

The Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy

The Process

Aug 2013

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Executive Summary

Background, aim and process

The Process is the first of eight documents that comprise the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy.

Background and Aim

In April 2013 the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Steering Committee (The Steering Committee) committed to developing a Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy (SHRWDS). The strategy aims to support local people to develop skills and qualifications needed by the region's employers, improve the region's ability to attract people with skills in demand and increase employment opportunities for local people who are under-represented in the workforce.

The desired outcome of this workforce development strategy is to enable existing businesses to expand, attract new business to the region and grow the population as a whole.

Focus

The inaugural Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy focuses on four sectors;

- Agriculture/Horticulture
- Manufacturing
- Health – Aged Care
- Community Services – Early childhood and social/welfare

Framework

The workforce development strategy project comprises three stages:

- the assessment of the current and future states, occurring simultaneously and
- an action plan

Building on local research and strategies

The Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy has incorporated the extensive research and projects already undertaken and underway in the Swan Hill and Loddon Mallee region. It quickly became evident in the collation of this research that the Swan Hill community has developed numerous strategies to support industries, build business capacity and develop its workforce. Hence this research builds on local research rather than duplicates it. Key research has included :

- Swan Hill Rural City Community profile presented by .id;
- The Swan Hill Rural Council economic development plan;
- The Loddon Mallee Regional Strategic Plan;
- The Murray Mallee Local Learning and the Employment Network (MMLLEN) 2013 Environmental Scan

Executive Summary

Consultations and a SWOT analysis for the industries helped to identify risks and strategies

Consultations

A key stage influencing the development of the workforce development strategy was the consultations process with employers and education providers. Face-to-face consultations were held in April and consultations by phone in April and May 2013.

SWOT Analysis

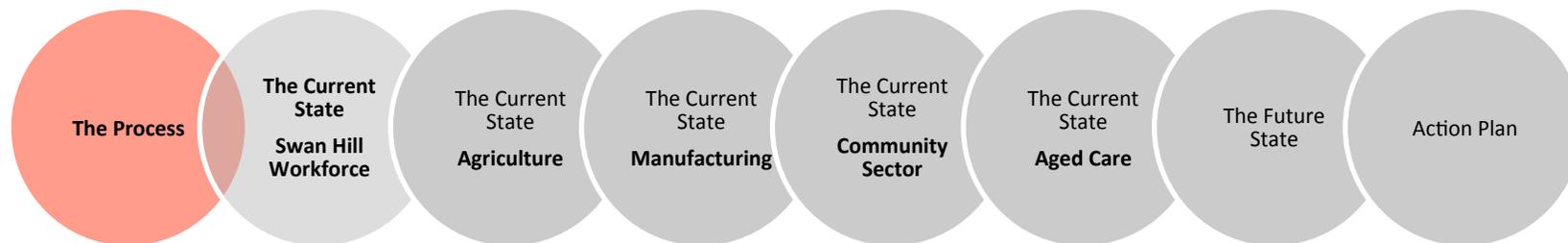
Drawing on the local research, ABS data and the consultation findings a SWOT analysis was conducted for each of the four industries. This logically led to the identification of the key workforce risks for each of the four industries as well as for the region's workforce as a whole. Strategies have been proposed and an action plan will be prepared.

A living and accessible strategy

A region's workforce development strategy is a living document. The strategies will be monitored and reviewed and new ones will added over time. Hence the structure of the strategy reflects this perspective.

A workforce development strategy needs to be accessible so the community understand their population, industries, business composition and employment trends. Hence it has been designed as a web-based document.

Many workforce development strategies fail because they includes too many strategies and consequently too many actions. This Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy is presented in the following eight documents.



About this document

This document outlines the process to develop the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy

This Overview Report is the first of three documents being produced as part of the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy. It will be updated as the project progresses. It outlines why workforce planning is being undertaken, describes the regional workforce planning process being used in this project and, what the committee is doing, and who is involved in the process.

The Regional Workforce Planning Process

The regional workforce planning process used in this project will:

- define regional workforce planning
- articulate the aims and objectives
- clarify governance arrangements;
- create a data story from data on employment, industry and training, as well as, regional economic development strategies
- engage and consult with the community
- bring key stakeholders together to develop the action plan
- refine the strategy and action plan

Workforce Planning Documents

The workforce planning documents produced in this project include:

- Overview of the workforce planning process
- Current and Future State – Includes scan for Agriculture, Manufacturing and Health and Community Sector industries
- Workforce Action Plan

These documents inform the workforce actions and will form the basis for ongoing regional workforce development in the Region.

