



The Hon Kevin Andrews MP
Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service

Welfare to Work - Employer Demand strategy

What funding is the Government committing to the Employer demand strategy?

- ▶ The Howard Government will provide funding of \$50 million over four years for the employer demand strategy.

What is the strategy?

- ▶ This strategy has three components aimed at increasing workforce participation for targeted groups in key industry sectors. Therefore, a range of measures including improving employer awareness of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, parents, mature age job seekers and the very long-term unemployed, and of the flexibility of workplace arrangements available to them.

How will business benefit under this strategy?

- ▶ This strategy will assist business to meet employment needs by considering current and future demographic changes, such as an ageing population, and will improve productivity through the implementation of flexible working arrangements. This will be delivered through the three key components of the strategy:

1. Targeted and improved industry and workplace engagement strategies.
2. Training for employers to manage a diverse workforce.
3. Strategies to increase employment of workers with a disability.

What industries will be targeted?

- ▶ The key industry sectors will include: Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants, Retail, Health and Community Services, Property and Business Services, Manufacturing, Mining, and Building and Construction.



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How will business be assisted to address labour and skill shortages?

- ▶ The Government will work with industries and individual employers to develop, with small grant funding, innovative recruitment, employment and retention strategies to increase the participation of key groups, such as people with a disability, parents, mature age job seekers and the very long-term unemployed, to assist in addressing labour and skill shortages.
- ▶ This will also include the development and maintenance of a portal and the roll-out of a series of Better Connection workshops to provide a range of information about labour market demand and supply to enable employment service providers and other key stakeholders to better service industry, employers and job seekers at the local level to address labour and skill shortage issues.

What assistance will be provided to employers in managing a diverse workforce?

- ▶ Employers will be provided with skills and tools to assist them in addressing barriers and needs of a diverse workforce, in particular for people with a disability, mature aged job seekers, parents and the very long-term unemployed job seekers.
- ▶ In addition, to assist employers to respond to the employment of a person with a disability increased funding under the modifications scheme and wage subsidy scheme has been made available in this Budget.

What assistance will specifically be available to assist in managing an ageing workforce and people with a disability?

- ▶ Employers will be provided with skills and tools through training courses, instructor guides, tools, and materials to be used by managers, supervisors and employees within enterprises to enable them to manage an ageing workforce.
- ▶ To further assist employers with the employment and retention of people with a disability this initiative will see the development of a jobs

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accommodation service that will include a website and advice from experts in workplace adjustment. This will form the hub of an information and resource centre for employers seeking to employ people with disabilities.

What assistance will be provided to support employers to create flexible workplaces to meet the needs of a diverse workforce?

- ▶ The strategy will also involve working with employers to determine the flexible work needs of employees, examine the business case for flexible working arrangements, identify potential barriers to their implementation, and highlight innovative arrangements and best practice.