

Employment and Skills Formation Network

for the

Mid North Region

Employment and Skills Formation Annual Action Plan 2008-09 (Part 3)



Government of South Australia
Department of Further Education,
Employment, Science and Technology




MID NORTH
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD INC
"fostering economic development in our region"


South Australia Works in the Regions

ENDORSEMENT

The Network participated in local consultation in the development of this Employment and Skills Formation Action Plan. It is endorsed by the:

Signature 
Chair Colin Rawnsley
Date 12/6/2008

South Australia Works in the Regions funds allocated to deliver this plan will be placed with The Mid North Regional Development Board Inc. and is endorsed by:

Signature 
Chair Kay Matthias
Date 12/6/2008

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GRANTEE / NETWORK INTRODUCTION

The Grantee, the Mid North Regional Development Board:

"The Mid North Regional Development Board seeks to promote Economic Development strategically and to facilitate the sustainable development of the region through:

Encouraging the growth of existing businesses and the establishment of new start up businesses;

Promoting the competitive advantages of the region as a place to invest, live, work in and visit;

Planning for the provision of infrastructure, capital and labour to meet the future needs of industries and communities in the region."

(Ref: Mid North Strategic Plan 2005-2008)

Goal 3 of the region's Strategic Plan states that we plan to "Foster inclusive access to employment and skills development programs that match employment opportunities in the region's key industries".

Training and employment are part of our core business, and the South Australia Works in the Regions program and the objectives developed by our Mid North ESF Network interconnect with the Regional Development Board's goals. The grant is of significant value to the region, in helping us to achieve our own goals, as we seek to assist the growth and development of our region, our communities, and the individuals in those communities to achieve their fullest potential.

The Network:

The Mid North ESF Network is a group of dedicated individuals who give voluntarily of their time in the most unselfish manner to further the circumstances that will benefit the most disadvantaged people of the region. The Network provides a unique opportunity for disparate interest groups spread across a wide geographic area to come together with this common goal. Members also provide a conduit for the flow of information relating to training and employment around the region, to and from both state and federal government departments and industry groups. They are vital in helping us to engage with job-seekers and employers throughout the region.

We currently have a membership of 62, representing industry employers, Job Network, training providers, Local Community Partnership, state and federal government departments, Industry Skills Councils, local government, Group Training organisations and schools. Of this membership, approximately 12-20 people attend our bi-monthly meetings on a regular basis which are held around the region, and provide a stimulated input to decision-making.

We make considerable efforts to engage with business people in the wide-spread towns in our region by holding information sessions and meetings around the region and inviting their participation. For example, we promoted a meeting in Riverton, one of the smaller towns in the region, to local businesses, and 4 local business people and the High School principal attended the meeting, which was used to inform the guests about the cross-section of services represented on the Network. October Business Month was also successfully used by the ESF Network to partner with the Regional Development Board and use the opportunity to engage with and inform the business communities in Clare, Burra and Eudunda. This was seen as a useful model to continue in the future.

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OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS FROM 2007-08

'My Job'

The 'My Job' project, managed by Employment Directions, continues to be an excellent case management model for engaging with local job seekers and placing them into employment. In 2006/07 the program assisted 181 people and placed 97 people in jobs. 'My Job' continued into 2007/08, and while the Network may have been initially unsure if they would be able to engage with a completely new group of participants in a region of very low unemployment, it appears that they have been successful in doing so, and when the program is completed a further 135 people will be assisted with a minimum of 55 people gaining work. To their credit, Employment Directions refuse to count short-term work as an outcome, but strive to find sustainable employment for participants.

Metal Industry Gateways (MIG) Project

The MIG program has been providing Engineering and Metal Fabrication skills to young people since 2005/06. In 2007/08 the MIG program went through two significant changes. An evaluation of the MIG program recommended that the course be extended to provide participants with entry level skills in Automotive and Electrical in addition to metal fabrication skills. This has now increased the training and skills people gain from the program and opened up new employment opportunities. The second change was a change in venue. The program was at risk of not being held in 2007/08 due to a lack of suitable facilities. The local newspaper, *The Northern Argus*, was approached and printed a story regarding the difficulties the Network was having in finding a venue. After this article was printed there was an outstanding response from the community and many

alternative sites were offered. The Network is now in partnership with the New Life Church who is providing low cost rent for the MIG program.

'A Taste of Country Hospitality'

A new initiative in 2006-07 addressed an important training gap for one of the region's key industries, commencing with a morning tea forum for a broad cross-section of employers in the Tourism and Hospitality sector to decide on the content of the course. The trial course included a highly successful industry expo for participants and targeted senior school students visiting 6 varied facilities hosted by employers. The project was rolled over into 2007-08, and the content expanded and fine-tuned, which has made it more inclusive of Retail skills as well. The response in 2007-08 has been outstanding.

Local Newspaper Success Stories

The South Australia Works program has regular success stories printed in local newspapers – 'The Northern Argus' and 'The Burra Broadcaster'. This has been an excellent way to promote the success of South Australia Works and attract participants to our employment and training programs.



