

# FSANZ WORKFORCE STRATEGY

## Introduction

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) supports a multi-jurisdictional food regulatory system. Our goals are to maintain consistent, effective and accountable food regulatory systems in Australia and New Zealand; and to ensure public confidence in the quality and safety of the food supply. In order to continue to achieve these goals, now and in the future, we need to ensure that we have a strong workforce plan.

FSANZ's workforce plan was developed in two stages. First, we monitored and assessed our current performance in relation to our future targets. This information is summarised in the Gap Analysis. Second, we developed a strategy for how to address these gaps. This is the Workforce Strategy.

The Strategy establishes our workforce goals and sets out the initiatives that we will strive towards in order to achieve these goals. It will be used by FSANZ to:

- understand our priorities in relation to workforce planning
- mitigate workforce risks
- build our ideal workforce
- respond to future changes.

## Themes

The Strategy is structured around five key workforce planning themes:



Each theme directly impacts our workforce and our ability to respond to future challenges.

## Principles

Underpinning the Strategy are FSANZ's workforce principles. These principles recognise that FSANZ is a statutory agency limited by government funding and resourcing, and therefore must set priorities which operate within these restrictions. The workforce principles are to:

- treat people as a priority
- take a risk-based approach to workforce planning
- focus on workforce optimisation
- invest in capability and talent development
- continue to review and improve workforce practices.

## Modernisation

The Strategy also considers the impact of the [Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991](#) (FSANZ Act) undergoing review. As FSANZ is a statutory agency, amendments to the FSANZ Act could result in our agency undergoing modernisation or transformation. In particular, this may include movement toward a greater regulatory and enforcement role in the food sector.

If the FSANZ Act Review (the Review) does result in modernisation or transformation, it would have a significant impact on our workforce, affecting overall size, variety of skillsets, role descriptions and organisational structure. The possibility of change makes it particularly important that FSANZ has a robust workforce strategy moving forward.

## Other publications

The Strategy supports and builds upon the strategic objectives set out in the current Corporate Plan, Science Strategy, Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and the Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

The Strategy replaces the People Strategy.



## Recruitment and retention: ensuring we find and keep the right people

Recruitment is how we build our workforce. By engaging and retaining the highest quality of candidates with the best cultural fit, we improve our service delivery, preserve our culture and protect our resources.

### Attracting the right people

FSANZ is a specialised, knowledge-based agency with a dependence on the capabilities of its people. As such, we need to ensure we are recruiting the highest professional calibre. This means recruiting highly trained scientific and technical staff with the ability to respond to a changing food industry. It also means attracting quality people in corporate roles.

We easily attract and recruit the highest quality of scientific, technical, corporate and regulatory staff.

Improve our visibility as a respected and favourable employer

- ensure our website and social media accounts are up-to-date, informative and welcoming
- publicise our successes (e.g. favourable survey results, community engagements) and employee benefits (e.g. small agency, values)
- develop strategies to target scientific and academic skillsets

Increase our understanding of how we attract new employees, where they come from and why they choose FSANZ

- conduct research about how job applicants and new starters discover FSANZ
- incorporate data collection into e-recruitment processes

Achieve higher quality levels of engagement with our job listings

- analyse engagement trends
- apply research to marketing strategies

Ensure our recruitment and onboarding processes are effective

- maintain an e-recruiting system that is targeted and modern
- where recruiting people is not favourable, consider other options for gaining people capability

### Retaining the right people

FSANZ relies on institutional knowledge, but also needs to be ready to adapt to change, especially if modernisation or transformation occurs. In order to achieve this, we must ensure that the employees we retain are capable, feel valued and are prepared to learn new skills and change old ways.

We retain the highest calibre of staff across all areas of the agency.

Provide work conditions that make employees feel fairly remunerated, valued, respected and secure

- maintain a positive workplace culture
- recognise the work of quality employees
- review and enhance employment benefits where possible

Invest in our employees' success

- provide ongoing opportunities for employees to develop new skills

Support employee movement

- assist employees with transitioning to other agencies where it supports their career



## Learning and Development: maximising the skills and abilities of our workforce

Investing in learning and development shows that we value our employees and helps maximise our workforce productivity.

### Supporting new employees

In order to make our workforce as efficient as possible, it is important that new employees can start achieving their best work as soon as they arrive at FSANZ. This means having an induction program that both informs and supports new starters. Further, as any possible modernisation would result in a large intake of new employees, our induction program needs to be particularly robust.

We have an induction program which is instructive, supportive and efficient.

Prepare our new employees for their duties as quickly as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actively engage employees with a range of induction practices</li> <li>provide user-friendly guides to policies and procedures</li> </ul>
Ensure the program is prepared for potential modernisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make induction processes agency-wide, where possible</li> <li>use systems which can accommodate large, bi-national groups</li> </ul>
Induct new employees into our culture and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support cultural education, including FSANZ values</li> <li>include practices that are designed to welcome employees</li> </ul>
Sustain the learning process beyond formal induction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establish a network of support which extends beyond the allocated induction period</li> <li>ensure there is ongoing access to induction resources</li> </ul>

### Developing new skills

Every employee at FSANZ works in an area that is constantly adapting, whether it's a changing food industry, developments in technology or updated legal requirements. To respond to these challenges we need to provide opportunities which encourage our employees to continually learn and develop.

We provide many quality opportunities for employees to develop their skills and knowledge.

Provide resources to encourage self-learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintain our extensive physical and online library collection</li> <li>update our databases to ensure they reflect the most recent scientific information</li> </ul>
Enhance performance management processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure performance plans are strong and sustainable</li> <li>recognise employee achievement</li> <li>tailor development initiatives to individual and organisational needs</li> </ul>
Provide a variety of development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilise secondment opportunities, work experience placements and mentoring programs</li> <li>maintain collaborative relationships with other agencies</li> <li>build capabilities in-agency through higher duties opportunities</li> </ul>



## Planning and Adaptability: preparing our workforce for the future

As we face the possibility of major agency transition, we need to ensure our workforce is ready to meet future challenges.

