

# **Tiwi Islands Regional Council**

## **Workforce Development Plan**

### **2014 - 2017**



**Service For A Better Tiwi Future**

This document has been prepared for use of the

Tiwi Islands Regional Council by

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## Introduction and overview

This Workforce Development Plan has been developed to support the vision and values of the Council, the intent is to

- support succession planning and merit selection processes,
- increase the proportion of Tiwi staff,
- support the retention and advancement of staff,
- provide all staff with the opportunity to improve their work skills and job satisfaction,
- improve the average grading level of Tiwi staff,
- enhance workplace efficiency and capacity, and
- improve career paths and progression through training that is of value to the organisation and the individual.

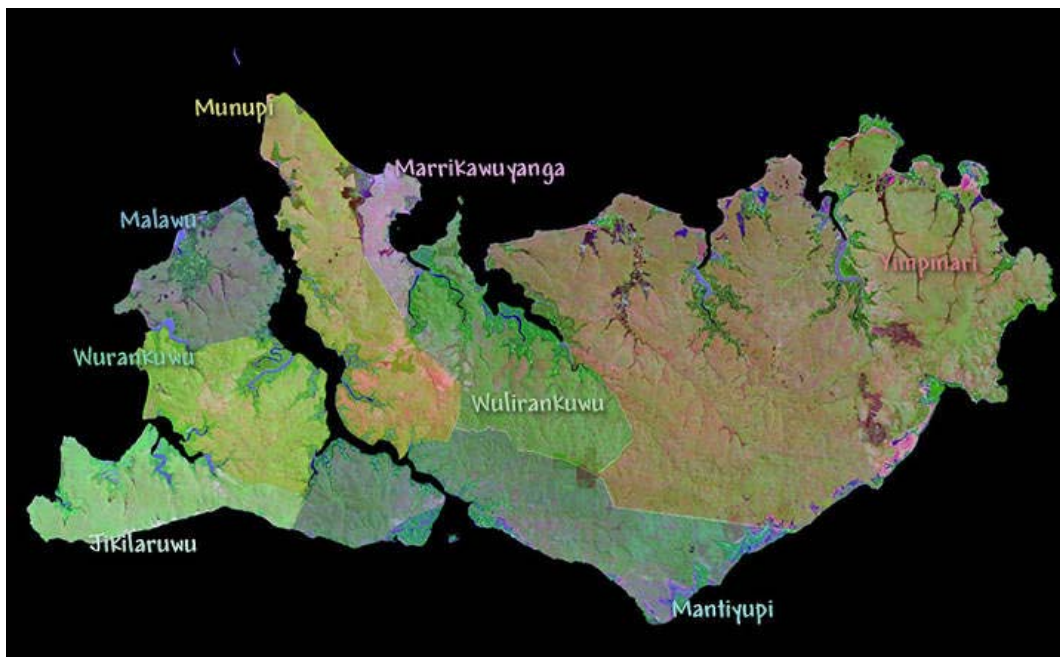


### *Tiwi Culture*

The beautiful Tiwi Islands are situated 80 km north of Darwin in the Arafura Sea. They comprise of two adjacent islands, Bathurst Island and Melville Island, with a total land mass of 8320 sq. km. The islands are home to the Tiwi people, who have a distinctive culture and language.

Traditional owners look after the eight countries or clan groups that make up the Tiwi Islands based on the father's clan. On Bathurst Island they are Jikilaruwu, Wurankuwu, Malawu and Mantiyupi. On Melville Island they are Munupi, Marrikawuyanga, Wulirankuwu, Yimpinari and Mantiyupi. The clan group (and their dreaming) is passed down through the father's family.

The eight countries or clan groups of the Tiwi Islands (Map courtesy of Tiwi Land Council).



All Tiwi's have a strong sense of family, belonging to a complex family structure, which defines how they behave and relate to one another. For example, brothers and sisters do not speak to each other after puberty; family relationships can have poisoned cousins. This can have implications on working together, communication, sitting and meeting arrangements. Tiwi people speak Tiwi at home and English at work.

All Tiwi's belong to a skin group, which is allocated at birth according to the mother's skin group. The four skin groups are Lorrula (Stone), Takarringuwi (Mullet), Miyartuwi (Pandanus) and Warntarringuwi (Sun). Each skin group has its own tribal structure and takes responsibility for

the well being of its members.