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Forums for employers and job-seekers

The ESF Network, under the auspices of the 'My Job' project, partnered with the Employment 40+ Program from DFEEST, DOME and Employment Directions to locally manage, organise and market a forum for mature-aged jobseekers in April 2008. The forum included an inspirational local speaker and a panel of local employers who talked about employment opportunities, the assets of mature-aged employees, and how job-seekers could overcome stereotypes and market themselves effectively. 18 people from a wide-spread area around the region attended the forum.

In addition the Network assisted the MNRDB in Small Business Month to put on forums for local business people in Clare, Burra and Eudunda, which showcased the range of services available throughout the region to support business owners, including the *South Australia Works* program.

In September 2007, the Network partnered with Barossa Lower North Futures to present a highly successful and well-attended dinner workshop for employers, educating them about Generation Y, what it takes to understand the thinking of this age-group, and how to recruit and retain them as employees.

Partnerships

The Network has developed a productive working relationship with TAFESA, Barossa Lower North Futures (Local Community Partnerships) and Employment Directions (Job Network Member).

Through the partnership with TAFESA, the *South Australia Works* program has been able to leverage significant funds and resources to develop quality employment and training programs. In 2007/08 three South Australia Works programs (MIG Project, Office Administration and Country Hospitality) were able to leverage Fund Source Indicator 500 Hours (FSI 500) to provide

increased training hours to participants. The Network considers that providing more extensive training to job seekers assist better outcomes for the region.

Barossa Lower North Futures (BLNF) is an extremely valuable link between schools and the Network, not only serving as a conduit for information flow to VET Coordinators in schools, but also in supporting transitioning school students and recent school leavers in *South Australia Works* projects. BLNF also convenes an inter-agency youth engagement network, through which it has conducted a work experience review, is the sub-contractor for our major Tourism/Hospitality project, and willingly serves on many project Steering Committees.

Employment Direction is another valued partner; as the principal Job Network Member in our region, the Network gains excellent coverage across the region from Employment Directions' extensive knowledge of unemployment issues. They have provided the Network's major engagement project 'My Job' over the past 2 years, with pre-employment programs already in place to assist job-seekers e.g. Career Awareness, basic computing and job-seeker skills programs. Their willingness to serve on all project steering committee meetings is a valuable means to facilitating the pathways model.

Skills Training Centre Strategic Plan project

This initiative arose from the Network's close involvement in the Skills Centre Action Group, a cross-functional committee convened in 2006 to explore what could be done to address the lack of skills training facilities in the region through partnerships and funding applications. It became evident that hard data was required through thorough research of the region's needs and examination of options to pursue. To this end the Network assigned the Regional Development Board to engage a private consultant to carry out community consultation, research and develop a strategy plan

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for a 'Vision for Education and Training in the Mid North', which is under way as this Plan is being developed.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

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2008-09 ACTION PLAN – LINKS WITH THE 3 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN & NEW AND EMERGING ISSUES

As stated in the 2006-09 Strategic plan, The Mid North Employment and Skills Formation Network's Vision for the region is:

"A region creating opportunities to develop and sustain vibrant communities through a skilled work force."

The Mid North Employment and Skills Network underpins its programs with the principles of:

- Inclusiveness
- Accessibility
- Engagement."

An analysis of progress towards meeting the Objectives to date is included in 'Objectives as Detailed in the 3 Year Strategic Plan' p. 12. The 2008-09 Action Plan details the initiatives that meet the Objectives and Strategies of the 2006-09 Strategic Plan for the third of the 3 years. (See summary chart p. 17).

The above Vision links to and supports the vision and goals of the Mid North Regional Development Board, in particular Goal 3: 'To foster inclusive access to employment and skills development programs that match employment opportunities in the region's key industries'.

At the state level, the Mid North ESF's Vision also supports the three priorities of A High Skill Economy, Quality Employment, and Better

Workforce Planning as detailed in the strategy for developing South Australia's workforce, 'Better Skills. Better Work. Better State.'

NEW and EMERGING ISSUES

Mining

Reports from Employment Directions indicate that people are working out of the region in increasing numbers and pursuing jobs in the Mining industry in the North of the state. With the region's high participant rate, high average working age and very low unemployment, further leakages into the Mining Industry will have a substantial impact on the local economy.

It also impacts upon the recruitment of apprentices and trainees, as there is a shortage of people at the qualified level to supervise them, thus restricting the capacity of small businesses to expand. A more recent impact is that qualified trades trainers are also being lured away by large Mining wages, thus compounding the on-going skills shortage.

However on the positive side, the region may be able to capitalise on the "resources boom" and high commodity prices, with increased activity occurring in the exploration of copper and gold leases and the possibility of re-opening the Burra mine. Adchem, a Burra-based company that claims to be the world's largest single facility for production of copper oxide, has the existing infrastructure to support local mining if there is a resurgence. The Network needs to consider the potential impact on the workforce if this does occur.