### Planning for change

If the Review results in modernisation or transformation, our systems and people must be prepared for our workforce to undergo significant change. Even if no changes occur, this preparation will support efficiency and productivity within FSANZ now and into the future.

We are prepared to meet the challenges associated with a major transition.

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| Prepare for recruitment challenges   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain systems that can meet greater recruitment demands</li> <li>• consider options for acquiring specialist knowledge without recruiting new employees</li> </ul>  |
| Consider the workforce of the future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review how our facilities could support an influx of employees</li> <li>• consider the right balance between permanent versus project funded employees</li> <li>• forecast the skills required for future needs or changes (e.g. skills required for enforcement roles)</li> </ul> |
| Develop a communication strategy     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use our communication channels to keep the public informed about any changes to FSANZ</li> <li>• ensure internal communication channels are robust</li> </ul>  |

### Developing an agile workforce

Changes in the workforce and work market are inevitable, so we need to ensure FSANZ is ready to respond to major shifts. In particular, we are aware that a rapidly changing scientific industry paired with a need for specialist knowledge in emerging fields can sometimes lead to a limited talent pool. We need to ensure we have the emerging talent and agility required to make our workforce sustainable.

We have an agile and responsive workforce.

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| Maintain a flexible workforce                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop an agile organisational structure that allows for movement between divisions</li> <li>• support mobility arrangements with other agencies</li> <li>• recruit employees with flexible and diverse skillsets</li> </ul> |
| Develop succession plans                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• offer succession planning opportunities to people in relevant feeder groups</li> <li>• ensure succession plans incorporate possible modernisation</li> </ul>  |
| Ensure our workforce is continually learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide learning and development tools that support flexibility, including temporary assignments, sabbaticals and training</li> <li>• encourage a growth mindset through communication about change</li> </ul>                |



## Diversity and Inclusion: strengthening our culture and our capability

Diversity is a valuable workforce asset. Not only do diversity and inclusion strengthen our culture and support our values, they actively improve our work capability.

### Building our diversity

We want to build a diverse workforce that can tackle problems with creativity and innovation. In order to achieve this, we need to ensure that our recruitment processes are fair and merit-based, and that we are committed to attracting quality individuals from diverse backgrounds.

We increase our diversity through the use of fair, merit-based and barrier free recruitment processes.

Become an employer of choice for individuals from diverse backgrounds

- use our communication platforms to celebrate and attract diverse individuals
- publicise our diversity commitments through relevant documents, plans and articles
- use consistently inclusive language across our publications

Ensure diverse individuals have access to equal employment opportunities within FSANZ

- ensure our recruitment processes (including advertising, applications and assessment) are accessible and barrier free where possible
- provide employees involved in recruitment with diversity and anti-discrimination training

### Creating our culture

We want to facilitate a workplace that respects and values individuals from diverse backgrounds. This not only means celebrating diverse employees, but engaging the entire workforce in a culture of collaboration, celebration and respect.

We promote and support diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

Build an inclusive culture

- embed inclusivity into our workforce values
- commit to eliminating discrimination in the workplace

Support the development of diverse employees

- ensure promotion processes are merit-based and barrier free
- invest in developing diverse employees

Ensure employees feel engaged and included in our culture

- support and encourage participation in our social events
- continue our culture work
- ensure our offices feel connected

Educate employees about diversity and inclusion

- consider the need for diversity training
- celebrate diversity through relevant events
- educate relevant employees about inclusive language and accessibility



## Infrastructure and Resources: providing the tools for success

Providing your workforce with appropriate infrastructure and resources is essential to ensuring employees can turn their skills and experiences into productive work.

### Boosting productivity

In order to ensure our workforce is as efficient and productive as possible, we need to provide employees with the right tools, resources and technology.

We have the right tools, resources and technology to support the productivity of our workforce.

Create an environment that promotes productivity

- communicate with workgroups about the resources and facilities preferred by their team
- accommodate individual needs where possible
- maintain positive physical environments

Maintain effective management systems

- educate employees about consistent use of agency-wide communication and record keeping systems
- continue to review our systems

Provide resources to support health and wellbeing

- encourage the use of our many health and safety resources
- maintain the current health and wellbeing resources available in-office and online

Educate employees about the use of technology and resources

- ensure employees understand how to properly use resources to their full potential
- provide ongoing access to educational resources

### Ensuring flexibility

It is important that our technology and infrastructure is flexible. Flexibility allows us to respond to any changes in the workforce as well as to protect our resources and keep up to date with changing standards.

We have flexible infrastructure that easily responds to change and supports an agile workforce.

Ensure our technology and infrastructure is sustainable

- invest in infrastructure and technology that can be updated
- undertake risk assessments to address sustainability

Ensure our technology can adapt to changing work conditions

- plan for the technology and infrastructure needs which may result from possible modernisation
- maintain the systems and tools that enable flexible work

Build infrastructure that supports an agile workforce

- encourage the use of communal and shared spaces
- educate employees about changes to resources as early as possible
- promote engagement with agile facilities (e.g. collaborative working set ups)

## Implementation

The implementation of the Workforce Strategy will be a continuous process.

We are already driving the implementation of the Strategy through the development of new systems as recommended within. It will act as a strategic guideline for future workforce decisions. We will continue to use it to understand our workforce priorities, and respond to change.

We will regularly reflect upon the Strategy and ensure that it continues to meet our needs. We will treat it as a living document, and make updates where necessary.

We will report on our successes in the Annual Report.