



## **Local Jobs Plan**

# **Illawarra South Coast New South Wales**

**September 2021**

# Contents

<b>Local Jobs Plan</b> .....	1
<b>Illawarra South Coast</b> .....	1
<b>New South Wales</b> .....	1
September 2021.....	1
The Local Jobs Program .....	3
Key employment and training priorities .....	3
Employment Region overview .....	5
Key challenges in the Illawarra South Coast Employment Region .....	9
Local stakeholders and opportunities.....	10
University .....	11
Attachment A – Key employment and training priorities: strategies and stakeholders .....	12
Priority 1 - Transport.....	12
Priority 2 - Indigenous.....	12
Priority 3 - Youth .....	13
Priority 4 - Community Services.....	13
Priority 5 - Manufacturing.....	14
Priority 6 - Construction.....	14
Priority 7 – Hospitality and Tourism .....	14
Priority 8 - Innovation and Technology.....	15
Consideration 1 – Housing .....	15
Attachment B – Labour Market Data Dashboard (April 2022) .....	16

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of the Dharawal, Gandangara and Yuin lands where we work and travel through. We pay our respects to their people, cultures and their Elders past, present and emerging.

## The Local Jobs Program

As part of supporting Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government's Local Jobs Program (LJP) brings together expertise, resources and access to funding at the local level to accelerate reskilling, upskilling and employment pathways in 51 Employment Regions.

Recognising the importance of local knowledge in getting people back into jobs quickly, the LJP includes the following key elements in each region:

- a local Employment Facilitator
- a Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
- a Local Jobs Plan
- a Local Recovery Fund to support small scale activities
- access to the National Priority Funding Pool.

The Taskforces, each chaired by the respective region's Employment Facilitator, develop and update a Local Jobs Plan for their region that identifies key employment and training priorities and provides a framework for driving employment outcomes in the context of the local labour market.

This updated Local Jobs Plan for the Illawarra South Coast Employment Region identifies the key LJP priorities with a focus on creating employment opportunities, actively upskilling or reskilling local job seekers and meeting local employer demands.

## Key employment and training priorities

### **PRIORITY 1 - TRANSPORT**

Remove transport related barriers preventing job seekers from accessing employment and training opportunities and pursue initiatives in line with employment and training needs. Ensure transport issues are considered in the design of activities developed to meet LJP priorities.

### **PRIORITY 2 - INDIGENOUS**

Build clearer pathways to employment and training opportunities for Indigenous job seekers, and provide culturally appropriate integrated supports to individuals over the longer term. Ensure Indigenous job seekers are considered in the design of activities developed to meet LJP priorities.

### **PRIORITY 3 - YOUTH**

Build clearer pathways to employment and training opportunities for youth job seekers, and provide integrated supports to individuals over the longer term. Ensure young job seekers are considered in the design of activities developed to meet LJP priorities.

### **PRIORITY 4 - COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Build a job-ready skilled workforce that meets the current and future labour demands for the community sector, including in aged and community care.

### **PRIORITY 5 - MANUFACTURING**

Support the growth of jobs in the region's manufacturing sector through stronger employment and training pathways, and the building of a job-ready skilled workforce.

#### **PRIORITY 6 - CONSTRUCTION**

Capitalise on the current and forecast growth in construction projects in the region by building strong and sustainable pathways for local job seekers into construction training and jobs.

#### **PRIORITY 7 – HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM**

Support the COVID recovery of the region's hospitality and tourism sector, through the building of a job-ready skilled workforce that meets the current and future labour demands for the sector.

#### **PRIORITY 8 - INNOVATION AND TECH**

Consider opportunities to incorporate technology and innovation into the design for activities developed to meet LJP priorities, and to retain and build a locally-based remote workforce of skilled workers and supporting them through more innovative and agile training and upskilling opportunities.

The following issue will also be considered when designing activities to meet these priorities:

#### **CONSIDERATION 1 - HOUSING**

Ensure access to suitable housing for job seekers and workers is considered and built into the design for activities developed to meet LJP priorities.

