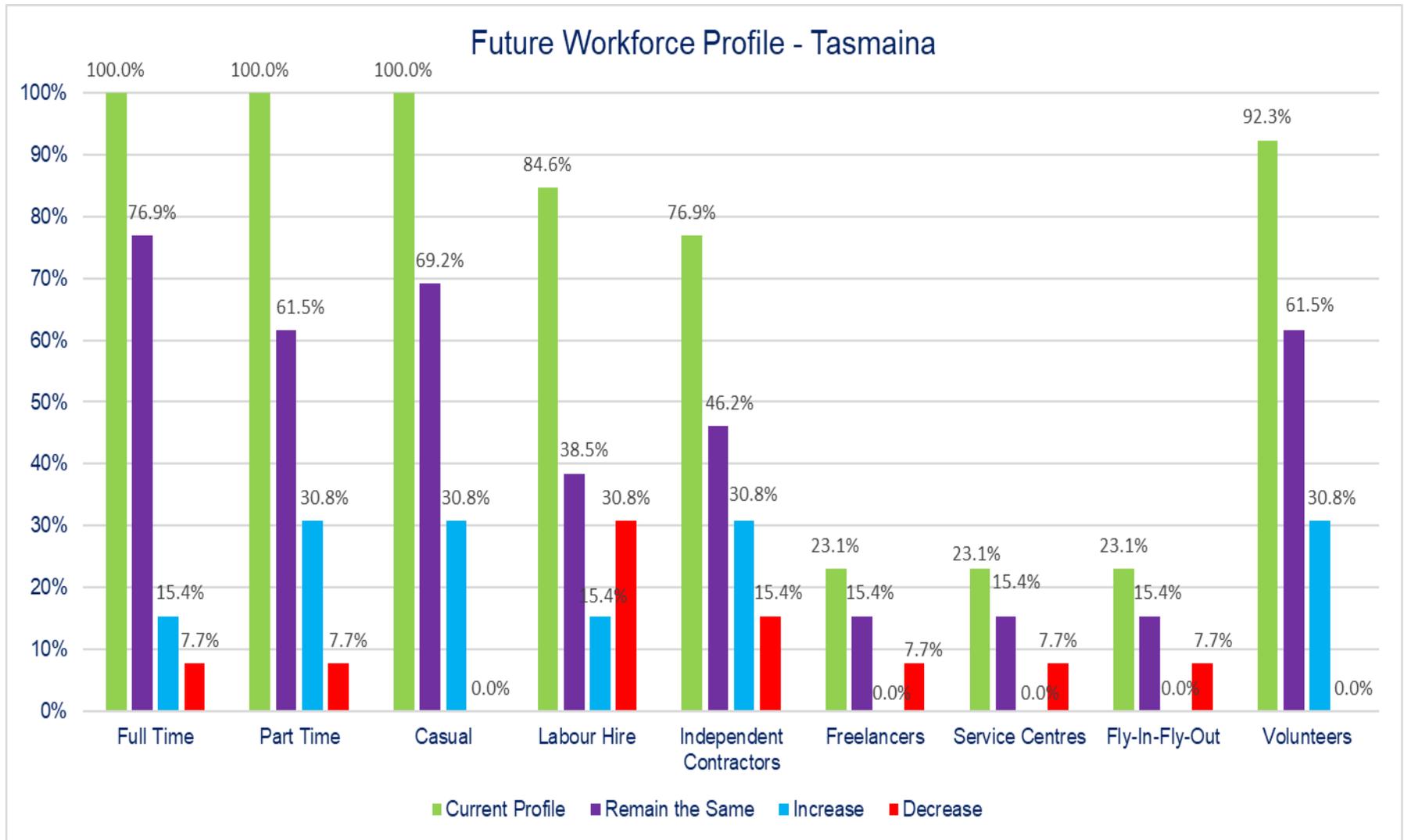
- Labour Hire Arrangements – 84.6%
- Independent Contractors – 76.9%
- Volunteers – 92.3%

To a lesser extent, councils use:

- Freelancers – 23.1%
- Service Centres – 23.1%
- Fly In Fly Out Workers - 23.1%

In the future, councils are predicting the following trends:

- A significant increase in the use of Part-Time Employees
- A significant increase in the use of Casual Employees
- A significant increase in the number of Volunteers
- A moderate increase in the use of Full-Time Employees
- A small increase in the use of Independent Contractors
- A decrease in the use of Service Centres, Fly In Fly Out and Freelance Workers
- A decrease in the use of Labour Hire arrangements



Source: Local Government Skills Shortage Survey 2017, LGWDG

Appendix 1

Councils in Tasmania that responded to the Local Government Skills Survey by ACLG region

Rural	
Circular Head Council	RAL
Dorset	RAL
Flinders	RAS
King Island Council	RAS
Huon Valley Council	RAV
Meander Valley Council	RAV
Northern Midlands Council	RAV
Waratah-Wynyard	RAV
Urban Fringe	
Glenorchy City Council	UFM
Kingborough	UFM
West Tamar Council	UFS
Central Highlands	URS
Devonport City Council	URS