Intensive Animal Farming Industry (Pigs, Poultry, and Rabbits)

Pig and Poultry companies continue to grow in the region, with expansions to existing businesses in Burra, Rhynie, and Eudunda. However, making employment attractive in these demand industries in times of high

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employment, despite security and career prospects, continues to be a difficulty. Consequently many employers in this industry are forced to privately recruit from overseas or use the Skilled Migration services.

In addition there are several new ventures farming rabbits in the Riverton area, as farmers seek to diversify. The Board also continues to progress discussions about a major development project, the Bower Special Zone, for intensive animal production.

Green Energy industry - Wind Farm Development

The Australian Gas and Light Company (AGL) are investing heavily in wind farm technology in the Mid North region of South Australia. Stage one of the wind farm development has completed with 45 wind turbines constructed and an investment of \$238 million. Stage two is under construction with a further 30 wind turbines and \$200 million being invested.

In March 2008 AGL announced that they had acquired the development rights for the third stage of development and further investment in the region. AGL will then be operating approximately 164 wind turbines by 2010 with a combined capacity of more than 345 megawatts. When operational it is anticipated that enough renewable energy will be produced to power approximately 43,000 average Australian households and avoid up to 265,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions each year. On May 13th 2008 negotiations for a fourth stage of development were announced, for yet a further 63 turbines which will produce 189 megawatts. Together the four wind farms would become the largest privately held renewable generation portfolio in Australia.

As well as channelling valued dollars into local communities, significantly contributing to the Mid North region's economy, and creating over 150 jobs in construction and maintenance, this development plays an important part in meeting the nation's future renewable energy needs.

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry (which includes Viticulture) accounts for 26.9% of employment in the region (Ref: *Mid North Regional Profile 2008, DFEEEST*, p. 7). There have been minor losses in employment in that industry since the 2001 Census, probably due to the continued drought and serious frosts impacting upon both broad-acre farming and viticulture.

More corporatised farming may be established if drought-affected farming families choose to leave the land, resulting in fewer owner-operators and prior owners employed back as managers and workers. There is a need for young people on the land to gain Agri-business skills and the need for off-farm income could tie up with the potential to RPL farmers for skills that could meet gaps in local industries.

Reports from Local Job Networks also indicate that seasonal jobs in viticulture are declining and providing shorter less sustainable periods of employment.

Skilled Migration

With the current workforce nearing capacity it is considered that skilled migration will be considered by more local businesses. The region's Skilled Migration Officer has recently placed people in Agriculture (piggery technical officers and an agronomist), Health (a mental health worker), and trades (a diesel mechanic). Other enquiries from interested employers have been for skilled workers in cabinet making, textiles and dairy industries, and the Skilled Migration Officer anticipates that future placements will occur in Agriculture, Health and trades. The Network needs to keep in close contact with the Skill Migration Officer to determine which occupations are in demand. With some farmers' income affected by drought and youth unemployment high, there may be opportunities to re-skill these people to meet workforce demands.

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Employment trends

Data from the 2006 Census, which is summarised in the Mid North Regional Profile 2008, demonstrates that the Mid North region continues to show lower than State average unemployment rates. Together with a declining number of people of working age and an older population than State average, it is expected that this will lead to potential labour shortages. There is a very low unemployment rate of 2.2% for one Council area in the region and 3.1% for the other, both well below the State rate of 4.1% (Ref: *Small Area Labour Markets Dec 2007, DEEWR*). Some job decreases in agriculture and viticulture have been off-set by jobs growth in mining, government administration, health and community services, and building and construction since the 2000 Census. The high participation rate in the region however masks the very high level of under-employment (71% of 'My Job' clients identify as under-employed) and geographical pockets of deeper unemployment.

Also of concern is the continuing decline in the number of apprenticeship and traineeship sign-ups, which goes against the state trend.

There appears to be an increasing numbers of parents returning to the workforce (23% of 'My Job' clients) as DEEWR's change of policy starts to bite. Timing of training courses for this important labour resource is critical if we wish to engage with them. Also the Network can serve an important role in educating employers about the reality of the available pool of job-seekers and their needs that have to be at least part-way met for work to be attractive. This is particularly true in the large Tourism/Hospitality industry, one of biggest employing industries in the region.

Demographical Trends

Low youth cohort

A modest population growth for the region in recent years is encouraging (an annual average growth of 1%, marginally above the State average),

however the region continues to suffer from a low 15-24 yrs cohort of 10.6% compared to State figures of 13.3%. (Ref: *"Mid North Regional Profile 2008"* DFEEST 2008).

An ACER report released in February 2007 on the results of a longitudinal study tracking 5,000 young people from regional areas around the nation found that more than a third of regional youth will relocate to a major city after leaving school, often because the regional communities are not able to offer further education opportunities, with a net loss of a quarter who never return. (Ref: *"Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY)"*, R Penman, pub ACER 2004.) In this region, the youth drain is believed to be exacerbated by the absence of skills training facilities for traditional trades.

