

**DRAFT QPRC
Workforce
Management Plan
2025-2029**

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General Manager's Foreword

Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council continues to evolve as one of NSW's largest and most dynamic regional councils. This Workforce Management Plan 2025–2029 reflects our commitment to aligning people and purpose, supporting a capable and engaged workforce to meet the changing needs of our communities.

We are entering a phase of consolidation, growth, and transformation. With service demands increasing across Googong, Bungendore and Jerrabomberra, we must ensure that our workforce structure, skills, and systems are sustainable and future focused. The plan draws on extensive staff consultation, external benchmarking, and emerging workforce trends to ensure we remain agile, accountable, and community driven.

I would like to thank all staff who contributed to this plan, especially through the 2024 survey process. Your voices, ideas, and lived experience help shape the future of QPRC. Together, we are building a culture of inclusion, innovation and excellence—one that reflects our values and delivers outcomes that matter.

Rebecca Ryan
General Manager

Legislative and Strategic Context

This Workforce Management Plan forms part of Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council's Resourcing Strategy, developed in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework outlined in the *Local Government Act 1993*. It provides the foundation for ensuring Council has the workforce resources necessary to deliver the Delivery Program, Operational Plan, and Community Strategic Plan.

Under section 403 of the Act, all NSW councils are required to prepare a Workforce Management Strategy. This document supports Council's responsibility to plan for and manage its workforce in a way that ensures sustainability, responsiveness, and alignment with community needs. It also reflects guidance provided by the Office of Local Government and supports QPRC's broader commitment to workforce excellence, risk management and organisational performance.

Executive Summary

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council employs 439 full time equivalent staff (559 including casuals) across a broad range of areas. The Local Government Area's estimated population is 65,369 and is expected to increase to around 76,000 by 2031, making it one of NSW's largest regional councils. QPRC provides services to an area of 5,319km², is responsible for more than \$2.4b worth of assets and has an annual budget of around \$230m.

As a key component of QPRC's Resourcing Strategy, this Workforce Management Plan focuses on ensuring the right people, skills, leadership, and culture are in place to deliver services efficiently. QPRC faces challenges such as skilled labour shortages, cost-of-living pressures, and a competitive employment market, rapid technological changes, legislative reforms, requiring proactive strategies to attract and retain talent. This strategy outlines pathways to attract, develop, and retain high-calibre employees who share QPRC's commitment to a safe, connected, and thriving community.

By anticipating workforce trends and addressing challenges proactively, QPRC ensures it can meet community expectations while adapting to the region's economic and demographic shifts.

Building on the previous Resourcing Strategy, the 2025-2029 Workforce Management Plan sees QPRC moving beyond the merger and transition phase to demonstrate QPRC's growth and stability despite challenges such as natural disasters, job seeker market, housing affordability and post COVID regional construction boom.

We remain committed to maintaining services in Braidwood and Bungendore with upgrades planned to make our workplace safe, accessible and equitable with planned refurbishment and relocation of facilities. 2027 will see Bungendore staff returning to our purpose-built Council building after the Department of Education moves their temporary high school to its new location.

Growth in Googong, Jerrabomberra, and Bungendore has increased service demands and will continue to do so with two new pools, community centres, libraries, parks and gardens, recreational facilities and sports fields planned for 2026/27 and 2027/28, requiring an increase in staff resources to ensure that we have a skilled and adaptable workforce to service these new facilities.

In 2022, QPRC set a target staff (FTE)-to-resident ratio of 7.5 per 1,000 residents, aligned with local government industry standards. In 2025, staffing levels are at 6.71 (FTE) per 1,000 residents. While overall staff numbers have increased, reflecting QPRC's intentional shift away from contractors toward building internal capability, we are still well within the benchmark for local government.

QPRC is focussed on building internal capability and capacity to allow us to employ more local talent and reduce the number of 'contract' staff employed providing us with the resources and capability necessary to deliver outcomes for Council.

Our Engineering and Roads Construction teams were an area of significant turnover, even though these contract roles had been in place since well before the merger in 2016. This impacted on our service delivery objectives in the area of road maintenance, as demonstrated by surveys and community engagement during the Special Rate Variation discussion; where it was evident this had fallen below expectations of Council and the community.

Recruiting to these positions as permanent jobs with Council has resulted in more stability and an experienced pool of applicants. Concerted efforts by our recruitment team for our General Equipment Operators has also resulted in over 15 vacancies being filled in the past 12 months.

This will remain a hot spot for recruitment in the coming years due to the aging workforce. Transport team members represent the largest group of employees over 50, at 51% of the directorate. Specific skills in infrastructure construction maintenance are, and will, continue to be a focus.

As with the transport team, waste and water and sewer workers are the next high risk of retirement group with 26% of the directorate eligible to retire within the next 5 years. QPRC will be targeting youth employment programs to build internal capability as well as encouraging more women to apply for these nontraditional roles.

We have made a concerted effort to address long term casual employment, concentrating on those who have been employed for over 10 years and transitioning them to permanent part time employment, in line with Federal and State employment legislation.

We have implemented structural changes to better align our business with strategy. Workplace changes have been implemented within Financial Services, Development Assessment, Tourism and Events, and Urban Landscapes to align the individual units with

Council service levels, risk management and financial constraints. This has included a new Deputy CFO position, Senior Business Partners and Business Partner Accountant roles, the Fast Track and Major Projects team in Development Assessment and a qualified Horticulturalist Coordinator supervising the Sports Fields team.

In 2025 we will be implementing further changes to Infrastructure Services, given the additional resources provided for Road Maintenance works; to ensure the structure of this Roads and Transport branch is meeting the community needs.

In January 2025 we introduced a new Water and Waste Water Industry Operators Agreement. The purpose of this agreement was to address strong market competition from ICON Water for qualified Water Industry Operators. A model similar to that in ICON Water was agreed whereby salaries were packaged, skill sets broadened, expectations established, and a competency-based salary progression implemented.

In October 2024, we developed QPRC's Organisational Strategic Plan which reset our employee values, goals and culture. This has been integral in developing the quality of data and providing an independent review about our culture and the position we hold in the local government sector. This is a QPRC staff owned plan that has been developed to reset our values and develop an Action Plan that will prioritise the strategies the Senior Leadership Team will put in place to ensure we achieve our vision of **Quality People, Remarkable Council**.

This Plan also established our Mission

- We recruit and retain quality people who are empowered and resourced to do the best for our community
- We get the work done, we celebrate when it is done well, we have fun while doing it
- We connect, collaborate and create

and Values for the people who work at QPRC

Building a strong community

We strive to enhance a liveable and sustainable lifestyle for our community. We are one and the same as our community. We commit to providing outstanding service and getting things done. We do this by working together and staying connected to achieve positive outcomes.

Integrity in every action

We are proud to be a member of Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council staff and we uphold the highest standards. Acting ethically and transparently in everything we do ensures we are accountable and build trust. We do the right thing and complete it on time. We are reliable and demonstrate value for money, being open and responsible in our decision making.

Respect and inclusion for everyone

We treat everyone with respect, providing thoughtful and positive experiences in all our interactions. We create a sense of belonging and treat others as we want to be treated. We are mindful of our colleagues and our actions support a positive culture. We care for each other's well-being, having empathy and acting with compassion.

Delivering outcomes that matter

We get the job done and do our best, we strive for excellence in everything we do. We are curious and listen to what others have to say. We are adaptable, flexible and open to change

and new ideas. We value everyone's role and are passionate about our contribution to local government.

