

Tairāwhiti Regional Workforce Plan



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Co-Chair Introduction

Toitū Tairāwhiti!

*Tama tū, tama ora; tama noho, tama mate kai.
(The industrious will thrive while the idle die in need)*

The Tairāwhiti has some huge workforce challenges and opportunities. In 2021, workforce plans were completed for the Horticulture, Tourism, Civil Construction, Transport & Logistics, and the Forestry sectors. We are now focussed on executing actions across those sectors in partnership with industry, business, employees and the broader talent pool.

This Regional Workforce Plan looks at the Vertical Construction, Digital-Technology, and Manufacturing sectors. It is our next step towards growing a skilled workforce that is directly relevant to local industry and employment opportunities. We have talked to people right across our region – kaimahi, employers, whānau – and hope that their voices are reflected in this document.

The CARE-RSLG is fully supported by the regional leadership, Rau Tipu Rau Ora, and has working relationships with all other regional groups focussed on delivering regional priorities. As we progress this work we look forward to a positive and productive working relationship with all of our regional stakeholders.



Gavin Murphy

*Tairāwhiti CARE Regional Skills Leadership
Group Chair*



Ko Tūranga-a-Mua Ko Tūranga Ararau Ko Tūranga Makaurau Ko Tūranga Tangata-rite Ko Tūranganui-a-Kiwa

This whakataukī speaks to the nature of our region, one that has a deep history (Tūranga a Mua), and whakapapa that is still reflected today in our diverse backgrounds (Tūranga Ararau), the highly prized natural resources that underpin our economy (Tūranga Makaurau), and most importantly the notion of seeking parity (Tūranga Tangata-rite) amongst our peers. We have an obligation to all these aspects in our identity as Tūranga, and our hope being that we can create parity of opportunity for our people to thrive in all aspects that make up our region.

Executive Summary

This Regional Workforce Plan (RWP) is about people. Tairāwhiti should be a place that provides opportunities for our people to get the skills and knowledge they need to have rewarding careers. A place where communities will benefit more by having opportunities to say what a quality job means to them.

This plan builds on the foundation set by ‘*Tini ngā hua maha ngā huarahi*’, Creating Pathways, Workforce Development Plan 2021, by setting out an approach to working in Tairāwhiti in the 21st Century. This is an approach that promotes wellbeing, equity, and better living standards for people as the platform for a new type of prosperity; where people living in Tairāwhiti have aspirations for the coming generations that are truly possible.

By looking at work and business through the lens of kaimahi, employers, and whānau we can put forward some ideals that we can aspire to, in that:

- **Kaimahi know what their job opportunities are and can easily acquire the right skills to realise those opportunities**
- **Employers are confident about their future because the people that work with them have the right skills to grow their business**
- **Whānau value the jobs and businesses in their community for what they do for households, and for the wellbeing of Tairāwhiti**

To better understand the needs of our region, we will continue to engage with our kaimahi, employers, and whānau to ensure that our actions and recommendations reflect those of our people.

¹‘Tini ngā hua maha ngā huarahi’ Workforce Development Plan (truststairawhiti.nz)

Action Plan

Tairāwhiti must exercise greater ownership when it comes to growing skills and capabilities in-region. On behalf of our communities, it is CARE-RSLG's responsibility to advocate for the skills, training, and qualifications the region needs from appropriate funding agencies. To support the delivery of this Regional Workforce Plan (RWP), CARE-RSLG will:

