

# Workforce Strategy 2022-25



Bega Valley Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of the shire, the people of the Yuin nation, and show our respect to elders past, present and emerging.

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# Executive Summary

This workforce strategy, developed through internal and external consultation, identifies Council's challenges, opportunities and priorities in relation to its workforce for the 2022-2025 period.

The Workforce Strategy considers the people, capabilities, experience and expertise required to implement Council's four-year Delivery Program and continue progressing us towards the Community's long-term goals outlined in the Community Strategic Plan. The plan integrates principles of human resource management, strategic workforce planning and capability building. It outlines how Council will develop and maintain a high-calibre employee base that meets current and future organisational and community needs.

The Workforce Strategy includes:

- an explanation of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) framework and where the Workforce Strategy sits within that framework
- an overview of the corporate values embedded within the organisation
- the major achievements from the 2017-21 Workforce Strategy
- an organisational profile
- a summary of the strategic challenges and opportunities
- financials considerations
- the actions Council will take to ensure we build and maintain an appropriate workforce structure and culture to meet the objectives of the Delivery Program 2022-25.

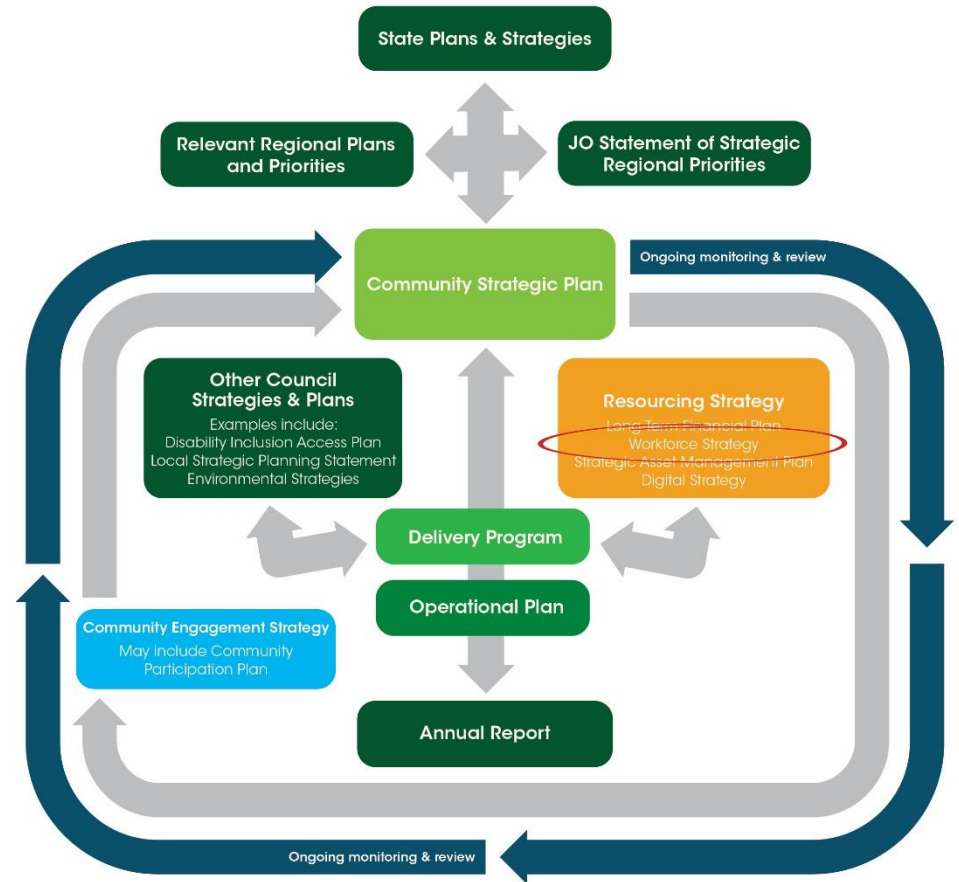


# Framework

The Workforce Strategy identifies the strategic challenges, opportunities, and priorities for Council in relation to its people, and how we make sure we get the right people in the right positions to deliver our services effectively and efficiently.

The Community Strategic Plan 2042 outlines strategies that relate directly to our workforce:

- We have meaningful employment and learning opportunities for people at all stages in life.
- We are an informed and engaged community with a transparent, consultative and responsive Council.
- Council has strong organisational practices to ensure a viable organisation that delivers services and facilities to meet community needs.