In May 2024 we began an extensive consultation process with staff, engaging Baytree Solutions to undertake a staff survey, data analysis and facilitation of staff workshops. This was integral in developing the quality of data, undertaking a SWOT analysis to better understand what attracts people to QPRC and what we need to do differently to retain them.

QPRC values the contribution of staff. We have a number of established consultative forums in place to facilitate engagement including the Workplace Consultative Committee, a Diversity and Inclusion Group, Health and Safety, and Wellbeing Committees. These committees provide additional engagement and communication between all levels of staff. In 2025 QPRC will be introducing Qooee an online employee engagement portal to encourage peer-to-peer and manager-led recognition, linked to our core values. Qooee is designed to create a culture of continuous and strategic recognition. The best part is that Qooee recognises and rewards all of our valuable staff, relieving some of the cost of living pressures by offering discounts at hundreds of retail stores including Coles, Woolworths and JB HiFi.

Workforce Profile

There is a significant connection between Council and the communities that we serve and live in, which is a positive benefit and attraction of why people like working for QPRC. Over 67% of the workforce also live in the QPRC local government area.

QPRC organisational structure aligns our five Directorates with the five key themes of the Community Strategic Plan.

- Community, Arts and Recreation
- Development & Environment
- Corporate Services
- Infrastructure Services
- The Office of the General Manager

The structure has been refined to enhance decision-making and service delivery:

- Aligning workforce resources with infrastructure and community priorities.
- Empowering staff through accountability measures and streamlined management.
- Implementing workplace change proposals to improve operations.

SWOT Analysis

Our people are generally positive and are open to exploring QPRC's potential, and the external aspects are unlikely to be amplified or mitigated by tactical, internally focused investments. The following SWOT is a summary of feedback received from the staff survey, staff workshops and Leadership Forum workshops in 2024.

On balance, QPRC is more exposed due to breadth of competition and demand from other employers, including NSW, ACT and Federal Governments. We also have a number of hard to fill roles. Household economic pressures mean people are valuing remuneration as opposed to other considerations. It is noted that we undersell our positive aspects which is a missed opportunity. We have a responsibility to optimise our strengths and opportunities.

These challenges and opportunities and what this meant for QPRC as an employer is key to establishing the organisation as an employer of choice.

Continuous Workforce Improvement

QPRC is committed to developing high-performing employees, attracting and engaging talent, and strengthening leadership capabilities. As a dynamic organisation, our Workforce Plan remains a living document, continuously evolving to meet changing community needs, legislative reforms, technological advancements, and demographic shifts.

Employee Value Proposition

The basis for joining QPRC provides a key insight to both recruitment marketing and retention priorities. These were surveyed and interrogated at each workshop. While 6 respondents remarked on the low pay, the general perception is wages are competitive because of the additional benefits, both non-financial and financial including lease back vehicles, flexible working arrangements, local team culture.

Council has implemented a specific leadership program for Team Leaders and above in the past 18 months. This program was supported by Executive following an assessment of exit interviews, which revealed the main reason why people were leaving was not necessarily remuneration. The capability of supervisors in management and leaderships skills to get the best out of their team is a priority for Council.

Top 5 key themes that attracted QPRC staff were: Professional interest, Employment benefits, Community impact, Reputation/referral and Proximity or location to home.

1. Attracting and Developing a High-Performing Workforce

The 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability survey highlighted that NSW Councils experienced unplanned turnover rates between 1-27% of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees. In QPRC and similar Councils, critical shortages exist in operational areas such as water, civil works, compliance, and planning.

More than 91% of NSW Councils reported skill shortages, with key gaps in engineering, town planning, building surveying, project management, and trades. QPRC must remain agile in workforce planning to ensure service continuity and expertise retention while fostering opportunities for professional development.

QPRC is particularly challenged due to breadth of competition and demand from other employers, including NSW, ACT and Federal Governments. We also have a number of hard to fill roles. Household economic pressures mean people are valuing and seeking opportunities for remuneration package increases in addition to the non-salary benefits. One of the few areas in which QPRC has better conditions over State and Federal Government, is the provision of motor vehicles. QPRC currently provides 25 vehicles to Senior Staff as part of their TRP (total remuneration package), with another 85 staff taking advantage of leaseback arrangements. Council has 11 fleet vehicles managed through a Pool Car reservation system. This is essential to ensure staff can conduct their duties across the length and breadth of the local government area.

2. Ageing Workforce and Investment in Skills

A significant portion of QPRC's workforce is ageing, requiring proactive succession planning and knowledge transfer initiatives. Council will implement strategies to mentor younger employees and develop emerging leaders.

Strong partnerships with local education providers and industry experts will facilitate effective career pathways, including work experience programs, traineeships, apprenticeships, cadetships, and graduate positions. These initiatives will ensure corporate knowledge is

retained and shared through structured development programs and collaborations with TAFE to integrate practical industry experience into training curriculums.

3. Work Experience and School Based Trainees

Expanding opportunities for local youth remains a priority within QPRC's Community Strategic Plan. With 5.4% of the local population aged between 15-19 (2021 Census), Council recognises the importance of fostering career awareness and hands-on learning.

By partnering with schools and TAFE, QPRC will further develop our highly regarded work experience and school based traineeship programs that introduce students to diverse career paths within Council. These initiatives will strengthen future talent pipelines while promoting local government as an attractive employer.

4. Traineeships, Apprenticeships and Cadetships

To enhance workforce participation and attract emerging talent, QPRC will continue expanding traineeship, apprenticeship, and cadetship programs. Council aims to allocate 5% of workforce positions to training-based roles, facilitating career entry for new graduates and those seeking industry transitions.

A key part of these programs will be attracting and retaining young women in construction, engineering and other nontraditional roles, as a broader strategy to address the skills gap anticipated with retirements and to increase gender equity in nontraditional roles.

We will use targeted recruitment campaigns and information sessions in Braidwood and Bungendore to target young workers.

Structured mentorships will support new employees while enabling long-serving staff to impart knowledge and expertise, ensuring best practices are sustained across generations. Council will leverage grants and workforce restructuring to establish additional training-focused roles.

5. Learning and Development

QPRC is committed to fostering a learning culture that empowers employees to grow, innovate, and progress their careers. Annual investment in training initiatives ensures staff gain essential skills to navigate regulatory environments and operational complexities. We focus on attainment and retention of mandatory skills, qualifications and certification for staff to undertake their roles; with support for developing our own leaders, by professional development opportunities, and co-funding, where approved, additional qualifications that meet the needs of the organisation.

Council will expand education programs, incorporating secondments, coaching, mentoring, on-the-job training, and seasonal learning calendars to enhance workforce expertise. This approach will strengthen employee capability while ensuring compliance with evolving legislative requirements.

6. Safety, Health and Wellbeing

Workplace safety remains a top priority for QPRC. Council will continue investing in holistic health and wellbeing programs designed to support employees' physical and mental health.

Collaborating with internal and external stakeholders, Council will implement targeted training and preventative initiatives to reduce workplace injuries such as Move4Life, enhance

resilience, and strengthen psychological wellbeing with mandatory mental health awareness training for all staff.

7. Leadership Capability Development

Strong leadership is fundamental to QPRC's ability to navigate change, achieve strategic outcomes, and foster ethical governance. Council will build leadership capability through structured programs that promote accountability, collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and responsive workforce strategies.