Hunting and gathering is still a highly valued part of the Tiwi culture, and is regularly practiced throughout the Islands, particularly on Sunday, which is a popular family hunting day. Traditionally, it is men who hunt and women who gather. On the land, hunting can bring home catches of wallabies, lizards, possums, carpet snakes, pig, buffalo, flying foxes, bandicoot, turtle, seagull eggs and magpie geese. From the sea, Tiwi's catch turtle, dugong, crocodiles, crabs, and of course fish. Women regularly hunt and gather in the mangroves and mud flats, collecting mussels, long bums (paringa), mud crabs and mangrove worms (yuwurli) and oysters. Though four wheel drives and rifles have now replaced feet and spears, hunting, collecting and cooking food is still very much a social and shared activity.

#### *Organisation background*

The Tiwi Islands Regional Council (TIRC) was created on 1 January 2014 in a seamless transition from the Tiwi Islands Shire Council, which had itself been established on 1 July 2008.

Shire Councillors, representing each of the Tiwi communities, advise TIRC about community issues.

The Tiwi Islands Regional Council was set up as a regional governing body to coordinate and administer service delivery, promote sustainable economic development, and negotiate arrangements responsive to the needs of the Tiwi people. This framework provides the opportunity for more effective cooperation and partnerships between all spheres of government to improve outcomes for the Tiwi people.

The TIRC maintains offices at three locations on the Tiwi Islands, – Wurrumiyanga, Pirlangimpi and Milkapiti; the Council also supports Wurrankuwu which is a major outstation.

TIRC core business functions are based on three key areas

- Service Delivery under the Infrastructure Directorate, work units include Town Services, Civil Works, Fixed Asset Maintenance and Construction, Mechanical Workshops, Essential Services and Outstations
- Administration – under the Corporate Services Directorate, work units include Human Resources, Payroll, Information Communication and Technology, Community Engagement, Office Administration; Finance Directorate; and Governance.
- Community Support including Sport and Recreation, Childcare, Youth Diversion, Community Safety (Night Patrol), Libraries and Centrelink agents.

## Links to our strategy

The Strategic Plan 2013-14 sets the direction for the organisation it provides the guidance as to how Council will meet the needs of its residents. The first line of the vision statements refers to the development and retention of employees and recruitment of local people.

Value – Service For a Tiwi Future in the following:

### Visions

- Employ, develop and retain employees with an emphasis on the recruitment of local people
- Provide effective Council services to the Tiwi communities and other stakeholders
- Management of finances, assets and infrastructure will be responsible, accountable and transparent.
- Manage resources in an environmentally sustainable manner, in harmony with country and culture.
- Improve Council operations through decentralisation of Council services and functions
- Communicate in an open, honest and culturally appropriate way
- Achieve best practice in compliance and governance
- Facilitate the development of socio-economically responsible opportunities on the Tiwi Islands

## External Environment

Global factors – global financial crisis and impact on national economies causing a trickle down effect, while initially this effect was muted in the Territory by the mineral extraction industry, that cushion is now disappearing with mines down sizing.

National factors – resource sector cycle of boom and bust causing workforce elasticity and affecting supply and demand. Changes in government, policy and funding impact on the programs that local government delivers and subsequently the staffing levels to deliver programs.

State/Territory Government factors – changes of government and government policy at a national and state and territory level, this affects the disposition of government funding and the contracts to local government, which have previously reduced the gap between low rate income in remote areas and the community expectation of the services to be delivered by local government.

Regional/Local factors – establishment of Local Authorities increasing workload for meetings, reports and increasing the expectation of service delivery in individual communities.

The major challenges being faced by the organisation are -

- Skills shortages
- Loss of government contracts
- Shrinking workforce as funds are reduced – loss of real jobs in the community
- Need to devote increased resources to the attraction and retention of alternate funding
- Increased community expectation of services to be delivered
- Community expectation that local government will increase recruitment and retention of Tiwi people.

### **Internal Environment**

Good capability in terms of local delivery of work and strong engagement of Tiwi people in the workforce.

Business planning challenges on-going movement of contracts from local government to other providers with little or no local presence causing a reduction in real local job; funding constraints in regional areas where the ability to collect rates and other traditional sources of local government funding is limited; challenge to maintain infrastructure and assets on a diminishing funding base.