Ageing population

The Workforce Development Directorate's Occasional Paper *'Population Ageing and Workforce Supply'* (p. 1, DFEEST 2008) states that 'South Australia has the oldest population of all States and Territories, and is ageing more rapidly than the nation as a whole'. The Mid North, according to the 2006 Census, has an even older population than the state average, and as the region continues to attract retirees, all of the implications about the consequences of an ageing population can be expected to be exacerbated.

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OBJECTIVES AS DETAILED IN THE 3 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Below are the Objectives of the Mid North Employment and Skills Formation Network and the progress made against each Objective.

OBJECTIVE ONE

A skilled and flexible workforce that will meet and sustain the requirements of the region's key and emerging industries

Progress

- *Financial support to Generation Y Workshop*
- *Mature Aged Forum planned for April 2008*
- *Business Forums linked with Network Meetings*
- *Linking South Australia Works with Small Business Month*
- *Continuation of 'My Job' and Industry Skills Training*
- *Planning Careers Expo for 2008-09*
- *Industry visits linked with projects*
- *Skills training projects developed in Industries relevant to the region – Hospitality and Tourism, Viticulture, Engineering and Health and Community Services, Office Administration.*

OBJECTIVE TWO

Effective partnerships with relevant stakeholders

Progress

- *Guest speakers at Networks*
- *Business Forums linked with Network Meetings*
- *Industry participation on the Network*

- *Industry Engagement for Hospitality Project (Employer Forum)*
- *Industry involvement in MIG Project*
- *Use of consultation groups – Wakefield SPOKE, Winemakers Association*
- *Strong partnerships with TAFE, Employment Directions (Job Network) and Barossa Lower North Futures (Schools)*
- *Established the Skills Centre Action Group*
- *Network involvement within South Australia Works Regional Forum*
- *Involved Network Members in project steering committees*
- *Involved Network Members in business forums and small business month*
- *DEEWR contribution to the Network*

OBJECTIVE THREE

Consultation, research and data incorporated in the development of Mid North ESF activities

Progress

- *Project Evaluation in August 2007*
- *Continuing project evaluations in 2008*
- *Participant information provided by DFEEST*
- *Use of destination surveys (participant feedback) to assist evaluation*
- *Established steering groups for projects*
- *Developing "Vision for Education and Training for the Mid North Region" research project*
- *Use resources within the Workforce Development Directorate, DFEEST, to access up-to-date skills and labour market data*
- *Industry and Skills Boards speakers invited to Network meetings*

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PLAN PROCESS

***South Australia Works in the Regions* Program Principles:**

The following principles taken from The *South Australia Works in the Regions* Project Management Guide provide information and assistance to Grantees and others responsible for the management of *South Australia Works in the Regions* (the Program) in a manner consistent with sound, accountable, legal and justifiable planning practices.

‘Good practice’ principles for *South Australia Works in the Regions*

- Partnerships will be developed at all levels of the program to maximise opportunities and promote the establishment of strategic links to achieve the Program’s objective;
 - The Program will develop close links to the local labour market so that participation leads to sustainable jobs;
 - The Program will use its local links and partnerships to meet an identified need, to target gaps in services, or to add value to existing activities;
 - The Program will place particular emphasis on working with organisations and communities that value and engage the target groups;
- Mechanisms will be developed that promote and enable decision making to be made at the local level;
 - Monitoring mechanisms will be implemented and used as a basis for continuously improving the quality of the program;
 - Program outcomes will contain a mix of employment, academic and vocational education, occupational skills, personal development and on-the-job training

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HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

Community Consultation

On 21 February 2008 the Network held a planning session to identify issues and priorities for 2008/2009.

During the planning session the Network reviewed:

- Strategic Directions from DFEEST, the Mid North Regional Development Board and Barossa Lower North Futures
- The updated Mid North Regional Profile
- Job Network issues and trends
- Skilled Migration trends
- *South Australia Works* participant profiles and feedback
- Skills provided through *South Australia Works* between 2006 and 2008.

The Network also workshopped the issues arising from the review to determine how *South Australia Works* is meeting regional employment and training needs and identify any gaps in services.

The TAFESA Regional Council also held a community consultation on 14 February 2008. Although this consultation was not specific to *South Australia Works*, general training and employment issues were raised and have been used to inform the 2008/09 Action Plan.

A 2007-08 research project (Skills Training Centre Strategy Paper 'A Vision for Education and Training in the Mid North') is currently underway to determine the needs for future education and training infrastructure in the region and to develop a strategic plan to move forward. The consultant is

conducting workshops with business people, business associations and service providers throughout the region, and while the strategic plan has not yet been developed, some of the research data is useful for our planning processes.

Data Analysis

The Workforce Development Unit released updated Regional Profiles in February 2008. The updated profiles include 2006 Census data and included new employment, training and economic data. This data has been presented to the Network and closely analysed by the Network and the Executive Committee. Key data from the Regional Profile has been used to guide activities and projects identified throughout the 2008/09 Action Plan.