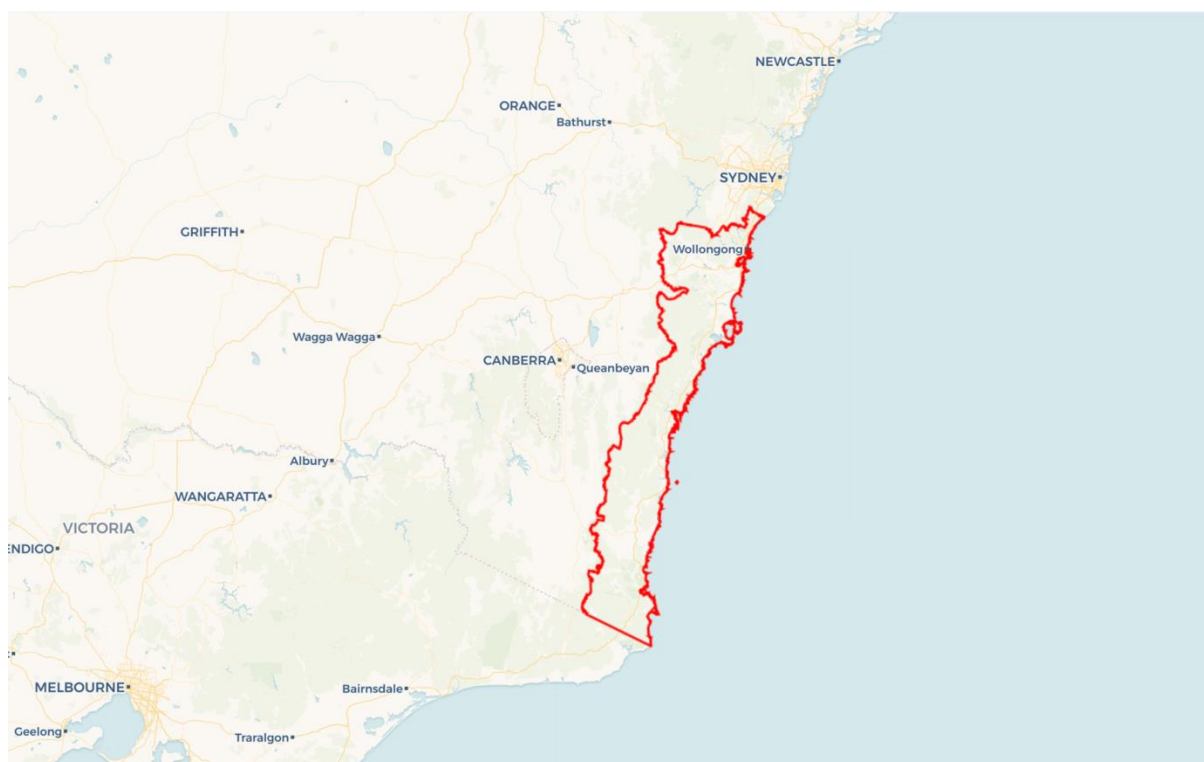
A full description of these key priorities, the strategies to address these and a list of key stakeholders can be found at Attachment A

# Employment Region overview

The Illawarra South Coast Employment Region stretches 500 kms along the NSW coast from Helensburgh to the Victorian border, and also includes the Southern Highlands. Wollongong is the largest urban centre within the region with a June 2019 population of 218,100 followed by Shellharbour / Warilla (50,600), and Nowra / Bomaderry (37,800). Other population centres with substantial populations include Batemans Bay (16,600), Ulladulla district (16,500), St Georges Basin / Erowal Bay (14,900), Kiama / Kiama Downs / Minnamurra (14,700) and Bowral (13,600).