The organisation currently has a good capability and capacity to deliver products and services, with a high proportion of staff comprising Tiwi people. Non Tiwi staff are generally people with specialist skill sets. The organisation processes human resources payroll work internally with a majority of Tiwi staff, while the finance unit processes internally it is all non Tiwi staff.

The major impediments to recruitment of Tiwi staff are

- Limited educational background including literacy and numeracy, trade qualifications
- Lack of need to work
- Staff attendance and reliability makes it difficult to efficiently plan work
- Staff retention and churn which can be lack of drive to work due to humbugging from family and community, dislike of working or the work type,



## Current Workforce Profile

In 2013 - a major overhaul of the organisational structure was undertaken which included

- rationalisation and standardisation of position titles, grades,
- changes to the disposition of units within Directorates
- re-structure of reporting lines within Directorates
- re-design of a number of middle management jobs
- changes to recruitment forms and templates

Recruitment is undertaken using Position Descriptions, which are reviewed for currency and accuracy before use. Recruitment is based on merit selections, with on-island (internal) or external advertising by a variety of means aligned to the job and skill type needed. Succession planning is used however it is balanced against the need to win the position based on merit, with higher grade positions external advertising is used. Where jobs vacancies are urgent or require specialist skills, a direct appointment may be undertaken which is usually for a fixed period of time.

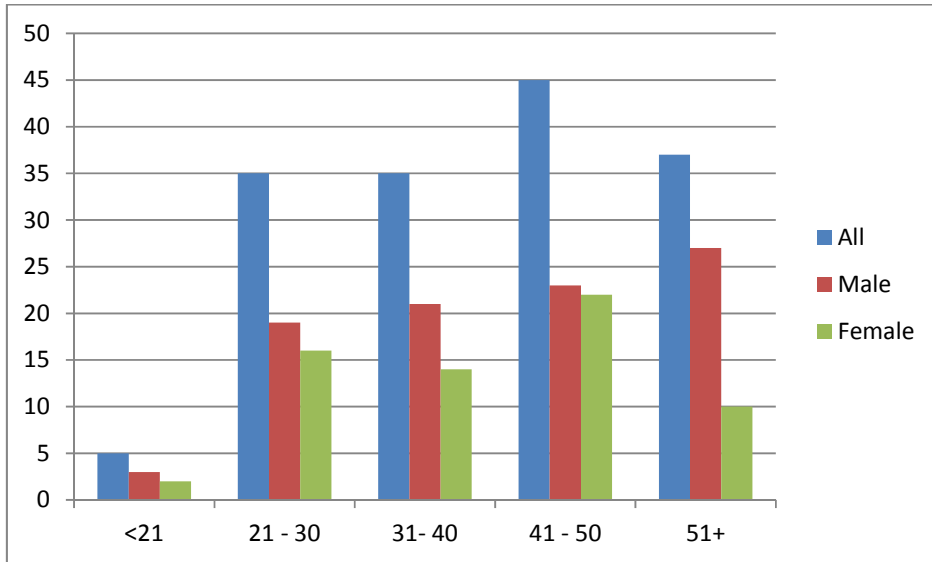
All staff in the Local Government Industry Award 2010 (LGIA) Level 1 – 11 ranges are generally called an Officer. This title is then redefined by whether an officer supervises other staff - Levels 5 - 6 may be Team Leaders; Levels 7 – 9 may be Coordinators, Levels 10 – 11 may be Managers. Senior management are generally above the ward.

Currently women predominate in Human Resources and Pay Roll, Finance, and Childcare, while men predominate in Town Services, Asset Management and Civil Works.

