

## **Skill Shortages – the real story**

I talk to many Tasmanian business owners and operators and I know that skills shortages are real and continue to be a significant problem.

We know skills shortages inhibit business activity and productivity. We are now being told that skill shortages are reducing businesses capacity to train new workers and we know that there are a range of labour market, workforce and demographic issues contributing to the shortages.

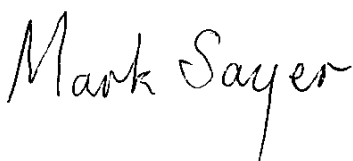
We also know we have to be cleverer in how we respond. Which shortages need our attention, which will be solved by the market, which require an education and training solution, and which require an employer solution? Particularly, we must have clear priorities for committing public funding to the solutions.

This is why I am pleased to launch this report prepared for Skills Tasmania by Lisa Taylor Consulting. This report is an important first step in this process. By bringing together the data, theory and analysis around skill shortages, a real insight into what it means when an employer talks about a skill shortage in their industry is provided.

There are, of course, traps in using data and it is worth noting the author's caution on some of the specific occupational employment forecasts in the data she has used.

As I said, this is the first step. The second is underway. The next step builds on this work and takes us further toward solid guidelines and priorities we should apply to action.

I expect there will be a major requirement for action by Skills Tasmania; but I also expect a major requirement for other Government agencies and an indication of where an employer response will be appropriate.



GENERAL MANAGER (SKILLS TASMANIA)