The region includes seven Local Government Areas (LGAs):

- Wollongong
- Shellharbour
- Kiama
- Shoalhaven
- Eurobodalla
- Bega Valley
- Wingecarribee



**Figure 1: Illawarra South Coast Employment Region**



Figure 2: Illawarra South Coast Employment Region - North



**Figure 3: Illawarra South Coast Employment Region - Central**

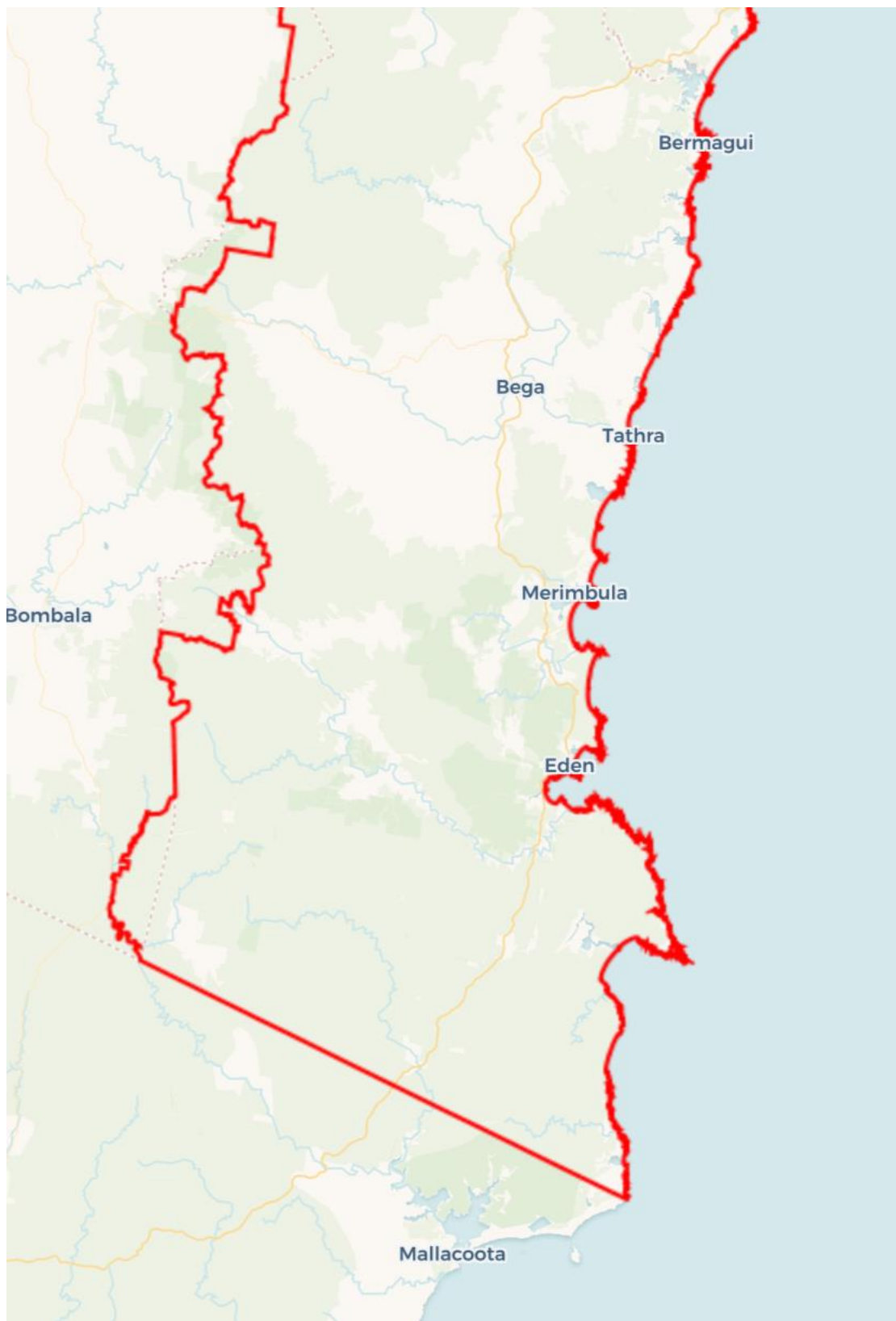


Figure 4: Illawarra South Coast Employment Region - South



Among LGAs in the region the two with population growth rates between June 2018 and June 2019 greater than for NSW (1.4 per cent) were Kiama (1.7 per cent) and Shellharbour (1.5 per cent). Wingecarribee had the same rate as NSW and Shoalhaven's was slightly lower (1.3 per cent).