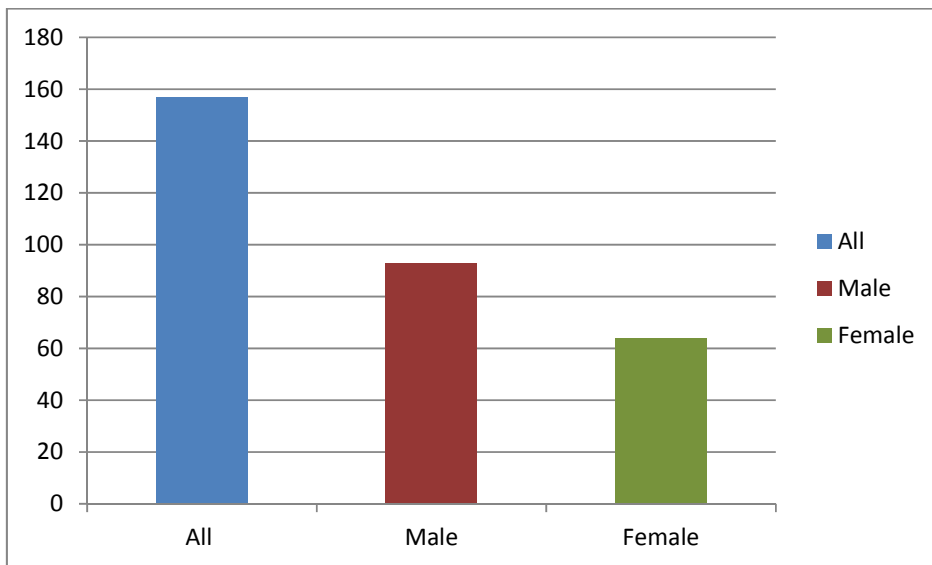
The following graphs show the current demographics for staff by age, gender, Tiwi and non Tiwi staff. Councillors and Local Authority Members have been excluded due to potential bias in age and average grade calculations. At the time of finalising this report there were over 10 vacancies on the organisation structure that were under recruitment action.

For the overall organisation 70.5% of staff are Tiwi (with Councillors and Authority members included this amount increases to 74%) and 42% are women however interestingly the average pay rate for women is higher than men.

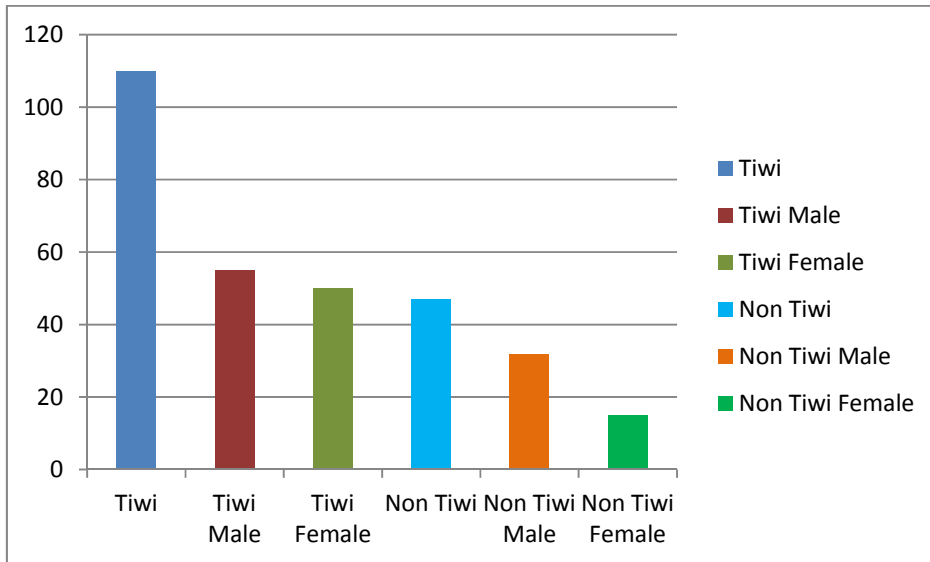
**Figure 1 - Demographics by Age and Gender**



**Figure 2 Total Number of Male and Female staff by Age**



**Figure 3 Number of Tiwi and Non Tiwi staff by gender**



The average grade of Tiwi staff, excluding apprentices, juniors and casuals is Level 3 Step 4, on a gender basis for males the average grade is Level 4 Step 3 for males and for females the average grade is Level 4 Step 3. Of the current 157 staff, only 9 are casual staff as the organisation is actively moving to minimise the excessive historical use of casual staff by transferring staff to permanent part time.

A Mentoring program has been in operation for three years, ending in June 2014. Two Tiwi staff have trained in mentoring and conducted formal and formal interviews with both Tiwi and non Tiwi staff. Staff are generally satisfied with the organisation, they are willing to undertake short training courses and seek promotion however formal training presents barriers due to the literacy, numeracy and language required. For example Childcare workers are required to undertake a Certificate 3 in Childcare and often have to complete a parallel course in Literacy, Language and Numeracy, this causes delays in training and the Certificate Course has a high drop out rate.

