



# Defence Industry Workforce Action Plan

South Australia 2009-2014

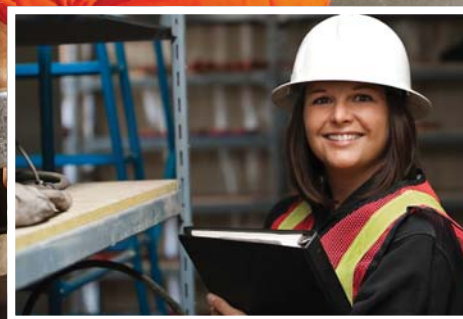
*South Australia has a strong Defence Industry, which must continue to be underpinned by a skilled and adaptable workforce.*

*A high-skilled, high-tech and adaptable workforce is critical for South Australia to take full advantage of increased Defence investment and build on its reputation as the nation's Defence State.*

*The Defence Industry supports over 24,000 jobs in South Australia and contributes more than \$1 billion to the economy each year. This figure is set to double as a raft of new projects come on stream.*



*This industry-driven workforce action plan is based on clear direction from industry about what is required to accelerate the potential of South Australia's workforce to meet rapid growth in the Defence sector, securing the long-term sustainability of both the industry and the State.*

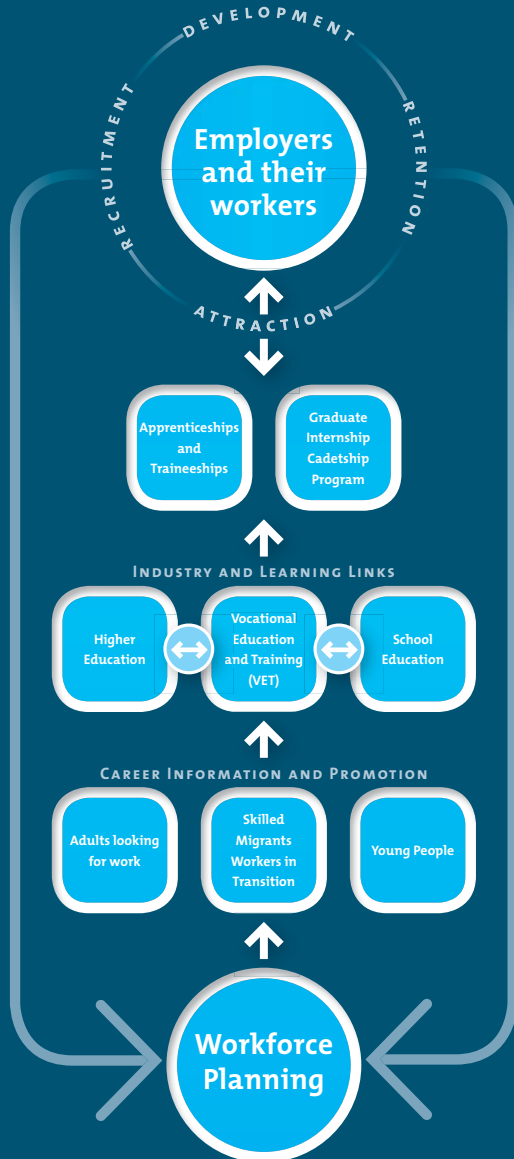


#### [Where to from here?](#)

The Defence Teaming Centre will drive the implementation of the strategies and actions set out in this plan, working in partnership with industry, government agencies and higher education to achieve them.

A Workforce Action Plan implementation group will have oversight of the plan. The group will be chaired by an industry champion and consist of a majority of representatives from industry and the Defence Teaming Centre. It will also include representatives from the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology; Defence SA; the Department of Education and Children's Services; and higher education.

# Skills and Workforce Development Model



This model puts into perspective the dynamic nature of skills and workforce development in the Defence Industry.

It demonstrates the role of industry leadership and partnership with the education and training sectors and the importance of industry specific information to help individuals choose the pathways that lead to jobs and careers in demand.

It also shows the essential relationship between employers and individuals to continuously develop their skills.

## The workforce challenge

The continuing fast growth of the Defence Industry presents crucial workforce challenges:

- The industry is characterised by a broad range and size of organisations, each with distinct constraints and opportunities to attract and develop their workforce, and differing levels of involvement in Defence Industry contracts.
- There is a high reliance on and ongoing demand for workers with professional and technical skills, and an emerging demand for workers with trade and higher-level Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications.
- Future demand will include project managers; professionals in the areas of computing and engineering; engineering associates and technicians; and electrical, welding and fabrication trades.
- Significant growth in employment over recent years has resulted in firms with new employees and lower levels of cultural experience in the industry.
- Attracting and retaining a highly skilled and adaptable workforce.