Background

Workforce Planning is needed to provide a clearer understanding of education, workforce and skills.

Swan Hill is the regional service centre of a significant catchment of over 40,000 people. This catchment stretches along the Murray Valley into the Mallee in Victoria and the Western Riverina in New South Wales. The activities of the region are largely influenced by irrigation from the Murray River and have an emphasis on agriculture, horticulture, viticulture and tourism.

Swan Hill City has a population of 10,000 and with its immediate hinterland, including the closely settled horticultural districts and small townships (Lake Boga, Nyah-Nyah West, Woorinen South and Piangil) its population is 20,000. The Murray River is central to the lifestyle of the region and with the favourable Mediterranean climate and fully serviced regional centre, Swan Hill offers an ideal opportunity for various visitor experiences.

Significant development had occurred over the past decade in the irrigated horticultural industries and this has led to new investments in related industries and services in Swan Hill. With low unemployment and high job growth the region has experienced moderate population growth and expansion in the residential housing market. The potential for increased investment and job growth remains and the economic future for the region is buoyant.

The Swan Hill Rural City Council has identified that to capitalise on future economic growth within the municipality, a clearer understanding of our workforce and the skills that will drive economic growth is required. With this in mind the Swan Hill Rural City Council contracted Workforce Planning Australia to facilitate the development of the inaugural Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy.

A Workforce Development Steering Committee has been established, consisting of local industry, services providers, government agencies and business stakeholders, who will work collaboratively with Workforce Planning Australia to develop the strategy. The Workforce Development Strategy will focus on the Agriculture/Horticulture, Manufacturing, Health and Community Services workforces in the Swan Hill municipality.

Why Workforce Planning?

Effective workforce planning is needed to support future development

Why have a regional Workforce Development Strategy?

The need for a Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy was identified in the Swan Hill Rural City Council Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016 and Robinvale Economic Development Strategy 2012-2017.

A strategy that supports local people to develop skills and qualifications needed by the region's employers, improves the region's ability to attract people with skills in demand, and increases employment opportunities for local people who are under-represented in the workforce is seen as vital in enabling existing businesses to expand, attracting new business to the region and growing the population as a whole.

The Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy will support the Swan Hill Rural City Council to translate the economic growth into employment opportunities and population growth for the region.

A highly skilled and innovative workforce will assist local businesses to grow and attract new businesses to SHRCC. Addressing the skills gap in key growth areas such as agriculture, manufacturing and health and community services is essential to ensuring SHRCC is prepared to meet the needs of changes to existing industry, development of new industries and population growth.

SHRRC Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016, p.32

Regional Workforce Planning – Definition

Defining Regional Workforce Planning is important

What is workforce planning?

‘Workforce planning is defined as a continual process seeking to align the individual’s and organisation’s needs to achieve business objectives.’

Workforce Planning Australia

What is regional workforce planning?

Regional workforce planning has a broader focus.

‘It seeks to align a geographic area’s workforce with the needs of each industry to support economic development and improve workforce participation.’

Workforce Planning Australia

Regional Workforce Planning Principles

Practical principles for regional workforce planning guide the project

Regional workforce planning is a continual process. These underlying principles will guide the committee on the journey of regional workforce planning.

Regional workforce planning:

- is iterative and responds to internal and external change drivers
- is driven by a regional committee
- supports the achievement of regional strategic plans
- supports economic development and workforce participation
- seeks to match the skills and capabilities of the local workforce with the needs of industry and local employers
- identifies industry trends including growing and declining segments
- requires collaboration and partnerships between stakeholders
- identifies the largest occupations, workforce issues and skill shortages
- drives regional workforce development strategies

Project Aims

Effective workforce planning is needed to support future development

The aims of the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy is to:

- provide a strategic approach to address current and anticipated skill shortages in the Swan Hill region's employment labour market and post education services.
- anticipate future skills required to satisfy major industries and potential developments identified in the Swan Hill Rural City Council Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016.