Data was also sourced from DFEEST's Workforce Information Service website reports (for example the Occasional Paper 'Population Ageing and Workforce Supply'), and from the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations' 'Small Area Labour Markets Australia' reports.

In August 2007 the Network established a Project Evaluation Team to review industry training projects and the Network's Engagement and Pre-Employment Support Program (My Job). The evaluation listed six recommendations to improve efficiency, appropriateness and effectiveness of project activities. These recommendations have been used to inform the type and structure of projects identified in the Plan.

The Food, Tourism and Hospitality Industry Skills Advisory Council was invited to provide information to the Network about the recently completed South Australian Wine Industry Employment Strategy project.

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Furthermore Project Steering Committees have been established for each project, and these Committees are continually monitoring and evaluating activities to inform future activities.

Strategic Plans review

The strategic directions of both the Mid North Regional Development Board and Barossa Lower North Futures tie in very closely with the aims of the *South Australia Works* program.

The economic development vision for the Mid North Region is to build an economy which is:

- Sustainable
- Diverse
- Appropriate
- Providing a range of employment opportunities
- Lifting the profile of the region
- Growing
- Nationally competitive
- Increasing and positively growing what we currently have (services, population).

Goals:

The five key goals which support the vision are:

1. Pursue, attract and facilitate appropriate, sustainable and diverse economic development
2. Improve competitiveness and sustainability of business
3. Foster inclusive access to employment and skills development programs that match employment opportunities in the Region's key industries
4. Increase the sustainable capacity, relevance and profile of the Board
5. Continually influence Local, State and Federal Government on the region's needs and opportunities.

Barossa Lower North Futures, a major partner in our region for the *South Australia Works* program, has the vision to be 'recognised within our LCP region as a leading organisation for facilitating the transition of young people aged 13- 19 from school to further education, training or employment.'

DFEEST Participant Data

The Project & Reporting Officer from Employment Programs, DFEEST, presented a summary of data about past participants to help inform the Network about the profile of clients being serviced, most of which tended to confirm the Network's beliefs.

Some key points of interest included:

- Further education outcomes were increasing
- Employment outcomes matched to our key industries, the largest being Agriculture/Viticulture and Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants
- 58% of participants had levels of education of Year 11 or less
- Approximately one third of participants stated they were casually-employed commencement (i.e. identified as under-employed)
- Pre-employment skills continued to be a need for many after exiting.

Time Frame for Planning Process

The time-frame for the planning process is as follows:

21st February – planning workshop

8th April – circulate draft Plan to Network

17th April – endorse draft Plan at Network meeting

24th April – endorse draft Plan at Mid North RDB Board meeting

1st May – draft Plan to Employment Programs, DFEEST

19th May – feedback from DFEEST

22nd May – endorse any amendments at RDB Executive meeting

9th June – final Plan to DFEEST.

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HOW THIS PLAN WILL BE IMPLEMENTED (INCLUDING PROCUREMENT PROCESS)

The Mid North Regional Development Board (Board) will implement the 2008/09 Action Plan on behalf of the Network. The Board has appointed an Employment and Training Officer who will work closely with the *South Australia Works* Regional Coordinator to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate *South Australia Works* activities.

Activities identified in the 2008/09 Action Plan will be tendered where possible. However as there are a limited number of providers in the region, many projects will be negotiated with local providers.

The Network has a strong working relationship with TAFESA Regional. Most industry training activities will partner TAFESA with funds being leveraged through FSI 500 training hours. This will allow the Network to develop quality training programs and maximise *South Australia Works* funding.

All activities will have a formal application process and will be assessed by the Network's Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consists of:

- Chair, Mid North Employment and Skills Formation Network
- Chief Executive Officer, Mid North Regional Development Board
- Employment and Training Officer, Mid North Regional Development Board
- South Australia Works Regional Coordinator, DFEEST
- Senior Project Officer, DFEEST
- Finance Manager, Mid North Regional Development Board.