# Our Values

We are committed to being a values-based organisation. Council's core values are supported by commitment statements. Our 'PLaCE values' are:

- People matter – we care for our people and each other
  - We respect, value and trust each other
  - We provide a caring and safe workplace
  - We act with integrity and honesty
  - We maintain the right work/life balance
- Learning is important – we learn and innovate
  - We actively encourage innovation and learning
  - We learn from our mistakes
  - We are a no-blame workplace
  - We invite constructive feedback
  - We are always improving
- and we
- Can do – we have a can-do approach and focus on solutions and outcomes
  - We strive for excellence
  - We do what we say
  - We achieve outcomes as a team
  - We celebrate success
- Engaging the whole organisation is key – we engage and communicate, clearly and consistently
  - We go to the right person
  - We are open and transparent
  - We listen
  - We communicate clearly and consistently

These values continue to be applied within our organisation and guide our people and business activities, practices, systems and processes.



# Achievements

During the four-year period preceding this workforce strategy, Council developed and implemented a number of actions and strategies, which have helped set the platform for future workforce planning and delivery of services.

Some of the key initiatives implemented as part of the 2017-21 Workforce Strategy are highlighted in the table below.

Item	Achievement
Gender diversity	<p>Council has experienced a shift in its 'gender profile' since 2017. At 5 January 2022, 48% of employees are male and 52% female.</p> <p>A significant shift has occurred at the management level with a higher proportion of females now being employed in managerial positions. Out of the total of 20 managerial positions across the organisation, 9 of these are filled by women. Prior to 2017, the ratio of female to male staff in leadership roles was significantly lower.</p>
Engaging with youth	<p>In 2020, Council developed and implemented a Work Experience and Work Placement program. This was prepared in consultation with local high schools and tertiary education providers.</p> <p>Council has also developed positive networks in the local community and attend careers days and information sessions with the Department of Education, TAFE NSW and University of Wollongong (Bega Campus).</p> <p>Council has supported six (6) local high school students to complete a School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship.</p>
Organisational culture and staff satisfaction	<p>In October 2020, Council entered a research project with the University of South Australia to deliver the first of three organisational culture and staff satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>The second survey was delivered in November 2021 and the third expected to be implemented in October/November 2022.</p> <p>The results of the first survey were positive, with a response rate over 60%. The overall satisfaction of staff was higher than the industry average, as was the level of resilience and organisational citizenship experience from our employees.</p>

Item	Achievement
Engaging cadets/trainees/apprentices	<p>At 5 January 2022, Council employs 9 people on 6-year contracts as cadets. These fixed-term positions are currently working in engineering, finance, human resources, and environmental planning.</p> <p>During 2017-21, Council had several cadets complete their tertiary studies and successfully apply for permanent roles within the organisation, particularly in engineering, waste services, finance and human resources.</p> <p>In November 2021, Council developed a formal traineeship program, appointing 10 new trainees to fixed-term contract positions. The trainees are working in finance, revenue, property services, IT, compliance, building and certification, and records management.</p> <p>We also have three people engaged in four-year apprenticeships within our Water and Sewer Services, and Fleet Services.</p>
Learning and Development	<p>In November 2021, Council implemented an online Learning Management System (LMS) that is being used to deliver training and education to all employees.</p>
Improvement of Human Resource Management System (HRMS)	<p>To help improve delivery of its services, Council has implemented a number of new and improved software solutions concerning its Human Resource Information System (HRIS), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduction of an improved recruitment and selection platform in December 2019</li> <li>• implementation of project management software in 2020</li> <li>• implementation of delegations' software in 202.</li> <li>• implementation of an online Learning Management System (LMS) in December 2021</li> <li>• implementation of a new financial reporting software (BIS) in October 2021.</li> </ul> <p>The introduction of these systems has seen improvements in the efficiency of operational processes.</p>
Decentralisation and mobilisation of the workforce	<p>In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Council introduced formalised Home-based Work Agreements in February 2020 that will remain in place as a strategic objective of workforce management through attraction and retention.</p>
Working together	<p>Council is a member of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) and continued to work in collaboration with this group.</p> <p>Council's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Bega, Eden and Merrimans Local Aboriginal Lands Council was adopted in August 2019.</p> <p>In 2020, Council developed and implemented a Work Experience and Work Placement program. This was developed in consultation with local high schools and tertiary education providers.</p> <p>In October 2021, Council adopted its Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2021-2025.</p>

# Organisational profile

Leadership and management of Bega Valley Shire Council is a collaborative effort between the Mayor, Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and staff. The CEO is responsible for the effective and efficient delivery of Council’s day-to-day operations and reports to the Council (Councillors). Our CEO is supported in the role by three Directors who, with the CEO, form the Leadership Executive Group.