1. Work with local tertiary providers to map the current training provision for the East Coast to better understand the geographical coverage of training opportunities, with a specific focus on the key priority sectors.
2. Work with local STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) related businesses in Tairāwhiti to establish a STEM scholarship to support local rangatahi to undertake STEM tertiary study and return to the region to work in the industry.
3. Engage local schools, training providers and industry to create a student-centred trades career pathway model within the construction sector that includes a focus on architecture, engineering, and other construction-related occupations.
4. Increase in-region training provision in advanced manufacturing by working with local tertiary education providers and advanced manufacturing businesses to develop (or tailor) an advanced manufacturing qualification in line with the Advanced Manufacturing Industry Transformation Plan.
5. Work with training providers and industry to scope in-work training provision in numeracy and literacy.
6. Work with industry and key stakeholders to determine the future tech needs across the key priority sectors to enable businesses and workers to respond to a rapidly changing world of work.
7. Work with key stakeholders to develop a portal for capturing local workforce data.
8. Work with local employers and other stakeholders to build more effective and sustainable pastoral care approaches.

Regional Alignment

The Commitment, Action and Reciprocity resulting in Employment (CARE) Forum was established in 2019 as the regional forum for overseeing workforce capacity and capability development.

Trust Tairāwhiti, on behalf of the CARE Forum, produced 'Tini ngā hua maha ngā huarahi', Creating Pathways, Workforce Development Plan 2021. This plan focussed on the forestry, horticulture, tourism, civil construction, and transport and logistics sectors.

The Workforce Development Plan demonstrated Tairāwhiti's strength in assessing the number of workers needed across those sectors. During that assessment they identified possible causes of the 'supply problem', by analysing each sector through four lenses: talent, skills, training, and career development.

Key priority actions from this plan have now been identified and prioritised for implementation² in the short to medium term (appendix one provides a list of the key actions from Tini ngā hua maha ngā huarahi).

In August 2021, CARE was designated as the Regional Skills Leadership Group (RSLG) for Tairāwhiti. RSLGs are focused on identifying better ways of meeting future skills needs in the region. CARE and RSLG have partnered to deliver a programme that will build the Tairāwhiti workforce by supporting improved education and training opportunities, and identifying and filling quality, well-paid employment options now and in the future.

The CARE-RSLG is part of the Rau Tipu Rau Ora³ regional infrastructure, established to promote and deliver regional priorities:

- **Our future Vision and Focus:** Tairāwhiti households, whānau, commerce, essential services and communities stand strong together in the face of the immediate, medium and long-term impacts of the Global Pandemic, COVID-19.
- **Workforce Focus areas:** To improve our economic recovery and ensure our households and whānau have greater resilience against future shocks, we boost the opportunities for local training, qualifications and jobs.
- **Workforce Goals:** Tairāwhiti people have the skills and capabilities to secure and maintain employment, create or adapt to new opportunities, and be confident in responding to a new outbreak or emergency.

²Trust Tairāwhiti is leading the implementation of the Workforce Development Plan 2021

³Rau Tipu Rau Ora was established in 2020 in response to COVID-19.

Regional Workforce Plan Focus Areas



To successfully build on the Rau Tipu Rau Ora aspirations and Tini ngā hua maha ngā huarahi, CARE-RSLG has selected the following areas of focus to be covered within this plan:

- Vertical Construction Sector
- Digital & Technology Sector
- Manufacturing Sector

In addition to these areas of focus, CARE-RSLG have also highlighted the need to support rangatahi and to support the resilience of our region. Tairāwhiti has one of the most 'youthful' populations in Aotearoa. CARE-RSLG will work with rangatahi to create opportunities for better work outcomes. We believe this will make an intergenerational difference, especially for those who are not in Education, Employment or Training. Making this a reality means addressing challenges that rangatahi have in engaging in employment and training.

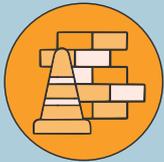
Our regional engagement has shown that rangatahi face many complicated issues that act as barriers to employment. Some rangatahi are leaving school as early as 11, often due to complications at home, such as overcrowding, financial pressures, and having to take on caring responsibilities within the home. Businesses have also commented that they understand the need to provide more pastoral care for rangatahi, but don't have the time or the resource to do this in-house.