Effective leadership development will ensure managers possess the skills to inspire high-performing teams, drive operational success, and align workforce objectives with broader community priorities.

Council has implemented training for all Supervisors, Team Leaders, Coordinators and Managers about leadership, conflict resolution, managing team dynamics, recruitment panels, Equal Employment Opportunity, WHS Legislation, Privacy Information, Duty of Care and Employer responsibilities.

8. Continuous Improvement and Digital Transformation

QPRC is dedicated to ongoing service optimisation, reviewing workforce processes, practices, and efficiencies to maintain peak productivity. In partnership with key stakeholders, Council will ensure policy compliance with legislative reforms while continuously refining operational frameworks.

As digital transformation progresses, Council will equip employees with the technological skills required to adopt emerging innovations. Training programs will support digital literacy while fostering a culture of adaptability. Collaboration with IT will ensure staff remain confident in using new tools to enhance customer outcomes and streamline services.

9. Rising Cost of Employment

Increases in employee salary and wages costs consist of two components: the annual Local Government (State) Award increases and movements within Council's salary system. Employment costs also rely on data from the Asset Management Strategy and the current four-year delivery program. The Long-Term Financial Plan uses this information together with the Workforce Management Plan to forecast planned increases in employment costs that include annual Award increases.

Council's employee leave entitlement liability as at 30 June 2024 was \$5.9M. QPRC needs to ensure there are sufficient funds in reserve to cover this liability.

While Council has implemented strategies to reduce an individual's annual leave balance to 8 weeks, and there has been success in this area, there is no requirement which requires staff to take Long Service Leave. As our staff group with long years of service reach retirement age, this liability needs to be funded in an internal reserve.

We will be working to improve workforce data, specifically the accuracy and quality of information in our systems and building analytical capability to better manage unplanned leave and ensure employees are taking annual leave.

10. Legislative Requirements

Local Government continues to be one of the most highly regulated section of government, staying up to date on changes impacting Council such as the suite of legislative reforms being implement by State Government imposes further responsibilities on Local Councils. For example, reforms related to contaminated land and planning impacting staff working in development and environment.

In August 2024 the Fair Work Commission introduced the right to disconnect, this legislation doesn't stop council from contacting employees outside of working hours, rather it gives employees the right to disconnect from work and refuse to monitor, read or respond to contact or attempted contact outside of work hours. QPRC has always encouraged work life balance and offers flexible working options, even so, this legislation provided Council an opportunity to encourage staff to switch off. In addition, we have been supporting this with a review of how we operate, adjusting our business processes.

The Local Government Amendment (Employment Arrangements) Bill 2024 that was passed by the NSW Parliament on 16 May 2024 removed references to 'senior staff' from the Local Government Act (1993), resulting in all executive-level employees, other than the General Manager, being covered by the NSW Local Government Award.

All have transitioned to a new QPRC Contract of Employment – Executive Band, which came into effect on Monday 6 January 2025.

Building a Stronger Workforce for a Thriving Community

At QPRC, we recognise that a resilient and forward-thinking organisation starts with a strong workforce. By investing in our people, aligning our structures to deliver on strategy, and fostering a positive values-driven culture, we are laying the foundation for a more effective and sustainable Council—one that is equipped to deliver the best possible services to our community, now and into the future.

Strengthening Workplace Culture

In May 2024, we launched QPRC's Organisational Strategic Planning process, an internally focused comprehensive initiative that ran from May through September 2024. With staff engagement at its core, 85% of employees participated in our survey, shaping key discussions on job satisfaction, workplace culture, leadership, and values. The Organisational Strategic Plan has helped us identify our strengths and shortfalls within our recruitment and retention methodology. In response, we have established new employee value programs, including a rewards and recognition platform.

The QPRC Organisational Strategic Plan focuses on redefining organisational values, strengthening workplace culture, and driving strategic actions to achieve our vision of *Quality People, Remarkable Council*.

Keeping Our People Safe and Well

ISO certification is a key requirement of the NSW Roads Maintenance Contract, which is crucial to improving roads across the Queanbeyan-Palerang Region. This accreditation ensures QPRC maintains the highest standards in Safety, Quality, and Environmental management for our staff and the community we serve.

An internationally recognised qualification, ensuring QPRC's safety policies are compliant with the most stringent of standards, this will be systematically applied across all levels of

the organisation, with documented processes that drive continuous improvement and support sustainable development initiatives.

QPRC maintains certification for three key standards:

- ISO 45001:2018 – Occupational Health and Safety Management
- ISO 14001:2016 – Environmental Management
- ISO 9001:2016 – Quality Management

Move4life

In 2024, QPRC staff were provided with a renewed perspective on manual handling, with MOVE Training. Move is a benchmark program that challenges outdated methodologies and promotes biomechanically efficient movement. Using an innovative behaviour-change approach, it empowers individuals to take ownership of how they move.

With 333 employees already trained, the highly practical program replaces desks and PowerPoint with hands-on learning—80% of the three-hour session is spent moving or standing. QPRC will monitor the impact of the program over the next three years, our primary measure of success will be reductions in pain and strain-related injuries.

Transforming the Water Industry

In preparation for upcoming major projects, QPRC initiated a transformative reform within our Utilities Branch, successfully negotiating a groundbreaking Water and Wastewater Industry Agreement in collaboration with the United Services Union. This milestone paves the way for further enhancements, including a forward-thinking approach to job design, the implementation of a dynamic competency-based skills framework, and the introduction of competitive salaries—strategically designed to attract top-tier talent and foster long-term retention within our workforce. These reforms should position QPRC to succeed in delivering our generational utilities projects.

Aligning Structure and Strategy

Over the past 24 months, Council has realigned a number of functions to better align our people capability with Council's operational strategy and to enhance service delivery. During this time, Council has delivered over ten major workplace restructures. Most notably this has included:

- DA Fast Track and Major Projects teams
- Utilities Water Industry Agreement
- Consolidation of regulatory services and compliance teams
- Restructuring of Urban Landscapes branch
- Realignment of Assets branch
- Restructuring of Finance branch
- Restructuring Economy, Place and Arts branch
- Restructure of People and Culture branch

Developing our Future Leaders

In 2025, we will launch *Brilliant at the Basics*, an in-house leadership program equipping new and emerging leaders with essential skills in communication, team management, operational efficiency, and internal systems.

This initiative is part of a broader strategy to address workforce challenges and maintain a strong leadership pipeline. With many staff nearing retirement, QPRC is prioritising mentorship and knowledge-sharing to ensure continuity.

Alongside *Brilliant at the Basics*, QPRC collaborates with training providers such as Local Government Professionals and LGNSW to deliver tailored leadership programs. Staff also engage in external development opportunities, including the Aspiring Leaders Program and in-house training on leadership essentials.

To strengthen our workforce, QPRC supports operational staff in obtaining formal qualifications, often funded through government initiatives. We also invest in attracting new talent via apprenticeships, traineeships, and partnerships with local schools and universities. By aligning leadership development with workforce planning, QPRC is fostering a skilled, resilient organisation capable of meeting evolving community needs.

Partnering with LEAD Employment

The Jerra Crew is a core part of Council's Urban Landscapes team and has been a contracted part of the organisation for nearly 30 years. It began as two team members and a disability support worker who would assist Council's horticultural team with maintenance work. The crew now consists of four teams that are supported by disability support workers from LEAD Employment who provide specialist disability employment services and support in our region.

