

# foreword

**The Business and Economic Research (BERL) Report of November 2004 sounded a warning to the tourism and hospitality sector: that looming skills shortages posed a real threat to the future of the industry.**

Like minds within the sector – passionate about tourism and hospitality and determined to take action to nurture the industry – came together in 2005 to devise a strategic approach to these projected workforce shortages.

Made up of individuals from industry associations and industry training organisations (ITOs), with the support of government departments and agencies, the Leadership Group has spent the past 18 months determining the drivers of industry skills shortages, and developing a strategy to tackle them.

When we started this process, we believed we were dealing with a workforce issue. After looking closely at the issues and listening to industry, it became apparent that we are in fact dealing with a *workplace* issue; the challenge for tourism and hospitality businesses lies in up-skilling our people at all levels, and lifting our productivity and profit so that the industry can attract investors and pay its workers more.

The Group's priority now is to spread the message to the industry: based on forecast visitor numbers through to 2010 we face a serious skills shortage and it will take collective, concerted action to overcome it. It is not merely a matter of finding people for the work that must be done, but of ensuring that people choose our industry over others, and have their choice confirmed by feeling valued in rewarding jobs with coherent career paths and equitable salaries.



This document outlines the workforce issues and offers some solutions to the tourism and hospitality sector. It exhorts all those who play a part in the industry to get involved in seeking and implementing solutions that will work for you, your customers, your employees and, most importantly, your future employees.

This document showcases solutions that ITOs, industry associations and government are implementing today; solutions that may provide useful blueprints for others. It also provides contact details for those with bright ideas to share, and those not sure where or how to start.

It is our hope that this document will assist you to identify actions you can implement in your organisations, today and tomorrow. Addressing workforce issues to transform tourism and hospitality businesses into employers of choice will also ensure delivery of highly profitable, world class visitor experiences.



**FIONA LUHRS**

Chief Executive | Tourism Industry Association NZ

Chair | Leadership Group

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PS. If you would like to be part of this dialogue, whether to promote solutions or seek answers, you can contact the Leadership Group directly. See Appendix Four on page 36 for contact details.

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