Tairāwhiti rangatahi need Tairāwhiti training; this means young people acquire skills about work, life and themselves. Young people who are confident about their identity and their ability to navigate 'life in Tairāwhiti' are more likely to find work rewarding.

This plan showcases some examples from within Tairāwhiti, where employers have adapted practices to focus on the needs of their kaimahi, and the positive benefits this has created for individuals and whānau.

We have been resilient in the face of COVID-19. However, there is a need for Tairāwhiti to prepare for upcoming megatrends⁴ that will shape the future of work. Continuing to plan for these and any other disruptions will be important for kaimahi, employers and whānau.

⁴Technology change, demographic change, globalisation and climate change



Hanga arorangi Vertical construction

The Vertical Construction Sector⁵ is important to Tairāwhiti, due to the number of people employed, and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contributions. The number of jobs in the construction sector is projected to increase slightly over the next 15 years⁶.

Fundamentally we know that a whare helps whānau grow their aspirations and their skills. With the current housing crisis, many whānau aren't getting the same opportunities. Accordingly, Tairāwhiti is focussed on building more houses which is generating a huge amount of activity for the region.

It is likely that the burden of completion targets has created flow-on pressure to employers who were already struggling with low staffing levels. Whilst there is a desire to promote skill development opportunities such as improving the numeracy and literacy levels of some kaimahi, the short-term supply problem has been more pressing for many businesses.

Wage rates are important to kaimahi, and with many of the smaller building companies unable to compete with larger firms in this space,

smaller companies are focusing on becoming employers of choice instead. Employers have told us that to better support our rangatahi coming into employment, we need new workplace practices that focus on developing 'people not just workers'. We need workplaces that engage kaimahi in a variety of construction tasks early on so they can acquire multiple skillsets in many areas and be more productive.

To future-proof the sustained resilience of our Vertical Construction sector, it is essential to engage with rangatahi as early as possible, and strengthen the connection between schools, training providers, and industry that wrap around them. A future workforce can be secured by exposure to trades training opportunities that sparks rangatahi interest in embarking upon their career pathway.

A vital piece of the puzzle is to ensure that kaimahi, and especially rangatahi have access to appropriate pastoral support to give them every chance of succeeding.

⁵Vertical construction includes commercial and residential building.
⁶Infometrics – Regional Employment projections.

Hangarau matihiko Digital and technology

Digital and Technology is not a stand-alone sector but rather a mixture of skills and professions across a variety of sectors.

Digital literacy and capability are required across all sectors, by all kaimahi. The speed at which technological advancements are impacting work is being felt across Tairāwhiti as it enables productivity and sustainability gains.

Tairāwhiti has an opportunity to develop its own pool of home-grown digitally capable talent. There is a need to work with local schools, employers and industry to ensure our people have the necessary skills in place to meet the digital capability requirements of any given job.

There are training initiatives in the Digital and Technology sector in Tairāwhiti, although the ability for employers to make use of these for their kaimahi varies. Currently there is a small number of kaimahi in this field, but a greater understanding of the demand is required to ensure the region has the resource to be able to train its own people.

Training providers such as Dev Academy⁷, produce graduates with skills in the field, however with little connection to Tairāwhiti industry, many graduates do not move seamlessly into employment. Although there is work in progress to set up a space that makes direct connections between students and employers, more work needs to be done in this area, including ensuring stakeholder support for job placements.

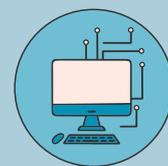
Te ahu mahi Manufacturing

The manufacturing sector is a large employer in Tairāwhiti, employing approximately 2,000 workers⁸. Most of these jobs are working with food, polymer and wood products, machinery and equipment, rubber, and printing.

Manufacturing methods are innovating at a faster rate and this needs to be served by innovative training methods. Businesses are very aware of the need to develop a skilled workforce to keep up with the pace. The first step is making bespoke qualifications accessible for people moving into manufacturing. Another step is bringing schools, training providers, marae and communities closer to manufacturing workplaces allowing people to see what a career in the sector looks like.