The Jerra Crew, currently a team of 24, includes people of all ages and abilities and Council proudly recognises the contributions they make to the organisation and wider community.

Advancing Gender Diversity & Infrastructure Upgrades at QPRC

QPRC is committed to increasing the representation of women in non-traditional roles, such as engineering, construction, parks and gardens, waste management, and the water and sewer industry. This initiative targets:

- Professional women, encouraging career progression in these fields.
- New workforce entrants, providing pathways through apprenticeships, traineeships, and cadetships.

To support this shift, QPRC is modernising workplace facilities to create safe, accessible change rooms at depots, ensuring gender equity and inclusivity across all operational areas. The Urban Landscapes and Infrastructure Services team will lead a major project to assess depot facilities for functionality, safety, and gender equity, planning for the necessary upgrades in the next 4 years.

Office Refurbishments & Regional Service Commitments

QPRC remains committed to maintaining accessible and efficient services for Bungendore and Braidwood. As part of this, plans are in place to refurbish the Bungendore and Braidwood offices, enhancing functionality and ensuring staff have modern, well-equipped workspaces.

In 2027, Council staff will return to the former purpose-built offices, which were acquired by the Department of Education for the proposed high school. Council have entered into a formal Deed of Settlement which will see this transition back with a refurbished and improved facilities, co-locating with the Library and ensuring long-term operational efficiency.

Through strategic infrastructure improvements and workforce initiatives, QPRC continues to foster a diverse, inclusive, and high-performing organisation.

Workforce Profile

Council's leadership profile highlights strong female representation at the executive level while males are well represented in managerial and coordinator positions, accounting for approximately 69%. This highlights the need for more dedicated programs for women particularly at the coordinator level within Council so that they are prepared for managerial roles.

The Directorate with the largest variance continues to be Infrastructure Services due to the large number of trades, labouring and plant operator related roles. As at April 2025 there were 31 women and 144 men with most women (45%) working in clerical administrative roles and project based roles. Men occupy most professional, engineering and management leaderships positions within the Directorate (91%), with the same gender pattern reflected in Transport, Waste and Water and Sewer operational roles (92%).

Gender representation across Council suggests that, while progress has been made at the executive level, challenges still exist for women and other gender identities progressing to coordinator and managerial levels or working in traditional gender roles (e.g. women engineers).

Many of our casual staff can apply for, and are successful in, fixed term/temporary or permanent roles. Over the last three years, 33 casual employees were appointed to fixed term/temporary (64%) and permanent (36%) roles across different areas in Council. Many of the fixed term/temporary appointments were within our aquatic centres to meet operational needs during summer. The staff transitioning from casual roles had an average of 4 years working with Council.

QPRC's workforce data highlights critical trends impacting organisational stability and future growth. A significant proportion of employees are over 50, offering deep experience but raising succession and knowledge-retention risks as retirements approach. Employees aged 25–34 represent 16.54% of the workforce. This younger group is central to long-term succession and leadership planning.

Succession planning is integrated into the annual workforce reporting process, with critical roles identified early to ensure continuity prior to retirement or resignation. To support retention and knowledge transfer, strategies such as mentoring, job shadowing, and job rotation are being explored.

Expanding entry-level pathways remains a key response to local government skills shortages. QPRC's Work Experience Program, nominated for a 2025 Local Government Excellence Award in the 'Innovative Leadership and Management' category, plays a major role in engaging young people with local government careers. In addition, school-based traineeships offer a separate and valuable opportunity to introduce students to the sector and build talent pipelines.

Employment Status

Approximately 72% of Council employees are employed on a permanent basis, working full time with 29% of whom access flexible work options such as flexi time, condensed working week, 9-day fortnight or have a monthly accrued day off.

Part time employees make up 18% of Council's workforce. These positions are predominately occupied by female employees. On average Council employ approximately 107 casual employees who provide vital staffing for our arts, entertainment, and swimming pools teams across the region.

Council is committed to the ongoing provision of developmental pathways for young people from the region. Fixed term employees are made up of young trainees (5), cadets (6) and apprentices (8) starting their careers in the sector. Many of the 107 casuals employed by QPRC are young employees still involved in full time study working in the aquatic centres across the local government area.

Workforce Diversity

This workforce strategy outlines QPRC's commitment to enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in alignment with state, federal, and local government benchmarks. Our current diversity profile includes 2.46% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) representation, 1.76% LGBTQIA+, 2.26% with disabilities, and 1.06% ADF veterans, alongside a balanced gender distribution.

Our Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy guides our approach to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace. It outlines specific actions to drive long-lasting change, ensuring that all employees have equal opportunities for growth and development. QPRC is committed to cultivating a work culture where everyone is respected, has equal access to opportunities, and can fully participate in shaping the future of the organisation.

QPRC is focused on ensuring that job opportunities are accessible equally to all members of the community. To achieve this, we actively collaborate with local job networks to ensure that our job advertisements and opportunities reach all corners of the region. By engaging with these networks, we create pathways for underrepresented or disenfranchised individuals to access meaningful employment, fostering an inclusive and supportive workforce that reflects the community we serve.

Years of Service

QPRC's annual staff turnover rate has improved from 19% in 2023 to 15% in 2024. The data shows that 52% of our new hires were recruited into permanent roles. These include growth areas and roles vacated due to attrition, such as in operational staffing (36%) and management positions (10%), which became available due to retirements. The remaining 52% of permanent employees are engaged in diverse service delivery roles across the organisation, including town planning, engineering, library services, and corporate support.

Our casual employees primarily work in arts, events and aquatic roles, reflecting the seasonal and event-driven nature of these positions. Nearly 42% of our workforce has been with QPRC for less than two years, reflecting the success of our recruitment program. Employees with 10 to 19 years of service show strong stability, which provides a solid foundation for knowledge sharing and mentoring.

Over the last three years, employees aged 50 and over have made up 33% of permanent new starters. Among permanent hires, the largest demographic recruited is the 40-44 age group, followed closely by the 50-54 age group.

Intergenerational Workforce

Our largest generational cohort are Generation X employees closely followed by Generation Y. The youngest generation (Gen Z) make up the largest group of our new recruits and Baby Boomers have the longest service within Council (as expected). Community, Arts and Recreation have the youngest cohort due to casual aquatics recruitment. Infrastructure Services has the highest representation of older workers with 63% being baby boomers and Gen X (see discussion on break up of professions and job families affected by this mature workforce).

Employment Programs

QPRC is committed to providing training and development pathways for young people. In addition to offering Work Experience and School Based Traineeships, Council also employs young people as Trainees, Apprentices and Cadets; 29 opportunities are planned for over the next 4 years. At the completion of the program many remain with Council building long term careers in local government.

Focus for Succession Planning

QPRC succession planning is focused on critical positions, the capabilities required for these roles and committing to ensuring internal staff members are skilled to undertake the roles when they become vacant (albeit until merit selection is finalised).

Infrastructure Services directorate has the highest number of non-casual employees over 50 years of age (38%) – eligible to retire over the next 10 Years. Community Arts and Recreation also have a high proportion of staff within this cohort (28%).

Overall, and across the organisation:

What type of work are these people (aged 50+) working in?