Objectives

- undertake a detailed analysis of information provided, engage stakeholders, identify issues/opportunities, formulate goals and provide a strategic approach to achieve outcomes.
- design and develop a Workforce Development Strategy that will increase business and employment opportunities in the region

Outcome

Drawing on local community knowledge, experience and research, the project will further our understanding of local skill shortages, emerging roles and skills, and training needs and gaps. The outcome will be a strategy that contains realistic, user-friendly actions that build on current successes and are adaptive to change. The strategies will aim to:

- help training providers better match the needs of employers
- help employers attract and retain the workers they need
- encourage and support local job seekers to gain skills and training in areas where there are opportunities

Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Steering Committee

Consists of local industry, service providers, government agencies and business stakeholders

Who is involved?

Member	Organisation
Michael Adamson	Chairman and Councillor
Janelle Earle	Swan Hill Rural City Council
Nathan Keighran	Swan Hill Rural City Council
Daan van Dorenmalen	SuniTAFE
Sandra Houlahan	CEO, Loddon Mallee Preschool Association
Rob Jardine	Regional Development Victoria
Matthew Holland	DEEWR
Murray Ray	Swan Hill Inc
Bradley Hogg	Eworks Swan Hill
Robyn Stepnell	Mallee Murray LLEN
Steve Wainwright	Swan Hill District Health HR Manager (Aged Care/Nursing)
Glenn Stewart	Robinvale
Kerry Gammon	Agriculture
Sam Cottingham	Manufacturing
Rowena Allen	DBI – Regional Workforce Planning

Approach

A three stage approach is used to develop a regional workforce development strategy

<p>Stage 1 Project Set Up and Current State Analysis</p>	<p>Stage 2 Future State Analysis and Further Data Collection</p>	<p>Stage 3 Action Plan and Capability Building</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with SHWDSC • Identify project risks • Discuss expectations re Workforce Development Strategy • Identify project stakeholders • Confirm reporting requirements • Source and review all relevant docs • Analyse ABS and other data to identify employment trends and growth areas in four industries • Identify employers/education providers for consultations • Develop objectives, questions and method, schedule for consultations • Develop framework for analysis for data 	<p>Consult with employers to identify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current skills needs, skill shortages • difficult to fill roles • difficulties with their workforce <p>Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • future needs • skills that are declining • effective strategies they are using to recruit/skill/retain • training needs • effective training approaches <p>Consult with education providers to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the courses they are offering • trends in enrolments • plans to offer new courses • challenges • effective strategies/partnerships in region to skill staff • effective pathways they have developed <p>Synthesise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design an Action Plan Template • Promote the workshop • Provide a summary of current state/future state (SWOT Analysis) at workshop • Design and deliver a workshop to develop the action plan • Include themes and target groups • Prioritise actions • Identify funding sources • Finalise Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy following review by steering committee

Scope

The Committee identified industries and occupations for focus

The Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Steering Committee recognise that private sector business is the major contributor to economic development in the region.

The strategy will focus on small to mediums sized businesses in the following sector and also consider other high priority needs that arise.

Industry	Sector may include:
Agribusiness	Horticulture/Food Processing Workers/Dryland
Manufacturing	Fabrication and 1 st Class Welders
Health	Aged Care and Nursing professions
Community Services	Early Childhood and Social/Welfare Workers

Potential Target Groups

The Committee identified target groups

Relevant economic development documents were provided by the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Steering Committee .

These documents describe groups with low workforce participation rates and groups of people with needed skills. These groups will be considered when identifying target groups.

Residents with low workforce participation	Workers the region would like to attract to and/or retain in the region
Refugees settled in the region	Former residents (Young adults and their families) returning to the area
Young migrants	Skilled Migrants
Early school leavers	Seasonal workers
Early school leavers	People with needed skills residing outside the region (skilled and semi skilled, including tradespeople and apprentices (in Robinvale)
Indigenous youth	Pacific Islander Guest workers (to address horticulturalist labour shortages) on other migrant temporary work visas
Teenage mothers	Backpackers (for agricultural/horticultural work)
	Year 12 school leavers (through offering training locally in key industries)

Risk

Simple risk management techniques will be applied

The Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Steering Committee have identified the following potential risks for the project:

Risk	Mitigation
Unrealistic expectations or taking on too many actions	Committee to ensure a realistic action plan is developed
Whether there is funding to support the actions	Committee to engage leaders and stakeholders in the project
Industry buy-in	Committee to engage the CEO , the council and industry association leaders in the project
Identifying champions to lead each action	Engage industry association in the selection process