Businesses have highlighted the ongoing need for comprehensive pastoral care provision to support entry-level kaimahi. The pastoral care element is difficult for businesses as they do not have the expertise or resource to adequately provide this to all new entrants.

Businesses have also commented that many kaimahi are entering the workforce with very low numeracy and literacy levels. Employers are dropping their minimum requirements; however this has adverse flow-on effects for job retention and the uptake of future training opportunities. A better baseline standard for kaimahi to have access to numeracy and literacy development is desirable.



⁷<https://devacademy.co.nz>

⁸Infometrics – Regional Economic Profile, 2021.



Case studies

Despite the existing demands on our workforce and challenges for our people, there is some excellent work already happening right across Tairāwhiti. Organisations from around our region have redefined success as investing in people and creating prosperous outcomes for kaimahi. This, in turn, creates better outcomes for our wider communities.

There is a lot more that can be done to create access to skills and training opportunities for our smaller, rural populations. However, numerous organisations have worked to create pathways for their kaimahi within the current system. They have achieved this by employing locally, providing pastoral support, promoting personal and professional development, leveraging off existing opportunities, and upskilling wherever possible.

The organisations spotlighted within the following case studies have experienced success because of their 'people first' mentalities. They have created a blueprint for what is possible and have illuminated the path to progress and prosperity going forward.

Ehara taku maunga i te maunga haere, he maunga tū tonu.

This statement represents the fact that Tairāwhiti has a long, proud history of maintaining their own rangatiratanga. This is as important today as it was 170 years ago and is reflected in the fact that whānau living on the Coast want to live, train and work in their rohe. Having to unnecessarily travel for training undermines their aspirations and ability to be self-determining when it comes to work.



Te Rimu Trust

Upskilling and finding work locally in small rural communities can be challenging. Te Rimu Trust, who own and manage 240 hectares of land in Te Araroa, has proudly been able to employ three local kaimahi. The business activities of the Trust are varied, ranging from beef grazing and establishing a lime orchard to mānuka production and river shingle extraction for road purposes.

Currently, the kaimahi are enjoying learning new skills while working in the lime orchard. They speak with great pride about being able to live locally and work on their whenua, noting that it has shown them what can be achieved on whānau land in the future.

Te Rimu Trust's kaimahi acknowledge that getting access to further training and upskilling opportunities in a rural location would be challenging. Since learning in their own environment is so important to them, they are hesitant to move away from whānau or regularly travel to bigger centres for training.

Having more accessible upskilling and training opportunities would be especially helpful as the Trust considers its next project⁹ – planting 92 hectares of native trees and setting up a nursery over a three-year period. This project will require at least four additional kaimahi by the end of July 2022. For the Trust, having the ability to do training on the coast and provide local people with the skills they need for the jobs available to them would be a game changer.

⁹Supported by MPI 1BT programme





Tairāwhiti Contractors



Being a supportive employer 'on the coast' is hugely important to Tairāwhiti Contractors. This Ruatōria based roading company takes pride in the fact that all their workforce is drawn from north of Tolaga Bay. In early 2022, Tairāwhiti Contractors supported Blackbee Contractors to become the first non-tier one business in Tairāwhiti to be awarded a significant roading maintenance contract. Tairāwhiti Contractors attributes a key part of this recent success to being devoted to staying local. They have achieved this through keeping their business connected to rural East Coast and employing locals who are invested in these communities.

Tairāwhiti Contractors is committed to creating training opportunities for their workforce,

whether they are starting with no formal qualifications or are wanting to upskill. While contributing to the growth of their workers is hugely rewarding, it is often hard to achieve in a rural setting. This is due to barriers in access to transport and information. Having mobile and agile training providers is necessary for their workers.