- 44% work in roles that are mostly 'outdoor' or operational roles – working in transport, facilities, water and sewer, waste and urban landscapes.
- Leadership roles (Team leader and above) in the organisation make up 25% of the 50+ age group
- 11% occupy roles that require undergraduate degrees and possible registration to ensure compliance with legislative requirements – occupations include engineers, town planners, building surveyors, EHOs etc.
- 11 % occupy roles that are community facing roles such as the library, children's services, community development, customer service & road safety & compliance (e.g. rangers)– these roles require experience and VET qualifications for incumbents to undertake the roles.
- 24% occupy 'corporate support' (back of house) executive or administrative roles such as finance accounting, asset management, ICT, legal support etc. which may require tertiary qualifications (e.g. accountant) and or considerable experience in their field (e.g. legal support).
- The balance of roles are in the aquatic, recreation, entertainment and hospitality fields, which traditionally attract a younger cohort of workers. Only 2% of staff over the age of 50 work in these areas.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Workforce Management Plan 2025–2029 outlines the strategic intent, operational priorities, and cultural focus that will guide QPRC in building a sustainable, capable and values-led workforce. It reflects the voices of staff, community needs, and future pressures.

To ensure the Workforce Management Plan remains responsive, accountable and aligned with Council priorities, it will be monitored through annual reviews and adjusted in line with financial constraints, service demands, and legislative changes.

This Plan is both a commitment to our people and a roadmap to becoming the best version of QPRC. The following mechanisms will be used:

- Quarterly reporting to Executive on key workforce metrics including FTE-to-resident ratio, turnover, and vacancy rates
- Annual review of the Action Plan with updates to Delivery Program and Operational Plan
- Staff engagement surveys (biennial) to track sentiment, engagement and culture
- Evaluation of recruitment outcomes and training completion rates
- Annual benchmarking through the Local Government Performance Excellence Program
- Regular reporting to the Workplace Consultative Committee and the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

Workforce Management Plan Actions

Strategic Focus 1: Our people are capable, tech savvy and fit for the future

I.D r	Strategy	Timeframe	Measures	Responsible Branch
	Strategic Focus 1 – Our people are capable, tech savvy and fit for the future			
1.1	Implement technological solutions that allow our people to stay connected and work from anywhere.	YR 1-4	80% outdoor staff have access to mobile devices	IT
1.2	Leverage existing and new IT solutions to increase productivity and simplify processes (annual appraisals, workforce reports, information management, organisation charts)	Yr 1 – 4	100% of appraisals complete online 100% Organisation charts reflect current state Dashboards implemented for workforce data and decision making	IT & People & Culture
1.3	Continue to improve recruitment process to simplify processes and reduce time to recruit quality candidates.	Year 1-2	Reduce time to recruit from 10.5 weeks to 8.5 weeks	People & Culture
1.4	Our internal policies reflect our values and support an agile contemporary workforce	Year 1	Review internal policies and processes removing any unnecessary complexity Increase awareness of QPRC policies and expectations by improving access to online systems	People & Culture
1.5	Encourage a continuous learning culture with access to online courses, workshops, and partnerships with educational institutions aimed at upskilling.	Ongoing	Number of online courses available to staff	People & Culture
1.6	Invest in modern technology tools that is user friendly ensuring employees have adequate training to use them effectively.	Year 1-2	ElementTime implemented	People & Culture

Strategic Focus 2: We care for our people and keep them safe, well and engaged

I.D r	Strategy	Timeframe	Measures	Responsible Branch
2.1	HSEQ Strategy	Year 1 - 2	Improve HSEQ data and reporting Annual HSEQ Plans Developed and implemented HSEQ accreditation achieved Annual Safety Day Event	People & Culture
2.2	Transition to electronic IMS to improve efficiency and reduce manual paper based system.	Year 2-3	Introduce BeSafe by DoneSafe program All operational staff have access to a mobile device and are comfortable and confident in entering information into the system	People & Culture
2.3	Monitor and review health and wellbeing programs and activities to ensure they support workforce needs.	Year 1	Develop Wellbeing Strategy Wellbeing Plan Developed and implemented Move4Life activated across the workforce	People & Culture
2.4	Build psychologically safe workplaces where employees can thrive.	Ongoing	Develop a psychological risk register and review annually Culture score (NPS) 100% employees attend mental health training	People & Culture
2.5	Implement employee engagement platform to improve communication and accessibility of information.	Year 1	Qoeee implemented 70% staff agree that they benefit from using Qoeee	People & Culture
2.6	Create an environment where diversity is celebrated and all staff feel safe, supported and able to thrive.	Year 1	Develop and implement 2025 – 2027 EEO and Diversity Plan Upgrade Bungendore and Braidwood Depots to include facilities for women	People & Culture

Strategic Focus 3: We grow our own talent and develop current and future leaders

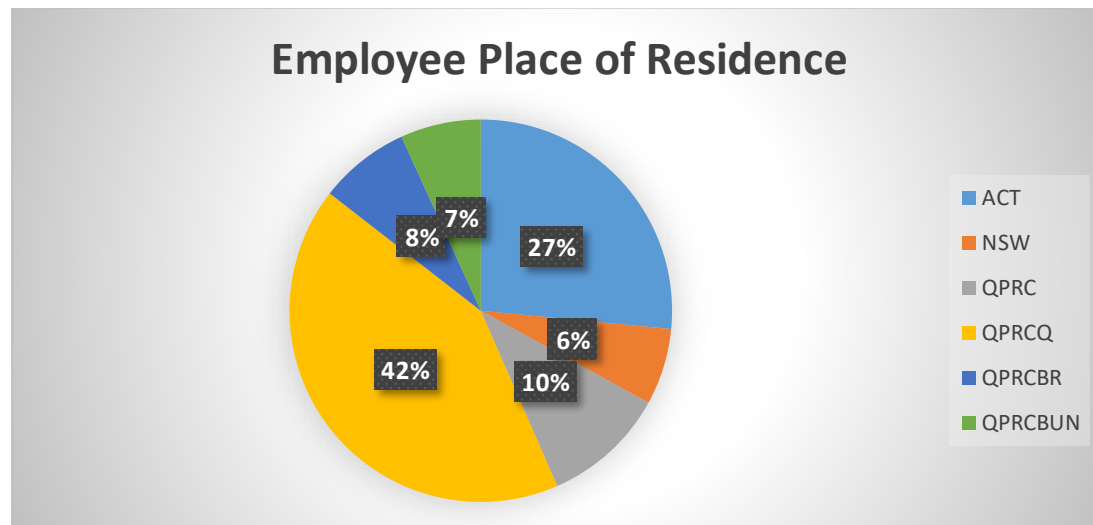
I.D r	Strategy	Timeframe	Measures	Responsible Branch
3.1	Develop career pathways and employment programs that grow our own talent and expand opportunities across directorates.	Year 1-3	50% of trainees, apprentices, cadets who remain with council after completing qualification Expand SBAT program to provide entry into traineeships and other entry level employment 25% of new employees progress to a higher position within first 5 years	People & Culture
3.2	Strong succession planning focusing on the development of mid-career talent and harnessing the knowledge and experience of our mature workforce.	Year 1-2	Develop a mentoring program focused on mid-career talent Develop and implement a knowledge retention project to capture critical information before staff retire	People & Culture
3.3	Develop annual training plans that addresses current and future needs.	Annual	90% staff up-to-date on mandatory training. Increase the number of staff accessing study assistance by 5% Review Study Assistance Policy	People & Culture
3.4	Maintain and improve annual appraisal systems to engage our employees in goal setting and continuously improving performance and productivity.	Year 1-4	Council has a robust appraisal system that support employee development 80% of employees who have development plans	People & Culture
3.5	Support career progression through fair and equitable processes that enable candidates to shine.	Ongoing	Number of internal promotions Number of Higher Duties Opportunities	People & Culture
3.6	Develop succession planning strategies for high-risk roles.	Year 1-2	High risk roles identified	People & Culture
3.7	Strong collaborative leadership across teams and directorates	Year 1-4	Expansion of leadership development program to include mid-career professionals	

