

TOP REGIONAL IMPACTS



- **The Ministry of Social Development has been heavily involved with its response to the heightened COVID-19 alert levels.** Employment remained a focus to ensure that industry and employers had the support and information required, including for the recruitment of essential workers. The provision of food to whanau was an imperative, and working with partners has been crucial to maximise the opportunities to support those who need food. Housing issues are also an ongoing priority, especially with rough sleepers trying to get shelter and access to food or other services.
- **Affco, Silver Fern Farms and Tumu Timbers now have drug testing by swabs as opposed to urine testing.** This has made a positive difference to their workforce numbers, as it is preferable for staff. Some large employers are also offering other on-site health services which staff appreciate as it has made access easier.
- **Understanding what initiatives and actions are already underway in the region is key to defining the future of our labour market.** Once these gaps are understood it will be clear where the RSLG can either complement existing initiatives or fill gaps in order to develop the skills required in the region.
- **Leadership potential needs to be more fully implemented at the middle management level within the region's workforce.** This is a key gap, and has been identified as a barrier to the development of the wider staff workforce.

TRENDS AT A GLANCE



There are **16,700** people in receipt of main benefits as at **September 2021**, up from 15,200 in August 2021. This rise is indicative of the effect that the recent COVID-19 lockdown has had, combined with the peak of seasonal layoffs.



56.7% of Hawke's Bay's total working age population that are in receipt of the main benefit are female, compared to 43.2% that are male.



52.9% of the total working age population in receipt of main benefits are Māori. 3.7% of main benefits are received by Pacific Peoples and 43.3% are received by all other ethnicities.

(Source: Ministry of Social Development, Working age population (aged 15-64 years) in receipt of a benefit August 2021)

TOP LABOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- **The RSLG and Matariki Pou 2 partners held a workshop with the Aged Related Residential Care (ARRC) and Home and Community Support Services (HCSS) industry providers.** The aim was to identify key areas of focus and the establishment of an industry-led working group. Promotion, recruitment, and retention of the ARRC and HCSS workforce are the main priorities for the working group to help address the workforce issues.
- **Engagement with schools is a vital opportunity to target as this is the workforce of the future.** Sectors that are seen more traditionally as only seasonal (such as meat processing and horticulture) have an opportunity to work with the schools to show case their industry. This includes the career paths and opportunities that they offer, and will help to change the current perception of them. Initiatives are being developed to increase training opportunities for Rangatahi at school, as the region progresses a training and recruitment pathway for construction.
- **Understanding and learning what a good employer looks like has a great influence on the attraction and retention of staff.** Leadership of people is a recurring theme at the RSLG. They are looking at exemplar models, within and outside the region, and showcasing these to help other employers become better employers and to improve staff retention.

TOP LABOUR MARKET CHALLENGES

- **Employees are worried about future lockdowns and a lack of communication and information from employers as they are considering mandating COVID-19 vaccines.** There is a lot of information out there but it is not clear if it is getting to the right groups quickly, which is creating uncertainty in the workforce.
- **Silver Fern Farms have increased funding for recruitment initiatives by 100% on last season due to the shortages they are facing.** The initiatives include pastoral care and wrap around support. As they begin their seasonal recruitment there is concern that they are not going to be able to get enough staff to be able to process all of the seasonal work that is available.
- **Driver licences continue to be a barrier for getting young people who are not in Employment, Education of Training (NEET) into employment.** The 'Building Futures' project at Tumu Timbers engaged with the Got Drive Community Trust and found it costs approximately \$950 for each person to get a full licence (this includes the costs of testing, re-testing and lessons). There are concerns that this is very expensive if businesses are asking employees to get on the right licence.
- **There is a challenge of matching current regional labour demand for specific job vacancies with the 6,000 Jobseeker Work Ready clients** who are not yet in work. It is not always an easy and straightforward match, even if it seems there is a plentiful workforce supply. The Hawke's Bay RSLG is keen to explore this further and identify how the region can work together to support MSD with this mahi.

REGIONAL WORKFORCE PLAN

- **Now that the full Hawke's Bay RSLG membership is in place, work has begun on the Regional Workforce Plan (RWP).** The first step is to identify the region's aspirations with respect to its future skills and workforce needs.
- **The principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi will be embedded throughout our work and will umbrella the RWP.** This will be achieved by:
 - Providing opportunities for the whānau voice to be heard and to be able to influence change and make their own decisions.
 - Ensuring Iwi are at the front, and with us the whole way along the journey and understanding the mahi that we are doing.
 - Te Kāhui Ōhanga o Takitimu (TKO) and Post Settlement Governance Entities (PSGEs) will work closely with the RSLG on developing the workforce for the future, including Rangatahi involvement.
- **The Hawke's Bay RSLG are keen to align the RSLG's regional aspirations with the region's economic development priorities.** Further engagement with building this picture will occur over the coming month.
- **Building on the previous work of the interim RSLG, the region has established that the current supply of workers will not be able to meet the future demand.** Workforce supply is a critical element that the HB RSLG want to focus on through school leavers, work-ready jobseekers and those who are currently under-employed (working part-time and want more hours).

OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 2 MONTHS:

- Build stronger linkages with Kānoa and the Regional Strategic Partnership Fund at the RSLG meeting in October.
- Continue to build on the early indications of the Hawke's Bay RWP aspirations.
- Supporting people to move off benefit and into sustainable employment with decent work conditions and pay is an important priority for the HB RSLG and will support MSD where they can to do this.
- Work with the Ministry of Education and Secondary Schools Principals' Association to identify the best way to connect with this year's school leavers and support those who need help to make their next steps into work, further learning or training.
- Research to see if a resource exists that maps where students go to after high school and to see if there is an online portal that collates all of the training provided in the region.
- Collaboration with Hastings District Council, MSD and EIT to bring together the "Serve the Bay" hospitality taskforce to address the upcoming summer season workforce needs.