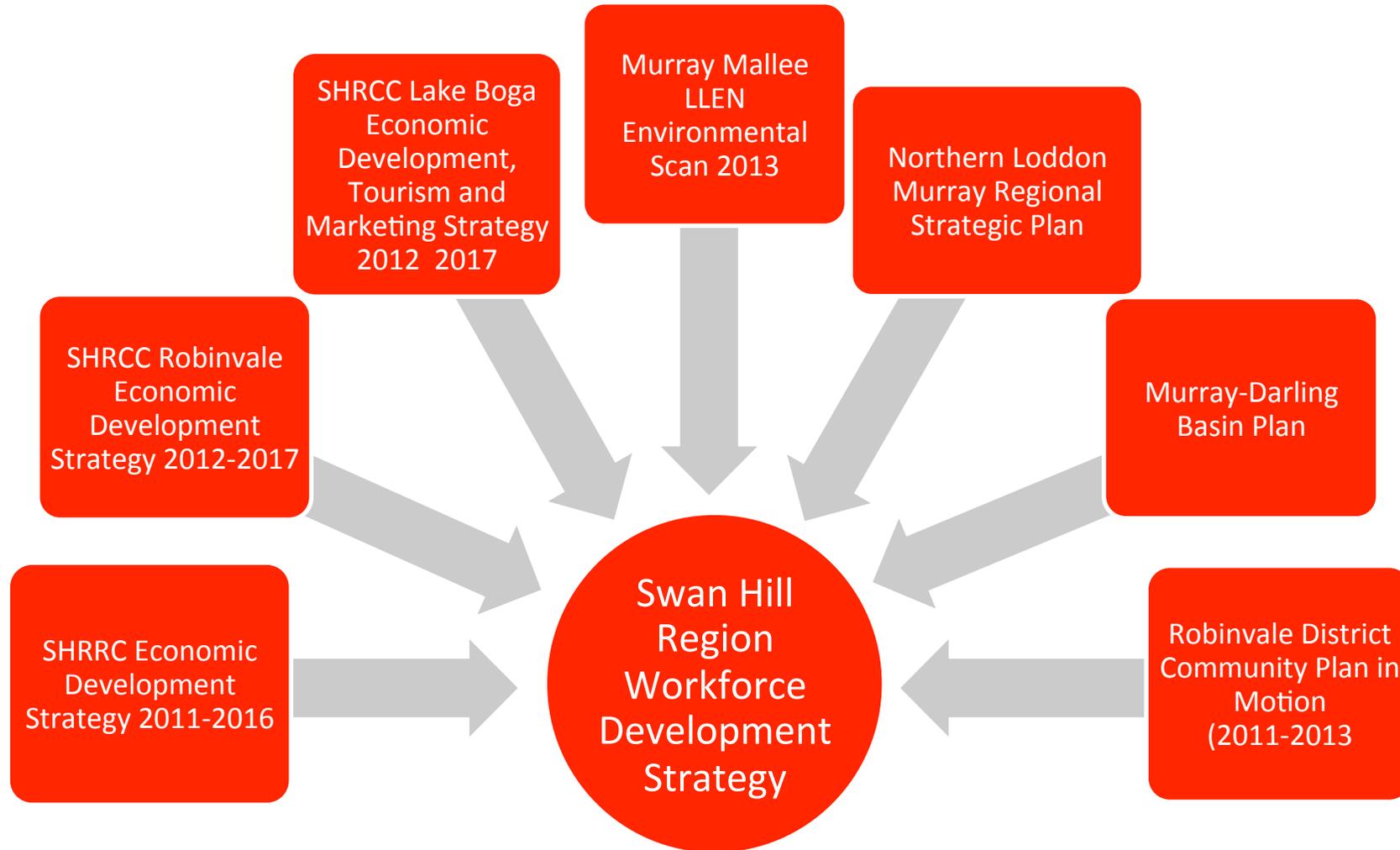
Project Timelines

The project will be developed over an eight month period

Stage	Key task	Timeline
Stage One	Project set up meeting	Tuesday 25 March
Stage Two	Analysis of ABS and other employment data	March/April /May 2013
Stage Two	Employer/Education provider consultations	April /May 2013
Stage Three	Workshop – Key Findings (SWOT Analysis)	5 June 2013
Stage Three	Draft Report	3 July 2013
Stage Three	Present Draft Report and develop Action Plan	9 July 2013
Stage Three	Finalise Report/Project completion	1 October 2013