Strategic Focus 4: We manage our workforce responsibly

I.D r	Strategy	Timeframe	Measures	Responsible Branch
4.1	Maintain strong connections amongst CRJO members to take advantage of our joint strengths	Ongoing	Number of opportunities activated	People & Culture
4.2	Implement workforce plans, within financial capacity, to ensure resource levels keep pace with population growth	Annual	Monitor FTE ratio and staffing forecasts Review high-cost employment risks (e.g. leave liabilities) Integrate workforce data into financial and asset planning	People & Culture
4.3	Improve workforce data for better data lead decision making.	1-5	Quality accessible data	People & Culture
4.4	Improve our processes and systems with a focus on efficiency and productivity (Element Time and DoneSafe software)	1-3	Implementation of Element Time	People & Culture
4.5	Utilise funding programs, incentives and grant programs to address workforce needs.	1-4	Entry level positions (Apprenticeships and Traineeships) filled under funding programs 70% of candidates employed at 12 months	People & Culture
4.6	Culture and values aligned to productivity and recognition (Qoeee implemented)	1	Qoeee implemented Directors Awards and Excellence Awards linked to QPRC Values NPS Culture Score	People & Culture
4.7	Actively manage factors which potentially contribute to rising employment costs such as leave liability, allowances, and resourcing.	1-2	Increase the number of employees with annual leave balances of <8 weeks to 100% Review motor vehicle policy to ensure effectiveness as an attraction and retention Review salary system	People & Culture
4.8	We embrace diversity as an organisational strength.	1	Develop and implement 2025-2027 EEO and Diversity Plan Review Disability Inclusion Action Plan Report workforce diversity metrics, to ensure our workforce reflects the rich diversity of our community	People & Culture

Appendices

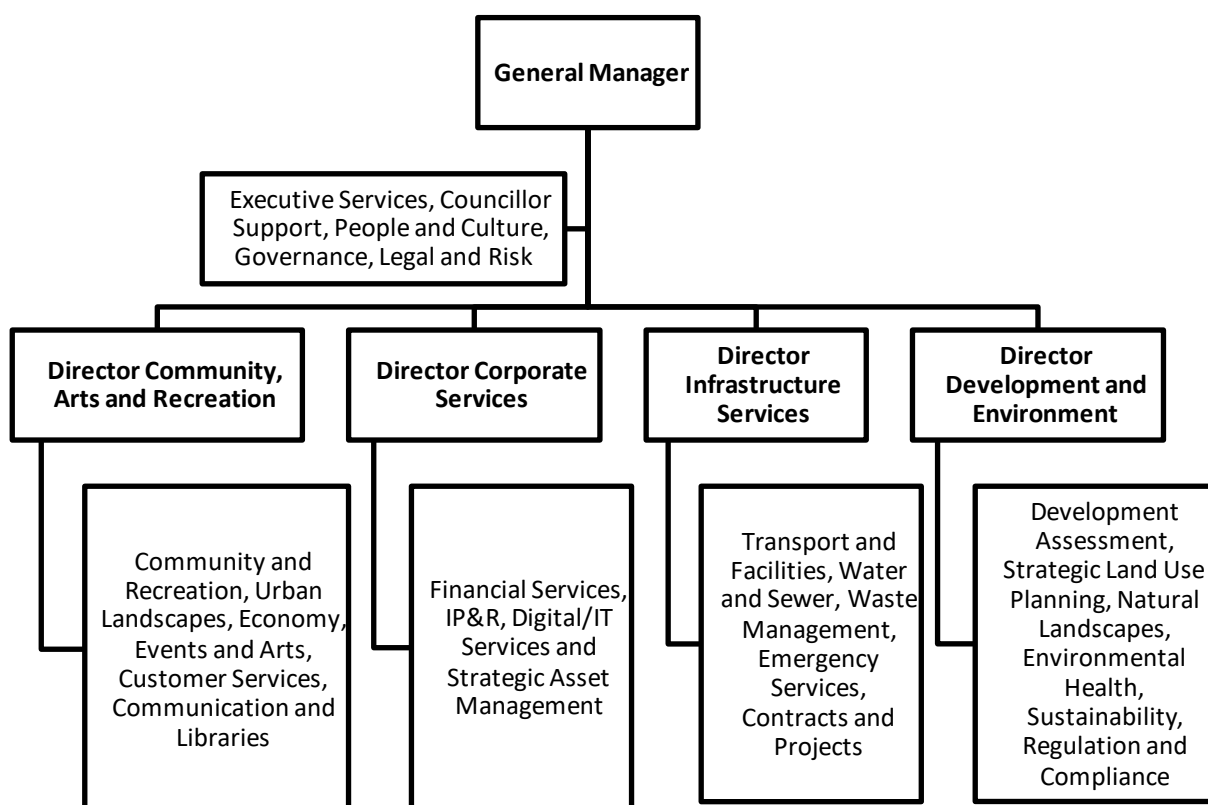
Appendix 1: Employee Place of Residence



Appendix 2: Workforce Profile

Total Number of Employees (headcount including casuals)	559
Occupying Full Time Positions	399
Occupying Part Time Positions	58
Employed as Temporary Employees	48
Employed as Permanent Employees	409
Average Age	
Average Age of Employees (including Casuals)	44.78 years
Average Age of Employees (Perm & Temporary only)	46.70 years
Gender	
Female (Including Casuals)	250
Male (Including Casuals)	312
Non Binary	2
Prefer not to respond	1
Percentage of Employees over 50 (including Casuals)	45%
Percentage of non casual staff over 50	47%
Total Full Time Equivalent (including Casual employees)	559
FTE to resident ratio	6.71 to 1,000
Staff Turnover Rate	15% or 19% (inc casuals)
Location	
Staff in Braidwood	48
Staff in Bungendore	83
Queanbeyan	326
Staff who live in LGA	67%

