

National Local Government Workforce and Indigenous Employment Forum and Showcase

Wednesday 2 December 2015

8 for 8:30am – 5:00pm

Old Parliament House, Canberra

18 King George Terrace, Parkes

PROGRAM

8:00am **REGISTRATION AND ARRIVAL (coffee and tea with breakfast)**

8:30am **Welcome to Country** – *Aunty Ruth Bell*, elder of the Ngunnawal people, traditional custodians of the Canberra region

8:40am **Setting the Scene** – Forum Facilitator, *Professor John Martin*, ACELG Adjunct Professor; Research Associate, Local Government Professionals Australia; Emeritus Professor, La Trobe University

9:00am **Indigenous employment: the labour market story and good practice in recruitment and retention** – *Chris Sainsbury*, Director Recruitment Analysis, Federal Department of Employment; and *Helen Willoughby*, State Network Group Manager & State Manager NSW/ACT, Federal Department of Employment

This session will present a national picture of Indigenous employment, with a focus on local government over the past few years. It will include good practice in recruitment and retention strategies, as well as case studies from across the country, and will also focus on the recently launched Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy

9:40am **Indigenous employment showcase panel: case studies** – Panel featuring *Manivannan Naidu*, Coordinator Learning and Development, Barkly Regional Council (NT); *Nathan Brennan*, Aboriginal Development Officer, Newcastle City Council (NSW); and *Ben Waterhouse*, Team Leader Aboriginal and Cultural Diversity, City of Whittlesea (VIC)

Each speaker on the panel will focus on the programs and issues relevant to their region:

- Manivannan (Barkly) will discuss the factors affecting Indigenous workforce development in remote central Australia, will present a Barkly case study on LLN, and will focus on where to from here.
- Nathan (Newcastle) will talk about the Council's Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2013-2017, and will focus on council's motivation for the strategy, what the specific targets of the strategy are, what has been implemented so far, what the challenges are and where the process is currently at.
- Ben (Whittlesea) will talk about his municipality, which is experiencing a period of prolonged population growth. Within this context the council is committed to Aboriginal employment,

reconciliation and preventing the often covert and subtle forms of discrimination that inhibit Aboriginal employment. The City of Whittlesea currently employs eleven Aboriginal staff, which constitutes 1% of the workforce; and Council has a target of 1.5% Aboriginal workforce participation by October 2017. Whittlesea's Aboriginal Employment Pathways Strategy and other key initiatives will be showcased and discussed during the presentation.

10:50am MORNING TEA

11:10am National profile of the local government workforce: Phase 2 – Melissa Gibbs, Deputy Director, ACELG

The first ever national profile of the local government workforce was prepared by ACELG in 2014. Phase 1 of the profile analysed and summarised findings of the ACELG workforce survey, supplemented with ABS Census data. Phase 1 identified some workforce research and data needs of the sector that are unmet. Phase 2, which is currently underway, will produce more complex pictures of the local government workforce. It builds on Phase 1 and looks at the following:

- 1) *Local government as a place-based employer*
- 2) *Inter-sectoral employee movement*
- 3) *How the local government workforce of Queensland and Northern Territory changed over a period of significant structural reform*
- 4) *Gender equity / pay gap data*
- 5) *Skills profiling of the local government workforce*
- 6) *Tracking career progression of local government employees*

This presentation will provide an update on Phase 2 and will provide an opportunity to present some high level initial findings.

11:50am Australia's Future Workforce report: What jobs and skills will be needed as the economy grows – Nathan Taylor, Chief Economist, Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA)

Australia is on the cusp of the next wave of the industrial revolution. Like previous technologically driven transformation, this revolution has the potential to radically upend business practices, change social arrangements and dramatically reshape the workforce. Modelling conducted for the report suggests that almost five million jobs face a high probability of being replaced in the next decade or two. In total, almost 70% of existing jobs in Australia face a high or medium probability of being made redundant. The jobs that are least likely to be made redundant involve aspects of creativity, social intelligence and physical mobility. These jobs are also clustered in the CBDs of Australia's major capital cities. The local government sector, like all sectors, will need to adapt to these changes.