Apprenticeships have been provided in trade certificates Certificate 2 and Certificate 3 level, with study blocks undertaken in Darwin, the apprentices are taking years to do their courses and complete their training. If the course is a Certificate 2 they are not full trained trades' people, they then have to commence a Certificate 3 or higher before being fully qualified, which can mean many years in training to reach full trade qualification and earnings.

Key skill set areas that are barriers to workforce entry from foundation to higher to higher level

- Literacy, Language and Numeracy
- Computer literacy
- Trades qualifications
- Supervision and management of staff

All these issues can be overcome by learning and training.



Wet season road



Don't drive on low tide beaches at estuary – this used to be a Land Cruiser



Tiwi Art



Women's' Gender equity and mentoring Workshop

## SWOT and TOWS Analysis

A SWOT analysis to identify Strengths and Weaknesses that are internal to the organisation and the Opportunities and Threats that are external to the organisation is listed below.

A complementary TOWS Analysis was undertaken to identify Strategic Options as follows

- SO Strategic Options to use strengths to take advantage of opportunities
- WO Strategic Options to take advantage of opportunities by overcoming Weaknesses
- ST Strategic Options to use strengths to avoid threats
- WT Strategic Options to minimise weakness and avoid threats.

**Table 1 SWOT Analysis**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Demand for work greater than supply.</p> <p>Commitment to training for staff, budget allocation for training.</p> <p>Support from Senior Management.</p> <p>High level of Tiwi staff in workplace.</p> <p>Merit selection processes balanced with succession planning.</p> <p>Three years of formal mentoring program, two Tiwi staff trained as mentors.</p> <p>Flexibility of training types.</p> <p>Sufficient staff to be able to bring good quality trainers to the islands cost effectively.</p> <p>Access to high quality trainers from Primary training providers.</p> <p>Ability to use current Tiwi staff as role models and mentors on an informal basis.</p>	<p>Staff churn – enter, leave and re-enter workforce.</p> <p>Failure to appreciate training, lack of attendance and lack of respect for trainers.</p> <p>Cost to take staff to mainland for training.</p> <p>Literacy, Language and Numeracy issues.</p> <p>Lack of computer literacy.</p> <p>Lack of education requirements to apply for skilled and higher level jobs.</p> <p>Lack of suitable venue for large training groups and limited accommodation.</p> <p>No data entry into TechOne system to flag when certificates permits and licences need renewal.</p> <p>Inability to deliver catch up training to new staff one on one basis e.g. cultural awareness training.</p>

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>Better engagement at school level about career pathways in local government.</p> <p>Support VET courses with high school.</p> <p>More work experience opportunities for local students.</p> <p>Emphasis on adult learning rather than education.</p> <p>Capability assessments by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) prior to staff commencing Certificate courses.</p> <p>Better communication and oversight of apprenticeships and formal courses to ensure adequate progress is made.</p>	<p>Change to government policy support for indigenous employment and training.</p> <p>Loss of funding for programs causing job losses.</p> <p>Tick the box trainers in the past who will give concessional certification to trainees leaving without the required competency.</p>

**Table 2 TOWS Strategic Options**

<b>SO Strategic Options</b>	<b>WO Strategic Options</b>
<p>Commence school engagement program using current staff as examples.</p> <p>Explore options for VET courses in conjunction with high schools.</p> <p>Use qualified and skilled staff to run in-house training on a schedule basis at each work location.</p> <p>Deal directly with reputable primary training providers/RTOs to ensure training delivers to meet organisational and staff needs and expectation. Develop a training program for each financial year.</p> <p>Use camp out venues for teambuilding and informal training courses and as a knowledge exchange between staff on a more regular basis.</p>	<p>Better engagement with staff when job are re-structured or re-designed.</p> <p>Clear notification to training participant's on organisations expectations.</p> <p>Use high quality trainers to provide training that staff enjoy and value.</p> <p>Undertake capability assessments before commencing staff in formal training programs.</p> <p>Use existing equipment and expertise to record the next Cultural Awareness training onto DVD for use by new Non Tiwi staff.</p> <p>Actively seek online training courses.</p> <p>Better support staff travelling to training at other communities for training.</p>
<b>ST Strategic Options</b>	<b>WT Strategic Options</b>
<p>Actively seek opportunities to access funding for employment and training of indigenous staff.</p> <p>Actively seek opportunities to access training delivered by government agencies or entities at low or minimal charges.</p> <p>Better assessment of training providers for cost effective good outcomes that yield real results.</p>	<p>Engage with primary training providers, not through third parties.</p> <p>Utilise empty staff housing to supplement accommodation.</p> <p>Commence data entry into Tech One for all licences, permits etc. that have expiry dates and flag for renewal.</p>