As an example of a successful small rural business, Tairāwhiti Contractors would love for other businesses in similar situations to have the capability built around them so that they can flourish too. Good employers who invest in their workers create better, more prosperous outcomes for all local people.



Tūranga Ararau



Forestry is a significant contributor and employer in Tairāwhiti. Tūranga Ararau, as the Iwi Tertiary Education provider of Te Rūnanga o Tūrangānui ā Kiwa, wants to enable more local people to progress into managerial or supervisory roles in the forestry sector. To achieve this, Tūranga Ararau have designed a diploma level course (Whakatiputanga Ngahere) to be delivered in Tairāwhiti. Currently, they are awaiting NZQA approval to deliver this programme in 2022.

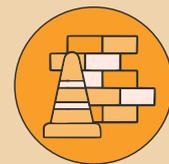
The Whakatiputanga Ngahere course being delivered in Tairāwhiti would be hugely impactful. Historically, locals wanting to complete the diploma level course have needed to relocate to Rotorua to attend Toi Ohomai.

This has reduced the number of prospective students doing the training, as many have been reluctant to relocate; this requires moving away from whānau, stable living environments and, in some cases, employment. For example, in 2021 there were 11 interested prospective students, but only one enrolled in the Rotorua based course.

Approximately 80 percent of forestry workers in Tairāwhiti identify as Māori. The majority of these workers are in entry level roles. Having the Whakatiputanga Ngahere course available in Tairāwhiti will give local people the opportunity to progress into high paying jobs in forestry such as forest managers, advisors, technicians and researchers.



Te Pae Hākari



Living out their kaupapa of 'creating opportunities for others', Te Pae Hākari is committed to developing the individuals in their workforce. This new Tairāwhiti-based construction company has been operating for one year and is already experiencing success. They attribute much of their success to date to valuing their staff and adapting to new workforce demands.

Te Pae Hākari has taken a non-traditional approach to growing their five apprentices. For these apprentices progress is quickly accelerated through hands-on experience across a diverse range of jobs as early as possible. Complementing this is strong pastoral support through individualised kaupapa based personal development plans. These plans

include goals such as homeownership and taking on upskilling opportunities. Personal and professional development is greatly valued within Te Pae Hākari, because they believe a stronger workforce equals a stronger business.

Looking towards the future, Te Pae Hākari are working with kura Māori in Tairāwhiti to establish a new, more accessible pathway into the building sector for rangatahi. In the face of existing workforce pressures for the industry, they see immense value in enabling Māori and Pasifika to train to become the region's future builders, architects, planners, surveyors and engineers. This links back to their kaupapa of 'creating opportunities for others', as this creates prosperity not only for their own business, but also the wider community.



Key Priority Actions

The following actions, set out the work currently underway to implement the recommendations made in the 'Tini ngā hua maha ngā huarahi' Creating Pathways, Workforce Development Plan 2021. This plan was written on behalf of the CARE forum by Trust Tairāwhiti.

1. Increase in-region wood processing capacity
2. Introduce an advanced manufacturing qualification pathway
3. Support the implementation of the Tairāwhiti Growers Association
4. Operationalise a horticulture seasonal work calendar
5. Engage Marae to develop location based horticulture programmes
6. Development of a transport & logistics 'training hub'
7. Increase training provision in the tourism sector
8. Understand the impact of Covid-19 on the hospitality sector
9. Build a tourism skills programme
10. Understand the impact of Covid-19 on the event sector
11. Increase exposure to the civil construction sector for school leavers
12. Increase collaboration across the civil construction sector
13. Regular workforce requirement forecasting (all 5 sectors)

A man with dark curly hair is holding a professional black video camera with a large lens and various attachments. He is looking through the viewfinder. The background is a solid green color.

Disclaimer

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For more information on the Tairāwhiti CARE - Regional Skills leadership Group, and to keep up to date on our mahi, please visit: mbie.govt.nz/tairāwhiti-rslg

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