12:30pm Deliberative Democracy – Address by The Hon Alannah MacTiernan MP, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary Regional Development and Infrastructure and Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Western Australia

Alannah MacTiernan has worked across all three tiers of government in a public career spanning more than 25 years. Her public life began in 1988 with a five-year stint on Perth City Council, and she was the directly-elected Mayor of the City of Vincent for two years before resigning in 2013 to take up her current position as the Federal Member for Perth. Between her times in local government, Alannah was in WA State Parliament for 17 years – and served as the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure for almost eight years. Alannah also spent four years working in the Commonwealth Aboriginal Employment and Training service before beginning a legal career.

12:50pm LUNCH

1:30pm LAUNCH of the Mature Age Workforce Resource – Ken Wallis, primary Resource editor; together with Angela Zivkovic and Alex Kats, Workforce Development, Local Government Professionals Australia/ACELG

The issues associated with the ageing workforce in Australian local government continue to concern employers and Councils. The *Mature Age Workforce Resource* has been developed

following extensive, academic-based research and comprehensive, multi-faceted consultation with practitioners in the local government sector. The practical focus and elements of the Resource are freely accessible online. The Resource will enable Human Resources and Organisation Development practitioners to evaluate, apply and monitor improvement initiatives to enhance the employment experiences of their local government's mature age workers.

2:00pm **Supporting businesses to grow: Industry Skills Fund and Youth Pilots** – *Linda White, Branch Manager, Industry Skills, Federal Department of Education and Training*

This session will provide information on the eligibility and application process for the Industry Skills Fund and the types of projects that are being funded, and how that could relate to the local government sector. The Industry Skills Fund also includes a Youth Stream which comprises two pilot programmes. These programmes assist unemployed and disengaged young people to access the training and support they need to get a job or to further their education.

2:40pm **Local government, Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) and the pathway to achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment equality** – *Justin Mohamed, Chief Executive Officer, Reconciliation Australia*

Reconciliation Australia works towards creating a more just, equitable and reconciled Australia. One of our key programs is the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program, which provides a framework for organisations to realise their vision for reconciliation. The program assists organisations and governments to develop a RAP – a practical plan of action built on relationships, respect and opportunities. RAPs support the creation of jobs and business for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and drives financial and in-kind support.

3:20pm **AFTERNOON TEA**

3:30pm **Case Study: Improving employee engagement and satisfaction through provision of employee shaped flexible work practices** – *Pauline Bennett, Manager, Organisational Development, City of Whitehorse (VIC)*

This presentation recaps a project commenced in 2012 that has developed into a successful model for employee empowerment and improved engagement through provision of a broad range of flexible work options. Employees engage with management in determining options that will be used in work teams guided by a set of Flexibility Principles that were developed by a representative group of employees, unions and management. The project has been successfully implemented across the organisation with more than 50% of the workforce using some form of flexible work options in the past 12 months. In turn this has impacted on employee engagement and satisfaction in a positive way.

4:10pm **Employer of Choice and Leadership Diversity Projects** – *Angela Zivkovic and Alex Kats, Workforce Development, Local Government Professionals Australia/ACELG*

Local government is keen to be seen and promoted as an employer of choice. An analysis and evaluation project is currently underway, based on 100+ videos from the 2015 Management Challenge PreChallenge Task that answered the question: 'What value proposition(s) can your council offer to attract and retain a relevant and credible workforce?' The objective of the leadership diversity project meanwhile is to explore a range of strategic approaches to increase the workforce participation rates of women and Indigenous employees in the senior management of local governments. Findings and recommendations from these two projects will be presented. Open forum discussion to follow.

4:40pm **Where to from here?** – *Professor John Martin, Forum Facilitator*

5:00pm **END**