The Policy Context –

The Regional Workforce Development Strategy is being influenced by the following work



Consultations

The following organisations were consulted as part of the consultations process

Organisation	Organisation	Organisation	Organisation
Goodstart Early Learning Centre – Beveridge St	The Grain Shed	Chislett Developments	Swan Hill Inc
Goodstart Early Learning Centre – Pritchard St	Swan Hill Secondary College	Swan Hill Abattoirs	MADEC
Swan Hill District Health	Swan Hill Specialist School	Grizzly Engineering	Eworks
SuniTAFE	Swan Hill Rural City Council	Polymaster	Murray Mallee Training
Alcheringa Group	DEECD - Regional Career Development	Dodgshun Medlin	Regional Development Victoria
Loddon Mallee Preschool Association	Mallee Family Care	Fruit Farmer	MMLLEN
St Luke's Family Care			DEEWR

Roles, Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of team

Role	Required	Who	Comment
Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend meetings Support engagement with stakeholders Contribute to development of strategies Provided local context 	Committee	
Project Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drive the project Organise meetings Set up consultation meetings Link to local and regional initiatives 	Committee Stakeholders Consultants	
Workforce Planning Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation Summary of key documents Analysis of information and data Facilitation of strategy development 	Identified stakeholders	

Leadership Alignment

Keeping leaders aligned improves the likelihood of workforce planning success

Who	Role	Workforce Planning Position	Strategy to build or harness support	Comment
Committee	Clear vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need one sponsor with responsibility to drive workforce planning • Unified front with healthy critical assessment • Promote buy-in to others • Can influence stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align all members through meetings • Engage committee in consultation of stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular, timely communication
Regional Leaders	Crucial to providing data and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive • Balance local needs versus business needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently report evidenced based data • Establish shared understanding of context for strategy • Consulted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring unique issues, wealth of knowledge, history
Swan Hill Rural City Council	Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate and link to other projects and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the CEO of Council in the project • Present project to council meeting 	

Stakeholder Engagement

Gaining strong support and commitment from stakeholders is vital

Stakeholder	Level of importance High, Medium, Low	Current support High, Medium, Low	What is required of this stakeholder?	How could this stakeholder block the project?	Strategies to receive support
Local Minister	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee to build relationship • Sell the benefits
Committee	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend meetings • Support engagement with stakeholders • Contribute to development of strategies • Provide local context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation at every stage • Sell the benefits
RDV/DBI	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation at every stage
Swan Hill City Council	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation at every stage
Swan Hill Inc	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation at every stage • Sell the benefits
Media	Med	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative Publicity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sell the benefits
Community	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not engage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation at every stage • Sell the benefits
Education Providers	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation at every stage • Sell the benefits

Communications Plan

Clear and consistent messages to support workforce planning outcomes

Target audience	Key messages	Methods and tools for communication	Timeframes and frequency	Responsibility
Local Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical milestones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee
Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Objectives • Proposed outcomes • Methodology • Timeframe • Intent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings • Workshops • Consultation process • Written Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Leader • Consultants
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to the region • WIIFM what, why, how • Career opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intranet • Regional reps • Workshops • Media • Consultation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical milestones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee • Consultants
Education Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to course relevance and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Consultation process • Written Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical milestones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee • Consultants
Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to business outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Consultation process • Written Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical milestones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee • Consultants
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to business outcomes and the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical milestones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Leader

Meetings and Workshops Held

Stakeholders consulted in the development of the report

Date	Meeting Between	Key Issues
Tue 26 March 2013	WPA and Swan Hill Workforce Development Steering Committee	Project Set up
Tues 15 – 19 April	Employer and Education Consultations – Round One	Committee members are welcome to join WPA on these consultations
April 29 -	Employer and Education Consultations – Round Two	
Tuesday 13 May	Strategy Workshop	Nathan Keighran presented SWOT analysis to Steering Community members
Tuesday 9 July	WPA and Swan Hill Regional Workforce Development Steering Committee	Presentation of Draft strategy, confirmation of strategies and Development of the Action Plan



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