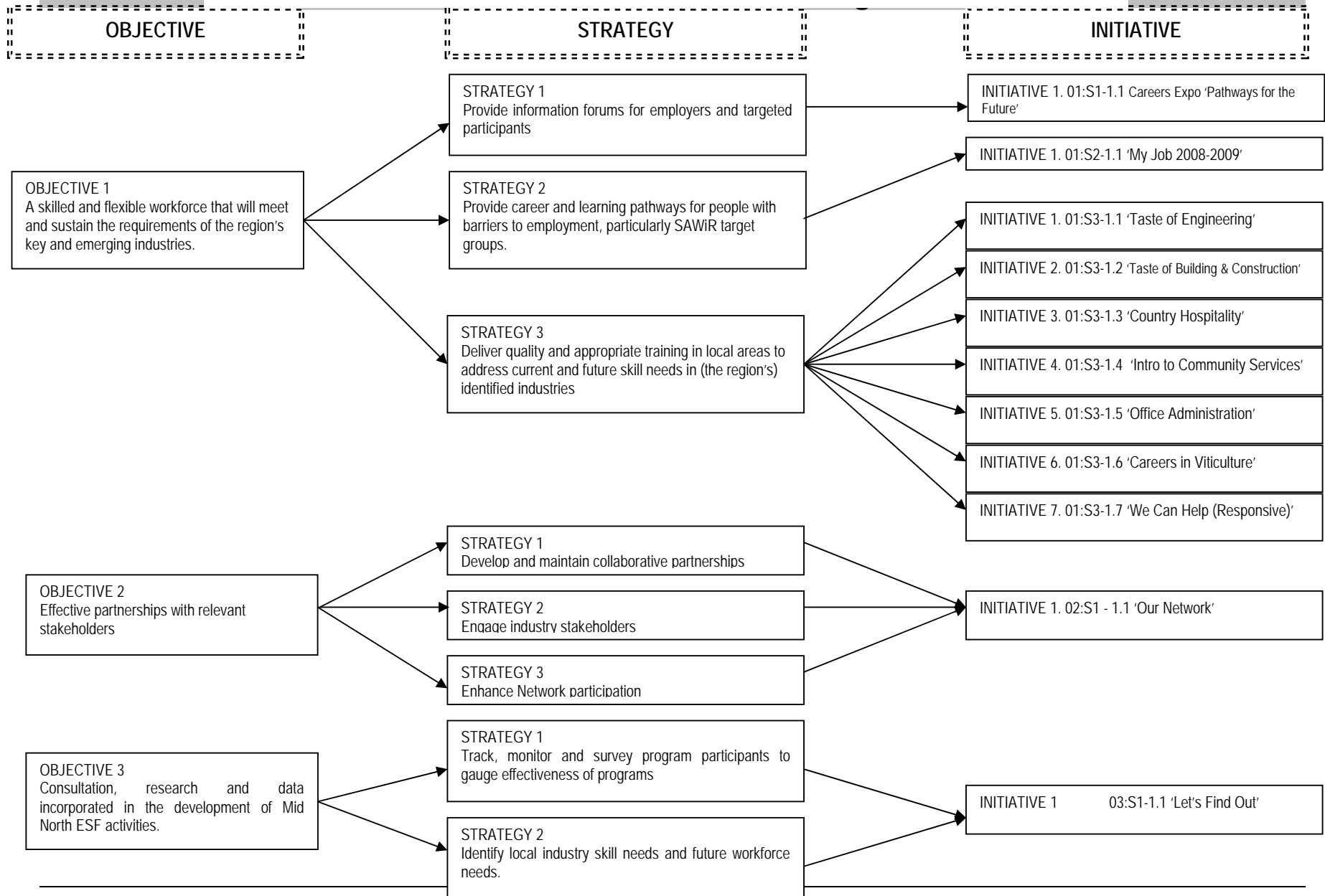
In December 2007 the Network reviewed and updated the Mid North *South Australia Works in the Regions* Implementation Plan, which details the

process for rolling out the *South Australia Works* program and the roles of people and organisation involved in the program. (See Implementation flowchart Appendix 3)

All major projects will have a Project Steering Committee which will include the project provider, Mid North Regional Development Board, DFEEST and a Job Network representative. The Project Steering Committee will meet monthly to assist with the monitoring, implementation and evaluation of projects.

Projects will also be formally evaluated by a Project Evaluation Team. In 2006/07 the Project Evaluation Team evaluated three projects – 'My Job', 'Training Ticket' and the MIG Program. The evaluation was successful in identifying internal and external improvements and allowed the Network to determine the success of each project.

MID NORTH REGION 2008-09 EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS FORMATION PLAN



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OBJECTIVE 1

A skilled and flexible workforce that will meet and sustain the requirements of the region's key and emerging industries

Strategy 1

Provide information forums for employers and targeted participants

Strategy 2

Provide career and learning pathways for people with barriers to employment, particularly *South Australia Works in the Regions* target groups

Strategy 3

Deliver quality and appropriate training in local areas to address current and future skill needs in the following identified industries:

- Health and Community Services
- Tourism/Hospitality/Retail
- Office/IT
- Trades
- Agriculture
- Viticulture/winemaking

Rationale for the Objective and Strategies

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations reported that in the June 2007 quarter the Mid North region had an unemployment rate of 2.4% (considerably below the State Average of 5.0%). *DFEEST Mid North Regional Profile 2008*.

The Mid North region's major industry is Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing which employs 27.3 per cent of the all jobs. *DFEEST Mid North Regional*

Profile 2008. Currently the industry is facing some issues with drought; and employment has declined slightly between 2001 and 2006, however it is important that workers are supported, shown sustainable career pathways in the industry, and up-skilled so incomes are not affected. Expansion of existing wineries and new winery development in the region continues despite the drought. The Network and the Regional Coordinator can play a role in continuing the dialogue between seasonal employers in agriculture and viticulture to develop strategies to streamline cross-industry employment opportunities.