## Training Types and Expectations

The TIRC uses three types of training for staff (*See Appendix A for a list of training*)

1. Basic training – usually completed by all staff e.g. first aid, computer and electronic filing for office staff, general induction and Work Health Safety. Training can also involve assisting staff to obtain Drivers Licences through the Driver Training Program. Non Tiwi staff also undertake Cultural Awareness training in a group environment.
2. Specific Training – related to the officer's role e.g. computer software programs, TechOne software for Purchase Order/HR/Payroll/Finance; Airport and Security Training, Chainsaw, OHS White Card, Chemical Handling, Vehicle Licences, Coxswain.
3. Career pathways - Apprenticeships, TAFE and tertiary courses, these courses are longer term commitments.

The type of training that is used is flexible depending on the needs of the trainees and the type of course being delivered

1. Informal training – may be in-house training, presentation, videos, attendance at conference, workshops, and short courses.
2. Semi formal training – may be group training, on-line training, run over a number of days or <6 months.
3. Formal training – Certificate 3 or above from a registered training organisation, traineeships, apprenticeships, >6months duration.

Training should be based on Adult Learning Styles to maximise the potential for all attendees to maximise their learning and provide the organisation with more cost effective and long term adult learning:

- Auditory – learning by hearing
- Visual – learning by seeing
- Kinaesthetic – learning by doing

Staff are expected to be respectful of the trainer, arrive in time. Stay until the end of the training and share what they have learned with other staff.

For formal training arrangements a new training request form has been developed which outlines the expectation of trainee and the commitment they are making to training (*See Appendix B Training Request Form*).



Training attendance records are kept and qualifications, certificate of attendance, competencies, permits or licences are held on file. Data entry into Tech One software system is planned in order for qualifications with expiry dates to be flagged for renewal at the appropriate time.

## **Future Workforce Profile**

Gaps generally fall into

1. Workforce planning – capacity – TIRC is dependent on grants and contracts to bridge the gap between rate income and operational expenditure, which tends to be reactive, seeking supplementary income, is proactive but requires resources and brings in inherent variability to workforce planning.
2. Workforce development – capabilities – clearly a need for a more structured in terms of planning and flexible approaching terms of delivery to increasing capacity of staff to move across units, in and out of the workforce and progress careers.
3. Human resource management – staffing – while there is labour available on the islands there is a lack of a qualified pool of personnel which leads to staff being brought onto the island to provide specialist/professional services

The future workforce profile for the organisation cover is based on the following areas:

- Increase the percentage of Tiwi staff in the workplace
- Maintain or improve gender equity
- Improve the entry and retention of younger staff to workplace
- Increase the overall number of staff employed through securing additional/replacement funding

Over the next three years workforce demand will change as funding programs end and staff are reallocated or cannot be retained. With an aging workforce opportunities will arise for recruitment of replacement staff. Exit strategies may need to be developed for staff.

Demand for jobs may increase and supply decrease as a major timber harvesting program commences on the Tiwi Islands.

The cost of doing business is highly likely to rise due to increased fuel and electricity costs, CPI adjustment increases to wages and the urgent need to address asset replacement. Changes to the regulatory environment are impacting on the ability to supply an inter island ferry service as

four staff are required to be on duty for the ferry to operate, the ferry itself has high maintenance costs and the ability to recover costs is limited by the community members ability to pay.

### **Conclusion, review, evaluation strategy and next steps**

In conclusion the primary issues for Workforce Development lie in education, adult learning and training to provide the skills and qualifications needed in the workplace.