The rates of population growth in Bega Valley and Eurobodalla were less than half that for NSW (0.5 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively). Although Wollongong's growth rate (1.0 per cent) was less than for NSW there were pockets with high rates including Horsley - Kembla Grange (4.5 per cent) and Wollongong East (3.7 per cent) where large residential developments have occurred.

Other parts of the Illawarra South Coast Region where the population grew faster than the state average included Mittagong (2.3 per cent), Ulladulla Region (2.2 per cent) and Albion Park / Albion Park Rail / Macquarie Pass (2.0 per cent).

To the south of Nowra there are many hamlets scattered along the coast where job seekers without their own transport face transport difficulties in accessing jobs outside the immediate locality.

Information from the 2016 Census indicates that around a quarter of employed Illawarra residents work outside the region. Most travel to Sydney but others travel to the Shoalhaven and the Southern Highlands. Anecdotally, some commuters are prepared to trade lower wages for the convenience of working locally and so provide the unemployed with increased competition for local jobs.

## Key challenges in the Illawarra South Coast Employment Region

Current labour market challenges and opportunities in the region include:

- Limited local employment opportunities in the more remote areas and transport challenges in accessing jobs elsewhere, primarily resulting from the limited availability of public transport across the region, challenges with the frequency and timing of current services, and difficulties for young people in accessing learner driver supports.
- A relatively high incidence of unemployment in Indigenous communities, with the young age profile of the Indigenous population presenting an additional challenge in an environment of generally high youth unemployment.
- Significant youth unemployment, especially in the Southern Highlands/Shoalhaven and the Illawarra which have some of the highest rates of youth unemployment in NSW.
- An ongoing difficulty of community service organisations, and in particular aged care providers, to meet increasing demand for skilled workers.
- An ongoing difficulty of hospitality and tourism organisations to recruit workers to meet demand.
- Providing clear and coordinated training and employment pathways into a growing manufacturing sector.
- Capitalising on a boom in construction projects in the region by ensuring local job seekers are moved into these local construction jobs.
- The exiting of skilled workers out of the region to pursue opportunities in Sydney, Canberra and elsewhere, adding to difficulties of regional employers to maintain a skilled workforce.
- A fundamental challenge of connecting the region's job seekers and disadvantaged with employment and training opportunities, and in delivering them an appropriate mix of supports over the longer term to help them find and stay in employment.

# Local stakeholders and opportunities

While there are some stakeholders whose coverage extends across all, or most of the Employment Region many stakeholders focus on the areas in which they are based. Examples of the former include Training Services NSW, Wollongong University, TAFE, IRT, IMB Bank, the SES, DSS (including the Boosting The Local Care Workforce program), Southern Pathology IML (though not extending beyond Batehaven in Eurobodalla), AusIndustry, Transport for NSW, Community Industry Group, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council's YARPA Hub, and employment focused service providers funded by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE).

Stakeholders focused on both the Illawarra and Shoalhaven include the Local Health District, the regional office of Premier and Cabinet, the Deputy Director Illawarra-Shoalhaven of the NSW Officer of Regional Development, the Illawarra Shoalhaven (councils) Joint Organisation, Southern Youth Family Services, The Flagstaff Group, Uniting Care, the Project Manager for IllawarraYES (youth employment strategy), SYC (Sticking Together Project), WEA Illawarra and Illawarra ITEC. Ramsay Health Care and HVTC cover the two areas, as well as the Southern Highlands.

Stakeholders focused on the Illawarra include the Kiama, Shellharbour and Wollongong councils, the Illawarra Business Chamber (apart from Illawarra YES whose coverage includes the Shoalhaven), RDA Illawarra, BlueScope (in terms of steel making), the local Master Builders Association, Warrigal (who also has a Bundanoon facility), Warrigal Employment, NSW Ports (port of Port Kembla), Autocare, Illawarra Multicultural Services, SCARF (refugee support) and Greenacres.