Council traditionally has stable employee numbers and trends or comparisons in data are difficult to analyse. During the period between December 2019 and January 2022, Council experienced a number of external events which impacted our workforce profile. The Black Summer bushfires in 2019-20, multiple flooding events, and COVID-19 have all had significant and ongoing effects on our business operations.

The number of fixed-term contract positions and secondments has increased significantly during the 2017-21 period. These increases were driven predominantly by recovery from the Black Summer bushfires and other natural disasters. Overall, as at 5 January 2022, there is an improvement in the gender balance.

## Employment types

### Workforce snapshot

	Full-time equivalent positions	<b>345</b>
	Fixed term contract positions	<b>158</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cadets</li> <li>• Trainees</li> <li>• Apprentices</li> </ul>	<p>9</p> <p>15</p> <p>3</p>
	Casual employees engaged	<b>65</b>
	Total head count	<b>568</b>

## Gender profile

<b>Male Employees</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Female employees</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Gender by directorate</b>	
<b>Assets and Operations</b>	
- Male	<b>221</b>
- Female	<b>100</b>
<b>Community, Environment and Planning</b>	
- Male	<b>147</b>
- Female	<b>30</b>
<b>Business and Governance</b>	
- Male	<b>15</b>
- Female	<b>55</b>
<b>Men in managerial positions</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Women in managerial positions</b>	<b>9</b>

The data provided in these tables are the status as at 5 January 2022. The number of casual employees engaged (65) were those engaged in casual work in the two-week pay period preceding 5 January 2022.

### Age profile

15-19 years	<b>16</b>
20-24 years	<b>26</b>
25-29 years	<b>44</b>
30-34 years	<b>56</b>
35-39 years	<b>79</b>
40-44 years	<b>61</b>
45-49 years	<b>78</b>
50-54 years	<b>72</b>
55-59 years	<b>63</b>
60-64 years	<b>50</b>
65 or oder	<b>23</b>

### Length of Service

Length of tenure is less than 10 years	<b>433</b>
Length of tenure is between 11-19 years	<b>91</b>
Length of tenure is between 20-29 years	<b>28</b>
Length of tenure is between 30-39 years	<b>12</b>
Length of tenure is 40 years or above	<b>4</b>

### Diversity profile

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people	<b>14</b>
People with disability	<b>2</b>
Culturally and linguistically diverse people	<b>12</b>

### Turnover and retirement rates

Turnover rate	9.3%
Retirement rate	1%

# Strategic Challenges

Bega Valley Shire Council is a member of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO). In October 2020, following a process of collaboration and consultation with members, the CRJO adopted and published the Regional Workforce Strategy.

The regional strategy identified key drivers and pressures being experienced by Council regarding the management of its workforce and ability to continue delivering services to the community as a result of external forces.

The drivers and pressures for Bega Valley Shire Council identified in the regional strategy include:

- **Geography**  
The geographic location of the shire can create challenges in attracting and retaining employees to the organisation.
- **Local economy and employment**  
The local economy and employment opportunities outside of Council can create challenges in attracting and retaining employees to the organisation – especially prospective employees with families.
- **Demographics and education**  
The importance of lifestyle is a significant motivator for attracting and retaining prospective employees. A high proportion

of people under the age of 30 are moving out of the shire to pursue employment and education opportunities. The Bega Valley Shire has a higher-than-average amount of people with graduate and postgraduate qualifications; many of these qualified individuals are retirees.

- **Competition with other employers**  
Major infrastructure projects in the South East such as Snowy Hydro 2.0 or other region-wide infrastructure projects make it a challenge to attract new employees. The potential for employees to work from home is a challenge due to private enterprise, state and federal government employers enabling staff to work remotely, decentralising the workforce and increasing competition in the employer market.
- **The state of local government as an industry**
  - Employee costs (salaries, wages, and other employee costs) are 37% of total expenditure across the CRJO members.
  - There are major skills shortages within local government – particularly in disciplines of engineering, project management, planning and plant operators.

- Difficult to retain employees due to remuneration in regional areas as well as lower levels of opportunities for career progression and experiences that larger metropolitan councils may offer.
- Recovery from natural disasters; in particular the 2019-20 bushfires has diversified the services provided by Council and in some cases, redirected the priority of desired community outcomes.
- The ongoing impacts and opportunities that arise as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to the challenges identified at the regional level, Council also faces a number of challenges on a local level, including:

- the low ratepayer base in the Bega Valley
- the ability to generate revenue to pay for a skilled and experienced workforce
- the availability and affordability of housing in the shire
- the high number of volunteers that council relies on to support the community
- the need to adapt to and adopt new technology suitable to local government.