Employment in Health and Community Services increased by 30.4 per cent (165 jobs) between 2001 and 2006 and it is envisaged that this trend will continue as the region's population continues to age. *DFEEST Mid North Regional Profile 2008*. There is a state-wide demand for skilled Childcare workers, enrolled nurses, aged care workers and registered nurses which also impacts the Mid North region. *DEEWR, Skills in Demand List - South Australia*. A new Childcare centre is commencing construction in Clare, with an expected demand for skilled staff.

With the Mid North being a popular place for tourists the region's Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants provide excellent employment opportunities, especially for young people and people returning to the workforce. However lack of child care available at flexible hours has been cited as a major barrier for filling this demand. The new childcare centre mentioned may help to alleviate the problem.

Like most of South Australia there has been significant growth in Building and Construction in the Mid North region. Between 2001 and 2006 jobs grew by 24.6 per cent (71 jobs) and there is potential for further growth in the future. There are two retirement villages of significant size either commenced or in the planning stages of construction in Clare. There are

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also a number of housing development sub-divisions occurring around the environs of Riverton and Clare, and possibly Eudunda.

Proposed Initiatives

'Pathways for the Future' – Careers Expo

There is strong evidence of young people leaving the region to pursue employment or further education. The youth cohort (15-24 years) is one of the lowest in the State, with 10.6% of the population compared to the State's 13.3%. The region's youth drain further impacts on the skilled labour shortage. The Network considers a Careers Expo is a key strategy to address these issues and provide all job-seekers with information about sustainable career pathways. It would expose them to a wider variety of careers and employment than those in existence in the region, and allows job-seekers to speak directly with employers and gain a clear understanding about pathways into a variety of industries.

'My Job 2008-09'

The 'My Job' project is the cornerstone of the pathways model introduced in the 2006-07 program, which engages, assesses and prepares job seekers for employment by providing case management, training and support. 'My Job' case managers work closely with job seekers to develop a personalised action plan, and link them with appropriate training and employment opportunities.

The past two years of case management have demonstrated that this project attracts a significant proportion of people who self-identify as under-employed, due to the high levels of seasonal and casualised employment in this region. Therefore this project includes a number of people classified as 'Upskilling'.

Over the last two years 'My Job' has been the Network's leading employment program, assisting 292 participants and achieving 128 employment outcomes (as of April 8th 2008). During 2006/07 the program was formally evaluated by the Network with recommendations incorporated to further improve service delivery.

'Taste of Engineering' (MIG) Project

The MIG project provides industry skills in Engineering, Automotive and Electrical. The project will be in partnership with TAFESA and Barossa Lower North Futures and will target school leavers and young people disengaged for learning and work.

'Taste of Building & Construction'

The Network is proposing to extend the provision of trades-based training by piloting an introductory course in Building and Construction skills. This will fill a gap in our provision and help to meet the needs of a growing demand.

'Country Hospitality'

The growing demand for this course over Stage 1 in 2006-07 and Stage 2 in 2007-08 demonstrates the fit with our past outcomes in this sector and the robustness of the industry in a major tourism region. The expectation is that there will be a continued demand for this training every year.

'Introduction to Community Services'

'Introduction to Health and Community Services' has proved highly successful over the past 2 years and provides a platform for people to enter the Industry. The program provides preliminary common units to allow participants to identify the industry sector they prefer to enter (Aged Care, Child Care, Disability Work, Community Work or possibly Allied Health). When completing the program participants are encouraged to complete their full Certificate III in their chosen sector (funding leveraged through the

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Commonwealth Government). Completing the full Certificate III provides excellent opportunities for more sustainable employment.

'Office Administration'

This is a roll-over of the pilot course introduced in 2007-08. Generous partnering from TAFESA-Regional enabled us to provide a very cost-effective course, which provides a set of skills most useful for people wishing to apply for jobs in business administration.

'Careers in Viticulture'

The Clare Valley is a region that traditionally uses hand rather than machine pruning in the viticulture industry. This on-the-job training has been conducted every year for many years to meet the seasonal demand for skilled pruners. In 2007-08 the course was expanded to include more information about career pathways in the industry, as well as OHS&W and tool maintenance. The training will be repeated in 2008-09.

'We Can Help'

This project sets aside a small amount of SAWIR funds to be used responsively on a needs basis. New businesses may move into the region creating employment opportunities and training requirements that need to be met in a responsive manner. The project focuses on working with employers to train individuals with skills required to enable them to be employed in specific vacancies. Requests from drought-affected farmers seeking support for off-farm income can also gain assistance through this program. The funds enable us to respond positively to requests for assistance in setting up short training courses that are not catered for within the Plan. Thus the project is a responsive initiative that will provide some assistance with up-skilling as well as un-predicted short training courses.

It is envisaged this project will be managed by the MNRDB, due to its contacts with local business and new enterprises in the region.

Initiative Targets are attached as Appendix 1.