A stakeholder spanning the Shoalhaven to the Victorian border is the (Fire) Recovery Coordinator for Southern NSW as is RDA Far South Coast (based in Nowra). There are NIAA (National Indigenous Australians Agency) offices in Nowra and Batemans Bay. The DESE funded Entrepreneurship Facilitator covers the Shoalhaven and Southern Highlands.

Stakeholders largely focused on the Shoalhaven include the Shoalhaven Business Chamber, the local Master Builders branch, Shoalhaven City Council, the Ulladulla-based Dunn and Lewis Foundation, the local Red Cross Nowra Regional Office, Headspace Nowra and major employers such as Shoalhaven Starches and some entities at Albatross Aviation Technology Park.

Stakeholders largely focused on areas south of Shoalhaven include the Batemans Bay Business and Tourism Chamber, the Bega Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Eurobodalla and Bega Valley Councils, the Southern NSW Local Health District (which also covers areas outside the region such as Queanbeyan and Goulburn), Bega Valley Innovation Hub, the local NSW Rural Fire Brigade, Bega Cheese and The Eurobodalla Adult Education Centre.

There are seven Australian Government **employment programs** delivered by 16 Employment Service Providers in the region. Four providers deliver jobactive services on the Illawarra South Coast: APM Employment Services, MAX Employment, MBC Employment Services and Campbell Page. Job ready job seekers are being assisted by the department through the Digital Services Contact Centre. Other employment services in the region include ParentsNext (PNX), Transition to Work (TtW), New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS), Career Transition Assistance (CTA), Employment Preparation Activity (EPA) and Employability Skills Training (EST).

Other Australian Government programs include Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC), Disability Employment Services (DES) (both the Disability Management Service and the Employment Support Service), National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Australian Apprenticeship Support Network and more.

Some stakeholders, including most multi-region employers, are based outside the region as is much employment for Illawarra residents. There may be opportunities for greater linkages between Far

South Coast job seekers and ACT employment opportunities especially where at least partial working from home or South Coast work hubs is possible as an adjunct to (for example) drive in drive out working arrangements.

## University

The main campus and the Innovation Campus of the University of Wollongong are located in Wollongong and connected to each other and the city centre by a shuttle bus. The Innovation Campus houses a range of business, governmental entities and research bodies and the iaccelerate business incubator.

Within the Employment Region, the university has a sizeable campus on the south western outskirts of Nowra and smaller campuses at Batemans Bay, Bega and Moss Vale. It has also has a campus at Liverpool, one at Loftus and the Sydney Business School at Circular Quay. Overseas it has campuses in the United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, Malaysia and a presence in China and Singapore.

Prior to the pandemic overseas students comprised a much higher (around 40 per cent) proportion of the university's student population than, for example, the University of NSW (25 per cent). ([www.universityrankings.com.au/international-student-numbers](http://www.universityrankings.com.au/international-student-numbers)) Recently more than 86 per cent of academic staff agreed to a leave-purchase scheme, which will cut \$53 million from employee expenses over two years, with other savings to come from deferred capital spending and cuts to operational expenses. (*Australian Financial Review* 20-7-2020)

## **Attachment A – Key employment and training priorities: strategies and stakeholders**

The labour market challenges and opportunities identified in this Plan will be addressed through design and delivery of activities that align with the following priorities and strategies:

### **Priority 1 - Transport**

Remove transport related barriers preventing job seekers from accessing employment and training opportunities and pursue initiatives in line with employment and training needs.

#### **Strategies**

1. Identify and communicate details of existing transport networks to job seekers, workers and students.
2. Trial worker buses to service areas not effectively supported by public transport.
3. Support businesses and programs that coordinate vehicles and drivers from local firms who are currently under-utilised to increase services to meet needs of workers and students.
4. Coordinate driver's license attainment programs, in response to employer need and opportunities.
5. Ensure transport considerations are considered and if necessary built into employment and skills activities.
6. Identify best practice solutions that solve transport issues with effective engagement of workers.

#### **Working Groups**

- Illawarra South Coast Local Jobs Program Transport Working Group

### **Priority 2 - Indigenous**

Build clearer pathways to employment and training opportunities for Indigenous job seekers and provide culturally appropriate integrated supports to individuals over the longer term. Ensure Indigenous job seekers are considered in the design of activities developed to meet LJP priorities.

