



Issue 1:

Monday 13th March 2006

On behalf of the Food, Tourism and Hospitality Industry Skills Advisory Council SA Inc. and the project team, I welcome you to the very first issue of the Meat Industry Workforce Development Project Newsletter!

The Food, Tourism and Hospitality Industry Skills Advisory Council SA Inc, trading as the FTH Skills Council, is one of nine newly established Industry Skills Boards working with industry, community, and government to develop industry specific work plans, identify workforce trends and emerging skill needs and consider issues relating to career advice and the attraction and retention of a skilled workforce.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Vision 2005-2008 in Action

The FTH Skills Council plays a significant role in contributing to the growing culture of workforce development and skill enhancement across the industries it embraces. In doing so, the Food, Tourism and Hospitality industries in South Australia will be well informed about opportunities to improve skills and address skill shortages and the South Australian Government will have relevant data to assist in the formulation of policies to complement industry initiatives.

“Attraction and Retention of Labour in the SA Meat Industry” Workforce Development Project

The Meat Industry in South Australia is entering a period of substantial growth. To be able to successfully achieve that level of growth the Industry will need to secure a flexible, skilled, and motivated workforce which will be retained in the industry over that period and in the longer term.

To assist industry in meeting its workforce needs the FTH Skills Council has brought together key industry stakeholders, government and other agencies to undertake a joint venture project aimed at enabling industry to:

- attract suitable personnel
- retain current and new staff
- access appropriate entry level and on-job training
- provide accurate career advice
- promote multi-skilling
- further develop skills of its managers, and
- address issues affecting the above which may limit industry performance and growth

This project is titled “Attraction and Retention of Labour in the SA Meat Industry” Workforce Development Project. In user-friendly terms, it is often referred to as “The SA Meat Industry Workforce Development Project”.

The State Government through the *SA Works* Workforce Development fund has provided \$200,000 to support this initiative with a further \$80,000 being made available by industry over the coming 18 months.



HOW CAN WE HELP YOU

Project Strategies

Workforce development encompasses an almost endless sphere of opportunities. The key to a successful framework often lies with strategies that provide tangible achievements, realized through a process of gradual change that is well supported and directed.

The FTH Skills Council has recognized that building the fundamentals of an effective Workforce Development Framework within the SA Meat Industry will require a range of management strategies through a team approach. This realization has resulted in the establishment of the following mechanisms:

- Appointment of a **Project Manager** for an 18 month period to oversee strategic planning and management, governance of project steering and focus groups, liaison with key stakeholders, research best practice and create a State-wide Growth strategy.
- Appointment of a Project Officer as an **Industry Change Agent** for 15 months to champion attraction and retention as a way forward through consultation with industry via site visits and focus groups, overseeing the suitability and quality of training, designing, implementing and evaluating the Retention “Road Show” to encourage industry commitment to change.
- A **Governance Structure** that includes Local, Regional and State Focus Groups to support ongoing consultation with key parties.
- A **Growth Strategy** that supports the industry’s planned employment growth over the next 5 years through ongoing development of sound workforce development strategies to be adopted in all other SA Regions.
- A **Ministerial Advisory Committee** to advise the Minister for Further Education and Employment on all issues affecting the productivity and long term growth of the Meat Industry in SA.

Operationally, the outcomes of this project will be realized through the introduction of a Workforce Development framework that supports a number of attraction and retention strategies in the South East Region of South Australia. The project aims to implement:

- A **School Based Apprenticeship Program** jointly supported through work placements by MAXIMA Group Training, Group Training Employment (GTE) and training delivery by the TAFESA Regency Meat Studies Section.
- **Pre-Employment Workshops** targeting younger people, Mature Age workers, Sole Parents and Women, coordinated through a collaborative approach with Job Network Agencies in the region.
- Improved Learning and relationship management support through an Individualized **Case Management approach**.
- A joint Industry/Union “**Training for Retention**” **Road Show** to assist regionally based processors and retailers with Professional Development strategies.
- A **mentoring program** to assist in the retention of existing workers within this industry.
- The production of a **Resource** which will identify all WFD resources, government contacts, relevant agencies and regulations, industry recognition processes, access to government funding initiatives and export opportunities.

Project Achievements

Statewide Growth Strategy: To assist in developing an appropriate strategy that will consider the full range of issues associated with Industry Leadership, Economic Development, Workforce Development and Training, a SA Statewide Meat Industry WFD Steering Group has been formed.

To assist in meeting the growth needs of the Meat Industry, the SA Statewide Meat Industry Steering Group invited key industry stakeholders, government and other agencies to attend a "SA Meat Industry Employers Forum" dinner on the 1st March 2006. Participants were invited to discuss the specific needs of their enterprises in achieving this development in the coming years and to gain an appreciation of the range of initiatives available to support industry growth.

This forum was sponsored by the Wakefield Regional Council and the Mid North and Barossa and Light Regional Development Boards and run in conjunction with the Food, Tourism & Hospitality Skills Council, PIRSA and TAFESA. These agencies presented the following addresses during the evening:

- Industry Address: **"Looking Forward – Establishing a Stronger Workforce"** by John Cassebohm, EO, Food, Tourism & Hospitality Skills Council
- PIRSA Address: **"Industry Development across the Sectors"** by Bill Giles, Principal Officer, Meat, PIRSA
- Regions At Work Address: **"Crossing the Regions"** by Simon Millcock, Economic Development Officer, Yorke Regional Development Board
- Workforce Development: **"Attraction & Retention of Labor In the SA Meat Industry"** by Kerryn Smith, Project Manager, FTH Skills Council
- TAFESA Address: **"Skilling the Meat Industry Workforce"** by Mark Olson, Educational Manager, Meat Studies Program

Feedback from this forum has resulted in ongoing discussion and negotiation with a range of key industry employers who have significant employment demands across the state.

South East Pilot: This initiative is designed to provide the resources and seed funding to develop a self-sustaining Workforce Development strategy for the SE Region. As such the following steps have been taken to establish this framework:

- A regional visit was conducted by the Project Team on the 2nd and 3rd February 2006. A meeting with key regional support agencies, major employers and business support agencies has resulted in the development of a sound network in the local region. This network has formed the SE WFD Reference Group as a focus group for further consultation and advice.
- In an attempt to establish the School Based New Apprenticeship Program in the SE, "Butcher for a Day" promotions were held in Naracoorte on Monday 27th February and Mt Gambier on Friday 3rd March 2006. These promotions allowed participants from Secondary Schools and the Community to experiment with knife skills and meat preparation for marinated skewers, sausage making and linking, hamburger making and meat packing. A key highlight of the day was a surprise visit by the "Dancing Butchers" group, made up of local Butchers and their keenest staff. A fun day was had by all!

To-date, 19 students have nominated for a School Based New Apprenticeship and will undergo a screening process early this week. A very pleasing result!



CONTACTS

FTH Skills Council sees this initiative very much as a team effort. We would welcome any thoughts and feedback you may have.

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