The next steps in the order to achieve the future profile and increase Tiwi involvement in the workforce will require the organisation to support

- direct financial support for an adult learning environment ,
- sourcing alternate funding to retain the existing workforce,
- a structured learning program directed by this Workforce Development Plan,
- a training program that is flexible in delivery, meets the varying degree of capacity of staff, and
- support for skill enhance and career development of all staff.

Evaluation of the program should be conducted on a 6 monthly basis reviewing the demographics, training provision and attendance.



## References

Australian Government Skills Connect <http://skillsconnect.gov.au/home/the-road-to-successful-workforce-development/planning/>

De Santis R, 2014 *Tiwi Islands Regional Council Strategic Planning Community Support Presentation* to Councillors and Local Authority Members

John G, Scholes K, Whittingdon R, Seventh Edition 2006, *Exploring Corporate Strategy*

Northern Territory Workforce Development Planning and Development – NT Regional and Remote Shires, Local People for Local Jobs – Project Report 2012

Northern Territory Workforce Development Planning and Development – NT Regional and Remote Shires, Local People for Local Jobs – Project Report 2012 Appendix C Workforce Plan template

Northern Territory Government <http://www.dob.nt.gov.au/employment/workforce-development/Pages/your-workforce.aspx>

Palmer LG, 2014 *Tiwi Islands Regional Council Strategic Planning Corporate Services Presentation* to Councillors and Local Authority Members

Sibley K, 2014 *Tiwi Islands Regional Council Strategic Planning Infrastructure Presentation* to Councillors and Local Authority Members

Roper Gulf Shire, Workforce Development Plan, Local 2012 - 2013

Tiwi Islands Shire Council Shire Plan, 2013-14

Work Force Planning <http://workforceplanningtools.com.au/workforce-development-plan/>

## **Appendix A – Training provided by External Providers in 2013 - 14**

### Short Courses

- Airport Operations
- Security
- Coxswain
- Heavy Machinery
- Truck licences
- Health and Safety Representatives
- Dealing Effectively with Unacceptable Employee Behaviour
- Prevention of Discrimination , Harassment and Bullying for Managers
- First Aid – 3 occasions
- Chemical handling
- Chain Saw
- Basic MS Office Word 2010
- Basic Office 2010 Excel
- Transition from office 2003 to 2010
- Fundamentals of Financial for non Financial Managers
- Delegation Skills
- How to Excel as a Manager and Supervisor – for experienced manager
- Excel as a manager – for new or aspiring supervisors/managers
- Conflict Resolution and Confrontation Management
- Dealing With Negative Attitudes in the Workplace
- Women's Gender Equity and Mentoring Workshop

### Formal Courses

- Certificate 2, 3 & 4 in Business
- Certificate 3 in Childcare
- Apprenticeship Certificate 2 Automotive Vehicle Servicing (Light)
- Apprenticeship in Certificate 3 Carpentry
- Certificate 3 Fitness

**Appendix B - Training Request Form**

	<h1 style="margin: 0;">TIWI Islands Regional Council</h1>
	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Request for Training <small>(outside of the organisation) RH12</small></h2>
<p><b>Please return this form to the Human Resources Department</b></p>	

Name		Employee No	
Position Title		Work Location	
Reports to		Directorate	
Course			
Institution		Location	
Duration	.....Days.....Weeks.....Years	In work time	No/Yes.....days/week
Delivery	External/ On campus/ Online	Course fees	
Travel cost		Materials cost	

Value of course to Employee

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Value of course to Council

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Please attach a copy of the course outline, subjects and other relevant course information.

Please attach your resume.

Council may only fund units that are considered of value to the organisation.

If this application is approved a letter of confirmation will be issued by HR.

**Employee Declaration**

I agree that I will undertake to complete the course to the standard and timeframe required on enrolment.

I agree that were absence from work is required to attend lessons, complete assignments, and sit exams; I will submit a Study Leave Request.

I understand that for courses containing multiple units, on-going funding depends on passing units funded by the council.

For Diploma courses or higher, I understand that failure to complete a course or withdrawing from a course after refund date will make me liable to repay the council the cost of the course fees.

Employee signature:.....Date.....

**APPROVAL**

Managers/Directors Name			
Signature		Date	

**Human Resources Office Use Only**

CEO Approval		Date	
HR Officer Signature:			
Date:			