#### **Strategies**

1. Build clearer pathways to employment and training for Indigenous job seekers, including the development of tools that provide more visibility of and streamlined access to local employment and training opportunities.
2. Develop mentorship programs that direct a range of supports to Indigenous job seekers in an ongoing and integrated way.
3. Build the cultural competency of the region's employers so they are better able to recruit and retain Indigenous workers.
4. Ensure LJP activities consider Indigenous job seekers during the project design.
5. Support projects that promote Indigenous business capacity building.

### Working Groups

- Illawarra South Coast Local Jobs Program Indigenous Working Group
- Far South Coast Employment Forum

### **Priority 3 - Youth**

Build clearer pathways to employment and training opportunities for youth job seekers and provide integrated supports to individuals over the longer term. Ensure young job seekers are considered in the design of activities developed to meet LJP priorities.

### Strategies

1. Build clearer pathways to employment and training for young job seekers, including the development of tools that provide more visibility of and streamlined access to local employment and training opportunities.
2. Build stronger links between schools, employers and training organisations, and ensure specific and region-wide employment and training opportunities and trends are communicated swiftly and effectively to students.
3. Develop mentorship programs that direct a range of supports to young job seekers in an ongoing and integrated way.
4. Ensure LJP activities consider young job seekers during the project design.

### Working Groups

- Shoalhaven Youth Community Investment Committee

### **Priority 4 - Community Services**

Build a job-ready skilled workforce that meets the current and future labour demands for the community sector, including in aged and community care.

### Strategies

1. Collaborate with community services stakeholders to develop a campaign that raises awareness of employment opportunities in the sector, and which seeks to build the profile of the sector as a desirable career choice for job seekers.
2. Collaborate with stakeholders to build stronger pathways to employment in the region's community services sector, including the development of tools that provide more visibility of and streamlined access to local employment and training opportunities.

### Working Groups

- Illawarra South Coast Local Jobs Program Community Services Working Group
- Illawarra Workforce Action Group
- Eurobodalla Aged Services Interagency Group

## **Priority 5 - Manufacturing**

Support the growth of jobs in the region's manufacturing sector through stronger employment and training pathways, and the building of a job-ready skilled workforce.

### Strategies

1. Collaborate with employers to build stronger and more coordinated pathways to employment in the region's manufacturing sector, including the development of tools that provide more visibility of and streamlined access to local employment and training opportunities, and the development of pre-employment programs that lead to guaranteed employment for suitable participants.
2. Work with employers and training providers to ensure current and future workforce needs are aligned with the courses and training available to local job seekers.

### Working Groups

- Illawarra South Coast Local Jobs Program Manufacturing Working Group

## **Priority 6 - Construction**

Capitalise on the current and forecast growth in construction projects in the region by building strong and sustainable pathways for local job seekers into construction training and jobs.

### Strategies

1. Collaborate with employers to build stronger pathways to employment in the region's construction projects, including the development of tools that provide more visibility of and streamlined access to local employment and training opportunities, and the development of pre-employment programs that lead to guaranteed employment for suitable participants.
2. Work with employers and training providers to ensure current and future workforce needs are aligned with the courses and training available to local job seekers.

### Working Groups

- Illawarra South Coast Local Jobs Program Construction Working Group

## **Priority 7 – Hospitality and Tourism**

Support the COVID recovery of the region's hospitality and tourism sector, through the building of a job-ready skilled workforce that meets the current and future labour demands for the sector.

### Strategies

1. Collaborate with hospitality and tourism stakeholders to raise awareness of employment opportunities in the sector, and which seeks to build the profile of the sector as a desirable career choice for job seekers.
2. Collaborate with employers to build stronger pathways to employment in the region's hospitality and tourism sector, including the development of hospitality and tourism training and upskilling opportunities and programs for job seekers and current employees in line with workforce needs of tourism operators.
3. Develop activities that overcome employment barriers associated with the casualised and seasonal nature of the tourism and hospitality sector.

### Working Groups

- Illawarra South Coast Local Jobs Program Small Business and Tourism Working Group.