Appendix 3 : Current Workforce Structure

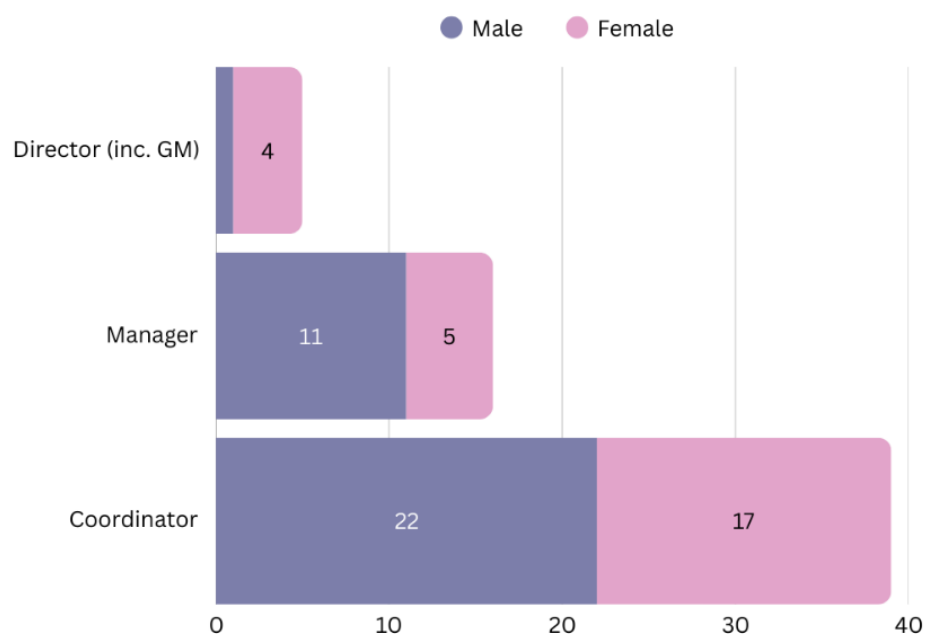


Appendix 4 : SWOT

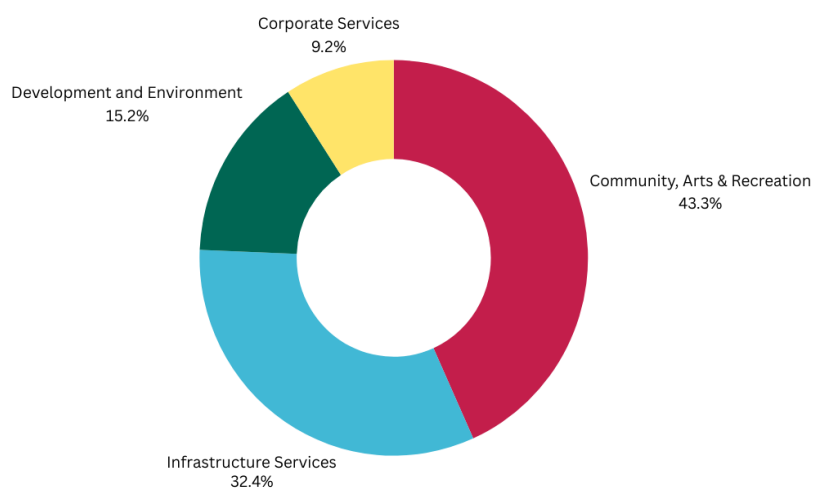
Positive Workforce Potential	Negative Workforce Exposure
Strengths Employment Benefits Social Dynamic and Comradery Executive Engagement Employee Experience Work environment We are doing well Nellie Hamilton Centre – a contemporary new workplace that we should be proud of and that people might aspire to work in. Diversity of skills in organisation, and access to it Achievement Work and job satisfaction Professional Development	Weaknesses Poor career management Inequity and inconsistency Inflexible processes Enabling Technology Don't celebrate success Aspirations are greater than our resources We don't say 'No' well. We try to deliver too much internally (for staff) and externally (for community) in trying to satisfy everyone Inequity and inconsistency in workplace changes Resourcing right areas Complacency Poor career management – progression Clarity of roles High vacancy rates and lack of redundancy in the system Unreliable technology and too many platforms being used for contact Lack of training for use of technology Succession planning Service creep (reluctance to say 'no') Remuneration
Opportunities Career Opportunities Location and Lifestyle Enterprise Culture Community Posture Planned upgrade to facilities Empowerment of workforce Celebrate success and achievement Career growth Celebrate success. Growth in our LGA (population) Employee Experience Professional Development	Threats Competition for Workforce Remuneration Resource Constraints Service Expectations Mincing responses Overwhelm process proactiveness Legislation changes and ongoing reform Other government agencies Ongoing changes to technology Regulatory decisions eg IPART/rate peg Other Councils are better resourced Public access to staff Corporate and Operational knowledge loss

Appendix 5 : Challenges and Opportunities

Potential	Meaning	Synonyms
Employment Benefits (Strength)	The attributes, amenities and benefits attributable to the workplace that make it enjoyable or support lifestyle outcomes	Employment stability, Free parking, Job flexibility, Job security, Strong award (security), Special leave entitlements, Employer brand
Social Dynamic & Comradery (Strength)	The way the internal community supports members and performs as a team to delivery outcomes	Reputation/referral, Positive Workplace Culture, Employee engagement, Team morale, Collaboration, Autonomy, Buy-in
Executive Engagement (Strength)	The way the leadership provides visibility, space and delivers relief allows the enterprise to focus on critical, community services	Communication from the General Manager, Approachable executive and open to feedback, Communication within teams, Good messages, Visibility
Employee Experience (Strength)	The overall experience, recognition and development of employees as they work and engage with the employer	
Career Opportunities (Opportunity)	The possibilities and encouragement to develop rewarding careers with interesting, variable subject matter	Breadth/Range/Diversity/Territory of work, Trainee/Cadet program, Career progression, Cross-sector exposure, Region, History and Heritage, Internal mobility, Multiple locations, QPRC size, Value local knowledge, Work across town and city, Access to Regional/rural staff, Ongoing training, Niche & customer service careers
Location and Lifestyle (Opportunity)	Smooth transition to leisure and home life, with convenient lifestyle options available nearby when not at work	Canberra lifestyle and amenities, Country feel, Regional lifestyle, Work life balance, Developments happening (attraction / facilities), Close to coast and snow
Enterprise Culture (Opportunity)	The shared focus and drive of the enterprise, along with a strong sense of unity and common purpose, are supported by unique enabling conditions	Collaboration with other councils, culture, Like family, Simple communication lines, Socially connected, Heritage, Small enough to collaborate, Locational Culture, Local workforce
Community Posture (Opportunity)	Strong connection and integration with the community throughout QPR, along with a unified brand presence among staff and the wider Region	Community focus, Community spirit, Generational connection, Persons community spirit, See impact of work, Work matters to community, community service, quality and improvement

Appendix 6 : Gender Profiles

Gender Identification	Community, Arts and Recreation	Corporate Services	Development and Environmental Services	Infrastructure Services	Office of the General Manager	Total
Female	135	28	33	31	20	247
Male	97	24	38	144	6	309
Non-Binary	2					2
Prefer not to respond	1					1
Grand Total	235	52	71	175	26	559