# Financial Considerations

Employment costs are estimated to account for 34% of our total draft estimated 2022-23 operating expenditure and have been developed under the following assumptions:

- continuation of current agreed service levels for delivering outputs, functions and actions
- a stable workforce number with no significant changes to functions and services
- an annual turnover rate of between 10- 20%
- continued internal focus to develop and grow staff skills, experience and knowledge programs
- minimal industrial activity
- no significant labour policy changes
- appropriate workforce and resources to complete the delivery program and operational plan actions
- completion of asset management annual programs

Using these assumptions, employment costs have been projected to support business as usual service delivery.

With 24% of Council employees aged 55 or over we need to plan for impending liabilities associated with staff exiting the workforce.

The forecast balance of the Employee Leave Entitlements (ELE) as at 30 June 2022 is \$1.6million. We will continue to monitor the ELE over the coming years and will actively manage Council’s leave liability.

Ongoing capacity to fund rising employment costs will require a strategic approach that maximises revenue streams, reviews service provisions and models, and increases resource capabilities.

Increases in employee costs can be attributed to:

- Local Government Award salary/wage and performance review increases
- changes to employee leave entitlements
- superannuation
- workers compensation
- staff training
- other employment costs.

Year	Total Employee Costs (\$,000)
2020-21	39,838
2021-22	40,847
2022-23	42,498

^ These include operational and capital wages.

# Strategic Opportunities

Although the operations of Council and delivery of services to the community will be influenced by the challenges identified within this document, there are also a number of opportunities that will be considered as part of this workforce strategy and the actions included.

The strategic opportunities are:

- involvement in the development of a circular economy and other networking opportunities
- the geographical location of the Shire
- the provision of flexible and remote work arrangements
- culture of the organisation
- utilising economies of scale in our workforce that allows us to encourage diversity and be agile when needed
- the development and growth of existing personnel as well as other local residents who join our organisation.

Based on the challenges and opportunities identified above, Bega Valley Shire Council has identified the following as its strategic priorities for the 2022-25 period.



# Action Plan

Strategic priority	Action	Year
Technology	Implement new performance management system	2022/23
	Implement new payroll system	2023/24
	Conduct audit of personnel data with Financial Management Information System (FMIS)	2022/23
	Mobile devices and software	2022- 2025
Attraction and retention	Provide flexible and remote working arrangements for new and existing employees	2022/23
	Develop and maintain partnerships with local high schools and tertiary education providers to promote local government as a career	2022-2025
	Develop a formal internship, work experience and work placement program	2022-2024
	Develop and implement a staff wellbeing program that includes informal rewards and recognition	2022/23
	Develop a service level agreement with other councils within the CRJO that enables resource sharing through fixed-term secondments	2023/24
	Conduct a review of Council's salary structure	2024/25
	Finalise and implement diversity and inclusion employment strategies	2022/23

Strategic priority	Action	Year
Learning and development	Deliver learning and development program through Learning Management System	2022/23
	Implement mentoring strategy	2022/23
	Develop a service level agreement with other Councils within the CRJO to promote, encourage and enable resource sharing	2023/24
	Higher duty arrangements and internal secondments	2022-2025
Skills shortages	Develop and implement a formalised succession plan which focusses on hard to recruit roles and potential areas where skills shortages exist	2022/23
	Develop and implement a formal cadet, trainee, and apprentice program	2022-2025
Knowledge management	Implement succession planning strategy	2022/23

Council's People and Culture team is responsible for implementing the Action Plan. The Plan will evolve as the community and the organisation reviews and evaluates its needs. At a minimum, it will be reviewed every year alongside our Operational Plan to ensure its objectives reflect the changing workforce, community and Council priorities.

## Key performance measures

Performance Measure	Baseline- 2022	Desired Trend
Training expenditure	\$166,515	Stabilise
Gender profile	48:52 Female to Male ratio	Stabilise
Number of cadets, trainees, and apprentice	25	Increase
Indigenous employment and diversity profile	15	Increase
Employee with excess leave accruals		Decrease
- Number of staff with more than 13 weeks Long Service Leave	46	
- Number of staff with more than 8 weeks Annual Leave	49	
Employee satisfaction	4.16/5.00	Stabilise
Employee resilience	4.74/6.00	Increase
Employee turnover	9.3%^	Stabilise

^ Benchmark from PWC Excellence Program and CRJO Regional Workforce Strategy is between 10%- 20%

## Supporting documents

- Regional Workforce Strategy
- Community Strategic Plan
- BVSC IPR document suite
- Succession plan
- Mentoring strategy
- Local Aboriginal Land Councils- Memorandum of Understanding
- Disability and Inclusion Action Plan
- Corporate learning and development plan
- CERM PI culture survey report











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