### **Priority 8 - Innovation and Technology**

Increase the region's pool of innovation and technology employment opportunities by retaining and building a locally-based remote workforce of skilled workers, and supporting them through more innovative and agile training and upskilling opportunities.

### Strategies

1. Support the development of innovative and agile training and upskilling in tech for local job seekers, such as through the formalisation of locally-led micro-credential courses.
2. Support projects that encourage the growth of a local skilled workforce that can deliver services remotely to organisations nationally and internationally.
3. Support the building of programs and tools that more effectively link regionally-based skilled job seekers with employers and employment opportunities.
4. Ensure innovation is built in to all LJP activities.

### Working Groups

Illawarra South Coast Innovation Working Group

The following issue will also be considered when designing activities to meet these priorities:

### **Consideration 1 – Housing**

Ensure access to suitable housing for job seekers and workers is considered and built into the design for activities developed to meet LJP priorities.



# Attachment B – Labour Market Data Dashboard (April 2022)



## Illawarra South Coast Employment Region New South Wales

## Labour Market Data Dashboard

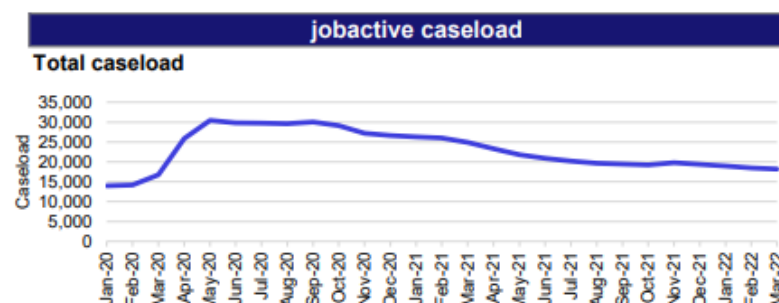
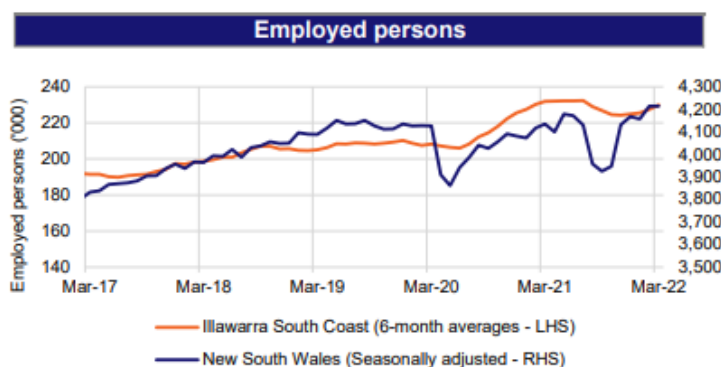
Data current as at 21 April 2022

Refer to source notes for data reference periods

Labour market summary table												
	Employment			Unemployment			Unemployment rate		Participation rate		Youth unemployment rate	
	Mar-22	Mar-20	Change	Mar-22	Mar-20	Change	Mar-22	Mar-20	Mar-22	Mar-20	Mar-22	Mar-20
	('000)	('000)	(%)	('000)	('000)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Illawarra South Coast	230.0	208.4	10.4	10.8	14.1	-23.2	4.5	6.3	61.1	57.2	13.6	16.8
New South Wales	4,214.9	4,127.5	2.1	172.4	214.9	-19.8	3.9	4.9	65.5	65.4	9.9	10.5
Australia	13,389.9	12,995.5	3.0	551.3	723.2	-23.8	4.0	5.3	66.4	65.9	8.3	11.6