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OBJECTIVE 2

Effective partnerships with relevant stakeholders

STRATEGY 1

Develop and maintain collaborative partnerships

STRATEGY 2

Engage industry stakeholders

STRATEGY 3

Enhance Network participation

Rationale for the Objective and Strategies

To ensure that job seekers have the most effective service through *South Australia Works*, the Network will continue to build and strengthen partnerships with Industry, service providers and the community.

It is particularly important that we continue to strengthen the working relationship with TAFESA and the Job Network. Both of these organisations are critical in assisting with employment and training outcomes and are able to provide additional funding to activities identified through the 2008/09 Action Plan.

The Network will also continue to look for opportunities to work with DFEEST on other South Australia Works program. In 2006/07 the Network coordinated the Employment 40+ Forum. This forum complemented work done through the Network and allowed additional services to be provided to the region's mature job seekers.

With Youth Employment a major state-wide issue, Barossa Lower North Futures will become an increasingly important partner for the Network.

Proposed Initiatives

'Our Network'

An important part of the success of training and employment activities in the region is the engagement of the community and the formation of strategic partnerships.

Successfully implementing the strategies outlined will meet the aims of Objective 2. Effective Partnerships with relevant stakeholders will ensure the Mid North continues to prosper and grow, achieves a coordinated approach to addressing training and employment needs and strengthens the capacity of the region to meet labour market demands.

As the mechanism shaped by a high level of stakeholder and community input, the Network's focus remains on the greater socio economic needs of the region and the target groups within it, and strengthens the capacity of local communities to determine and respond to learning and work needs.

The Mid North ESF Network oversees the Employment and Skills Formation Plan, and plays a major part in identifying issues of most concern to the region to realign training and employment programs and resources to target groups within the community experiencing disadvantage in the labour market (Mid North Regional Development Board Strategic Plan 2005-2008).

Effective community and industry engagement is critical to the success of South Australia Works in the Regions. This engagement is underpinned by involvement which is voluntary. It leads to local control and inclusion, and

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builds a culture of problem solving and ownership which builds social capital within the region.

Community and industry engagement benefits and improves the program. It ensures that local information and communication channels are broad and inclusive; it provides for the gathering of local intelligence which forms part of program planning; and it leads to empowerment and inclusion of members.

Wherever possible partnerships with other State and Federal programs will be forged, to leverage SAWIR funds for best outcomes eg. TAFESA, Job Network Providers, Employment 40+, ACE, Career Advice Australia, Group Training Organisations and the Sturt Area Consultative Committee.

Active participation in Network activities, particularly by industry representatives, is difficult for people whose core business does not include employment and training. We will continue to employ strategies to make ESF activities more engaging for local small business owners.

We propose to provide:

- Web page on RDB website maintenance
- Support SAWIR Graduation Ceremonies
- Functions and forums to engage with employers
- Marketing SAWIR
- Organisation of meetings
- Administration.

Initiative Targets are attached as Appendix 1.

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OBJECTIVE 3

Consultation, research and data incorporated in the development of Mid North ESF activities

STRATEGY 1

Track, monitor and survey program participants to gauge effectiveness of programs

STRATEGY 2

Identify local industry skill needs and future workforce needs

Rationale for the Objective and Strategies

Having up-to-date and accurate local intelligence is an important function of the Network.

The region is experiencing high jobs growth in Building and Construction, Transport and Storage and Mining and accurate intelligence is required to provide job seekers the best opportunity to fill vacancies in these industries.

In 2006 a Steering Committee (the Skills Centre Action Group) representing TAFE, schools, BLNF, the Network and the MNRDB, was formed to explore infrastructure needs for the delivery of skills-based training in the region and potential partnerships. To further these goals, in 2007/08 the Network commissioned the Verve Group to develop a vision for education and training for the Mid North Region, and extensive community consultation and research data from that project will become available to the Network for actioning.

Proposed Initiatives

'Let's Find Out'

This project will allow the Network to examine and action the recommendations from the vision strategic plan as mentioned above. Further consultation with industry on specific recommendations may be required through forums, telephone and mail surveys, particularly for sectors that do not have local industry associations to liaise with, such as builders and carpenters.

In addition, it would be advantageous to seek intelligence about specific groups that are not covered by the Regional Profile or Job Network statistics, but which are integral to our planning, for example, about the significant proportion of the under-employed in our region.

Initiative Targets are attached as Appendix 1.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<i>Accredited Training</i>	Training unit competency that forms part of a national training package
<i>Barossa Lower North Futures (BLNF)</i>	Local Community Partnership funded through the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Service to assist young people transition into work.
<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

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Participant

- (i) High Level Participant Outcome
Jobseekers out of work, out of training, out of school and engaged in training, job search, a case management project or some similar activity. Also applicable in upskilling underemployed people and backfilling upskilled positions
- (i) Low Level Participant Outcome
Persons attending activities in the nature of career expos, workshops, or conferences for the purpose of career planning / preparation or participants in research projects or surveys

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

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

Volunteering Outcome

Where following completion of South Australia Works in the regions activity, the participant moves into volunteering

FSI 500 Hours

Fund Source Indicator 500 – Subsidised training hours provided through TAFE