## Responding to the challenge

The strategies and actions set out in this plan focus on:

- Ensuring industry plays an important role in attraction, development and retention of its workforce, by maximising the use of existing skills and providing opportunities for further career and learning development.
- Establishing a single point of contact in government to provide information for industry on customised education, skills and workforce development services.
- Streamlining and shortening security clearance processes and reducing delays.
- Encouraging science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) in schools, VET and higher education through active industry partnerships and experiences to demonstrate relevance and application in the workplace, and job and career opportunities.
- Developing clusters with non-defence enterprises in related advanced manufacturing and technologies, to build the capacity of enterprises in South Australia and broaden the potential skills and capability base.
- Establishing a South Australian Defence Industry Leadership Program to strengthen leadership skills and foster high-performing work practices, to increase adaptability and innovation capacity, including improved enterprise-based skills acquisition and use through new work practices, and recruitment and retention practices.
- Implementing the Advanced Technology Industry Schools Pathway Program by establishing three specialist clusters of schools; defence, industry and higher education partnerships.
- Articulating the pathways between VET and higher education more clearly.

# 1

## Develop and sustain industry leadership and engagement with workforce planning and skills development

Outcome	Actions
Up-to-date and coordinated intelligence on Defence Industry workforce requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a mechanism for industry to advise on workforce requirements and training and skills issues by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reviewing membership of the Defence Teaming Centre Workforce Planning Forum to ensure relevant representation and engagement of industry sectors, and to incorporate feedback and specialist advice</li> <li>establishing a single point of contact in DFEEST, TAFE SA and DECS to provide information on customised education, skills and workforce development services</li> <li>using existing programs and initiatives such as the Building Business Capability in Workforce Development, to develop industry's capacity to identify skill needs and inform industry of the link between the State's forecast economic development and the associated workforce implications for small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs).</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Increased skills recognition, training and assessment in the workplace	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and deliver an 'Industry as Trainers' program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>trains more industry personnel as workplace trainers and assessors to support tailored enterprise training solutions</li> <li>establishes a formal link between industry-based trainers and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to expand workplace recognition of prior learning, training and assessment.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Strengthened collaboration within the Defence Industry and related industries that have a similar demand for occupations and skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist enterprises to navigate government services and funding mechanisms for skills development programs and initiatives.</li> <li>Establish and develop working relationships with the resources, engineering, electronics and manufacturing industry associations to improve collaboration in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>advancing science, technology engineering and maths (STEM) industry-based initiatives</li> <li>implementing workforce planning and development activities, including the implementation of this action plan and other industry workforce action plans.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

# 2

## Improve the industry's ability to attract and recruit a highly skilled workforce

Outcome	Actions
The South Australian Defence Industry is considered an 'industry of choice'	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the Defence Industry's branding strategy to raise the profile and identity of South Australia's Defence Industry.</li> <li>Provide employers with information and support to adopt flexible employment practices that attract and retain skilled workers.</li> </ol>
New and transitioning workers are attracted to and supported into and within the industry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the skills and employment barriers that inhibit workers from transitioning into the Defence Industry.</li> <li>Develop and deliver a state-specific short course to assist new workers to adjust into the Defence Industry culture.</li> <li>Assist transitioning workers from other industries to find employment in the Defence Industry.</li> <li>Support personnel transitioning from the Australian Defence Force to the Defence Industry through networking and provision of information.</li> </ol>
Reduced security clearance processes and timelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamline and shorten security clearance processes, in conjunction with the Defence Security Agency, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implementing a phased transition of the security clearance process from restricted to full clearance, enabling earlier productivity of new staff</li> <li>ensuring a phased security clearance process that coincides with training completed through sponsored government and industry training</li> <li>enabling exiting workers to retain their security clearances to encourage them to return to the industry.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Skill gaps are met via immigration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote job opportunities in the South Australian Defence Industry through immigration marketing.</li> <li>Assist employers to recruit skilled employees from overseas.</li> </ol>