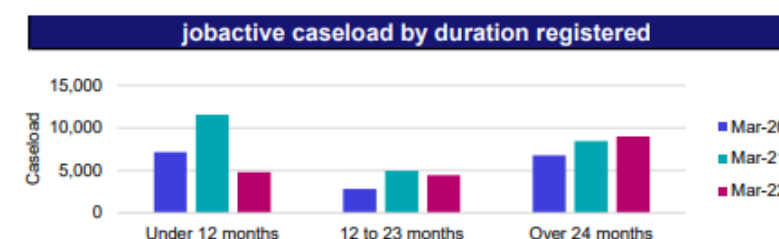
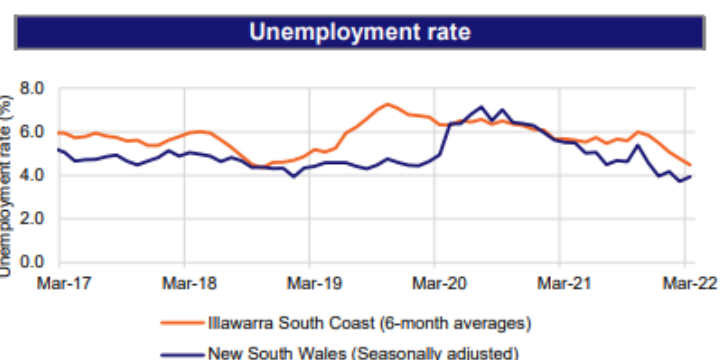
Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, Mar-22. Employment Region data are 6-month averages of original estimates, except for the youth unemployment rate, which is a 12-month average of original estimates. State youth unemployment rates are 12-month averages of original estimates. Remaining data are seasonally adjusted.

This **Labour Market Data Dashboard** provides key indicators for the labour market by Employment Region and is updated monthly.



### Change in jobactive services caseload

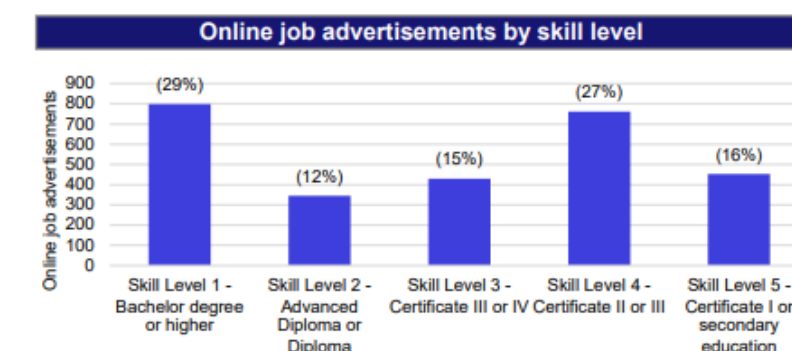
	Illawarra South Coast	New South Wales
Caseload - Feb 2020	14,220	169,325
Caseload - Mar 2022	18,215	251,206
Change from Feb 2020 to Mar 2022	3,995	81,881
	28%	48%



### LGAs with highest unemployment rates (%)

Local Government Area (LGA)	Dec-21	Dec-20
Eurobodalla	9.8	7.7
Bega Valley	8.3	6.0
Shoalhaven	8.1	5.9
Shellharbour	6.0	7.7
Wollongong	5.3	7.0

For more insights, access SALM data via [lmp.gov.au](http://lmp.gov.au). Source: National Skills Commission, Small Area Labour Markets, four quarter averages, Dec-21 quarter



Note: Data are not readily available for all sources by Employment Region. ABS Labour Force Survey data are based on the combined SA4s of Illawarra; and Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven. The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) uses a unique geographical approach. For this region, the IVI Illawarra & South Coast region has been used. jobactive caseload reports at the Employment Region level and includes participants receiving both digital and provider servicing (it excludes other programs, such as ParentsNext or Transition to Work (TTW)). For caseload data, the Employment Region is based on (1) the location of the provider for jobactive provider serviced participants; (2) where the participant resides for Online Employment Services (OES) participants; (3) the NEST Employment Regions of Adelaide South or Mid North Coast for NEST participants. jobactive caseload by duration registered is based on the participant's time registered in employment services. Caseload data are based on current methodology which has been retrospectively applied to historical jobactive caseload dates. As such, the data may not align with earlier figures. For any enquiries related to the data in this dashboard, please contact [EmploymentPathwaysAnalysis@skillscommission.gov.au](mailto:EmploymentPathwaysAnalysis@skillscommission.gov.au).