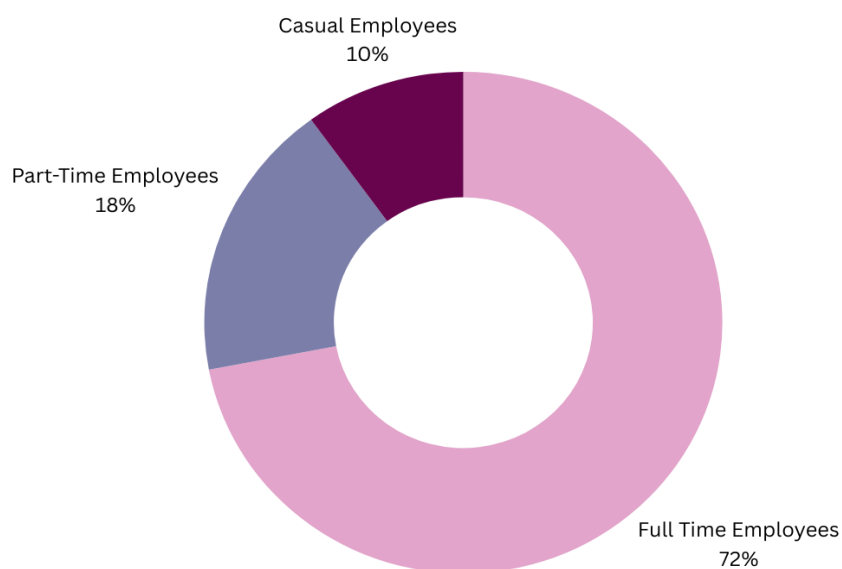
Appendix 7 : Employees by Directorate

Appendix 8 : Workforce Gender and Age

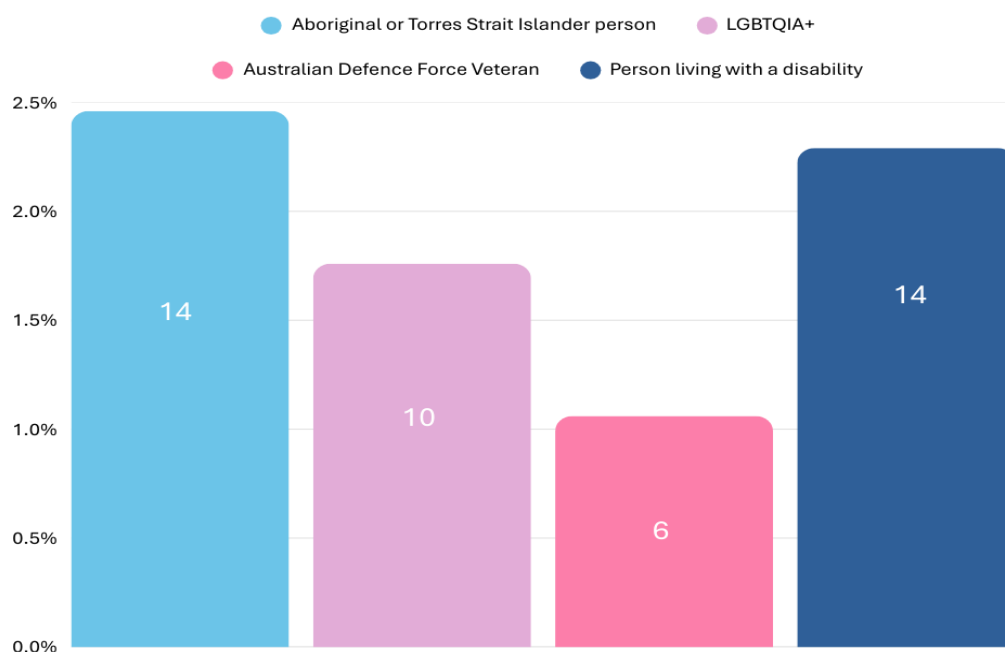
Age Range	Female	Male	Non-Binary/Genderqueer	Prefer not to respond	Total
Less than 19	14	10	1		25
19-24	25	32			57
25-29	21	17			38
30-34	23	29	1	1	54
35-39	18	22			40
40-44	20	26			46
45-49	24	23			47
50-54	28	45			73
55-59	31	45			76
60-64	29	37			66
65+	14	23			37
Grand Total	247	309	2	1	559

Appendix 9 : Workforce Status

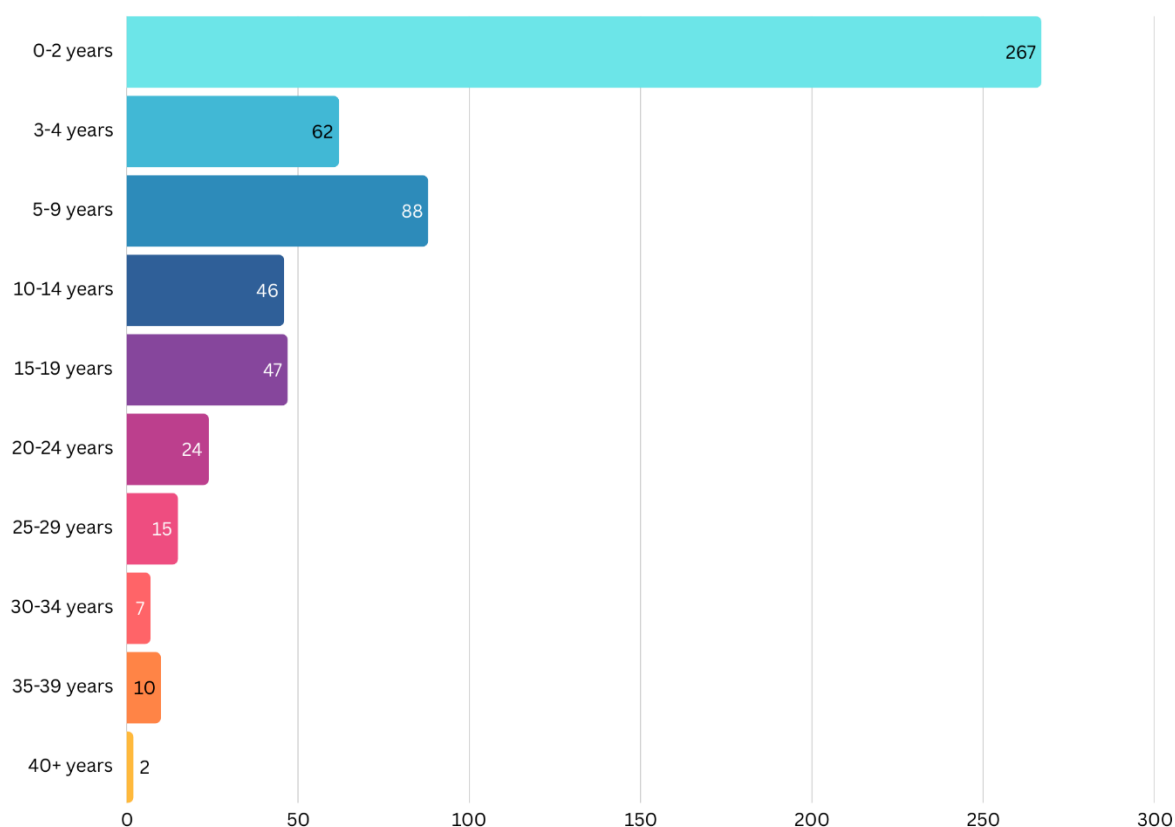
Work Status	Community, Arts and Recreation	Corporate Services	Development and Environmental Services	Infrastructure Services	Office of the General Manager	Total
Casual	98		1	3		102
Full Time	105	48	67	157	22	399
Part Time	32	4	3	15	4	58
Grand Total	235	52	71	175	26	559



Appendix 10 : Workforce Diversity



Appendix 11 : Years of Service



	Casual	Full Time	Part Time	Grand Total
Baby Boomer	18	63	14	95
Generation X	18	158	21	197
Generation Y	10	114	17	141
Generation Z	56	64	6	126
Grand Total	102	399	58	559

Including Directorates:

	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation Z	Total
Community, Arts and Recreation	42	64	53	76	235
Corporate Services	10	23	12	7	52
Development and Environmental Services	6	29	23	13	71
Infrastructure Services	37	73	41	24	175
Office of the General Manager		8	12	6	26
Grand Total	95	197	141	126	559

Appendix 12 : Traineeships and Cadets

Positions	Number	Year
Trainee - Civil Construction	2	2025
	3	2027
	3	2028
Trainee - Bio Weeds	2	2025
	2	2028
Trainee - Administration	3	2026
	3	2029
Apprenticeship Parkes and Gardens	2	2026
	4	2027
	2	2028
Cadet Journalism/communications	1	2028
Cadet Engineering	1	2029
Cadet Planning	1	2029