

TOP REGIONAL INSIGHTS

The Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) is promoting its hospitality training programmes in response to the shortage of hospitality workers. They are reaching into smaller communities through the 'Te Pouaka Kai' café trailer which supports their Level 3 café course in Waipukurau and Wairoa. Hospitality businesses across the region continue to struggle because of a lack of workers, and even though employers are looking to attract workers from other regions, they still cannot fill vacancies because there is also a national shortage. This is creating a level of competition for existing workers which is increasing tensions as owners work to keep their operations running.



Photo credit: Eastern Institute of Technology

The Wairoa Young Achievers Trust (WYAT) is celebrating success through a series of short videos and engaged a local company Korou Digital to tell these stories. Designed for social media, people can see how rangatahi have been successful in gaining their driver's license and engaging in apprenticeships. The impact of these videos has been immense with people of all ages contacting them via social media, walk ins and phone calls. Whanau want to enrol so they improve their chances of employment and becoming legal drivers. It has been important to show the community how initiatives like the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) Mana in Mahi programme have made a positive difference for Wairoa rangatahi. A big part of this success is the productive partnership between WYAT and MSD.

A pilot programme offering flexible working hours for solo parents is making a positive difference for new packhouse workers. The T&G apple packhouse has teamed up with MSD to trial a six-month pilot programme called 'He Huarahi Hou', that supports solo parents to work around the needs of their tamariki. Participants say they can successfully balance the needs of work and tamariki without unnecessary stress. In the past they would have been locked into an 8- or 10-hour day but this arrangement means they can negotiate work hours that are whanau friendly.

TRENDS AT A GLANCE



-5.2% The decrease in the number of underutilised people living in Hawke's Bay compared to the same time last year.

Source: Household Labour Force Survey, March quarter 2022



-12.8% The decrease in the number of people (aged 18-64 and living in Hawke's Bay/Tairāwhiti) who receive Jobseeker Support (Work Ready) compared to the same month last year.

Source: Ministry of Social Development, data current to 30 April 2022



-1.6% The decrease in the unemployment rate in Hawke's Bay compared to the same time last year.

Source: Household Labour Force Survey, March quarter 2022

TOP LABOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- 1. The regional tourism sector is cautiously optimistic as bookings for the 2022/23 season roll in.** Participants at the monthly regional tourism forum expressed cautious optimism for the months ahead with positive signs of improved business. At the 'First Friday' meeting it was reported that there are 95 cruise ships booked to visit Hawke's Bay for the 2022/23 season, which has a value of \$32m to the local economy. The sector was initially frustrated while waiting for a decision on the opening of the maritime border but are now enthusiastic on what this will mean for the region.
- 2. EIT and NZ Chefs Association are running a local 'NZ Chefs Hawke's Bay Salon' competition in June.** It aims to get local rangatahi interested in cooking through competitions, and they are keen for young people to give it a try as a way of helping address the regional staff shortages in the sector.
- 3. The Government-supported 'Digital Boost' initiative has been acknowledged by the Hawke's Bay Chamber of Commerce** for its benefits in building workforce digital capabilities. Local estimates say we are 5-7 years ahead of where we would have been in terms of business digital capability.
- 4. The Hawke's Bay District Health Board (HBDHB) is using micro-credentialling to upskill church and community leaders** to be able to deliver COVID-19 and Flu vaccinations. The HBDHB Pacific Health Unit wants to give the unregulated workforce the ability to provide this health service direct to their communities themselves. This initiative will greatly improve the region's primary health response capacity whilst providing people with an opportunity to learn new skills.

TOP LABOUR MARKET CHALLENGES

- 1. Optimism in the tourism sector is being tempered by staff shortages.** Staffing remains a big challenge especially as new businesses are starting to open up, and there are concerns for associated businesses like laundry services who are expected to experience a surge in demand. Employers are adapting to this pressure by changing their hiring practices and note that when hiring new staff they prefer to take on someone who is keen to learn rather than waiting for someone with the right skills/experience.
- 2. Local businesses are concerned that Hawke's Bay will lose local talent overseas as the borders reopen.** There is a sense that although it will be a slow burn, it is inevitable. That said, there is hope that the tourism/hospitality sectors will benefit from an influx of overseas visitors and working holiday visa holders.
- 3. The Hawke's Bay Chamber of Commerce say that businesses are fatigued by their attempts to manage the impacts of COVID-19.** Wellbeing issues for employers continue to prevail as the compounding effects from the combined pressures of staffing shortages, the end of work subsidies, as well as continual staff recruitment are coming to the surface. In response to these challenges, employers are promoting 'good workplace culture' as they seek to attract people and say it's no longer just about skills, it's about the whole package.

REGIONAL WORKFORCE PLAN

The Regional Workforce Plan is at the final draft stage. The RSLG has agreed to focus on five actions that will be undertaken in the region. These will focus on:

- pre-employment programmes
- development of a collaborative training hub
- undertaking a needs analysis of workforce needs
- improving the Māori Economy (Te Ohanga Māori)
- scoping workplace leadership programmes in primary and construction sectors.

The RSLG will be making two recommendations to the Tertiary Education Commission and Workforce Development Councils around investing in improved pre-employment programmes across Hawke's Bay.

The Secretariat is undertaking some pre-planning work to shape up how these actions and recommendations can be implemented. Regional engagement has been underway with local and central government, Post Settlement Governance Entities (PSGE's) and other regional stakeholders.

Further information and progress on the development of the Regional Workforce plan can be found on the Hawke's Bay RSLG website. Scan the QR code to be taken directly to our website.



OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 2 MONTHS:

- Final publication and launch of the Regional Workforce Plan (RWP)
- Begin work on an implementation plan for the RWP actions and recommendations
- Initial scoping of focus areas for the next RWP