## 3

## Assist the Defence Industry to retain an adaptable and diverse workforce.

Outcome	Actions
Skills within the Defence Industry are fully used	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate a 'Workers Mobility Plan' that considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the supply and demand of labour required in the Defence Industry</li> <li>the skills sets required</li> <li>the use of these skills</li> <li>security clearance processes.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Women's employment is increased	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a Community of Practice for women's employment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify development opportunities for women</li> <li>explore the feasibility of a coaching/mentoring program</li> <li>identify and develop incentives to increase the number of women in the Defence Industry.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Business and leadership skills are enhanced to promote adaptability and innovation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a SA Defence Industry Leadership Program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>builds financial, project management and business skills</li> <li>promotes high-performing work practices</li> <li>increases innovation capacities</li> <li>increases skills.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## 4

## Develop and promote industry led school to VET to higher education pathways

Outcome	Actions
Industry work placements and experience accelerates the uptake of science, technology, engineering and maths.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerate the uptake of science technology engineering and maths (STEM) in schools, VET and higher education sectors by facilitating industry partnerships with schools to expand workplace experience and to demonstrate relevance and application in the workplace, and job and career opportunities.</li> </ol>
An increase in Defence-related pathways in schools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the Advanced Technology Industry Schools Pathways Program by establishing three specialist clusters of schools; defence, industry and higher education partnerships.</li> <li>Promote trade related occupations in the Defence Industry to schools.</li> <li>Establish a 'Come Visit Us' Industry Participation in Schools Program to increase the awareness and uptake of career opportunities and pathways in the Defence and related industries.</li> <li>Increase and improve industry work placements for students and teachers.</li> </ol>
Up-to-date and accessible Defence Industry career advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the Defence Industry in a structured and integrated manner by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creating a 'one-stop-shop' for careers in the Defence Industry to outline clear career pathways into critical occupations and provide advice to potential recruits on relevant training</li> <li>promoting specialist career practitioners to industry.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Pathways between VET and higher education are more clearly articulated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement Defence and Education Pathways between school, VET and higher education for priority occupations in areas of demand.</li> <li>Implement and promote the Defence Skilling Framework through customised training plans and agreed pathways for new entrants and up-skilling of existing workers.</li> <li>Promote training packages to employers and individuals to increase skills recognition and utilisation.</li> </ol>
An increase in employment pathways, and apprentice uptake and completions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot an Industry Group Cadetship/Internship scheme and multi-employer graduate program amongst Defence Industry enterprises.</li> <li>Collaborate with clusters of SMEs to improve their capacity to employ and retain apprentices by enhancing their supervisory skills.</li> </ol>

## South Australia's future workforce

The Training and Skills Commission (TaSC) estimates that there will be around 134,000 new job openings, and an additional 260,000 post-school education and trade qualifications sought for the period 2007–08 to 2012–13 (*Skills for Jobs* May 2009, pages 12 & 14).

Growth in the Defence Industry is expected to be a significant driver of these new jobs and increased demand for qualifications. South Australia already has a wide range of major defence projects, including support for the AP-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft, construction of three new Air Warfare Destroyers and through-life-support for Collins class submarines. These are set to significantly increase the demand and strong competition for a highly skilled workforce.

South Australia's Defence Industry relies heavily on a skilled workforce that is shared with other industry sectors, including electronics, advanced manufacturing, mining and resources. As the economy grows, there will be a corresponding increase in demand and the Defence Industry will face strong competition for skills.

This action plan sets the course for defence to attract and retain its workforce for the future.

## Industry driven workforce action plan

The development of this Defence Industry Workforce Action Plan involved broad consultation with prime and small-to-medium sized enterprises. Specific information was also gained through a 'Women in Defence' forum and a 'Skilled Migration Survey'. This plan has been developed with the support of the South Australian Government. The strong partnership between government and the defence industry will continue throughout the implementation of the strategies and actions.

## Get involved

The strategies and actions in this plan are the first step in coordinating a collaborative approach to skilling South Australia's Defence Industry. The next step is to make it happen with support from within industry and government.

To register your involvement, contact:

Kerryn Smith,  
Director, Skills and Workforce  
Defence Teaming Centre  
kerryn.smith@dtc.org.au

## Defence Teaming Centre

The Defence Teaming Centre is the peak industry association in South Australia, with national capability. The Centre facilitates the collaboration and development of teams to work together, strengthening their ability to win a larger share of Defence business locally, nationally and internationally.

## For further information

[www.dtc.org.au](http://www.dtc.org.au)  
[www.workforceinfoservice.sa.gov.au](http://www.workforceinfoservice.sa.gov.au)