



Australian Government
Department of Employment and
Workplace Relations

THE POLICY IMPERATIVE FOR MATURE AGE EMPLOYMENT

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“Age may wrinkle the face, but lack of enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.”

Anon





THE ISSUE

- Australia has an ageing population
- By 2050, 25% of the Australian population will be aged 65 years or more
- Government, business and the community face significant skill shortages, loss of operational knowledge and experience if mature age workers are not encouraged to stay in the work force.





FACTS & FIGURES

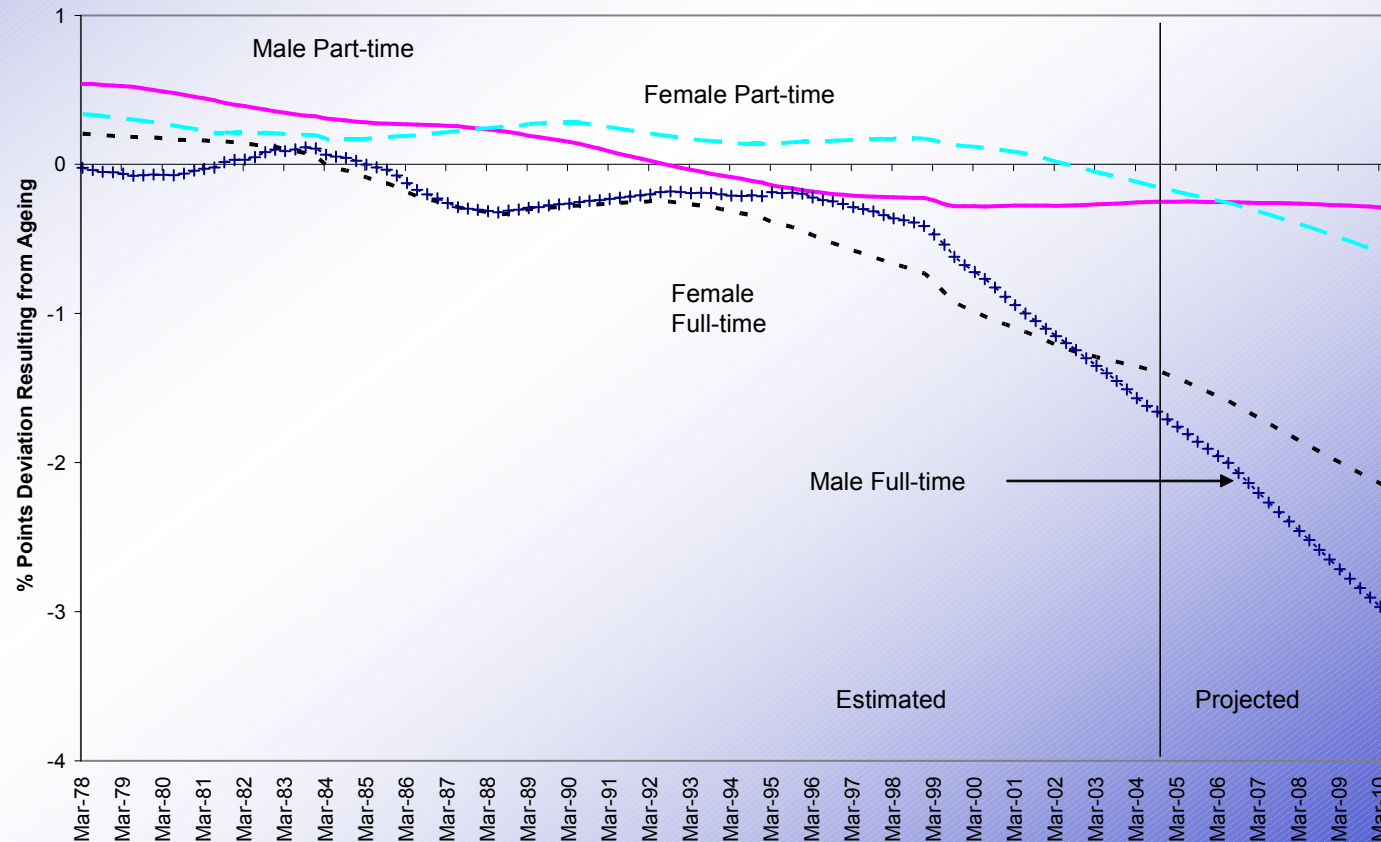
- Working population grows by around 180,000 per annum currently
- This figure will grow by only 125,000 for the **DECADE** of the 2020's (*Access Economics projections*)





FACTS & FIGURES

- Population ageing will reduce male full time workforce participation rates by around 1.4% & female participation rates by 0.8% between now and mid 2010.

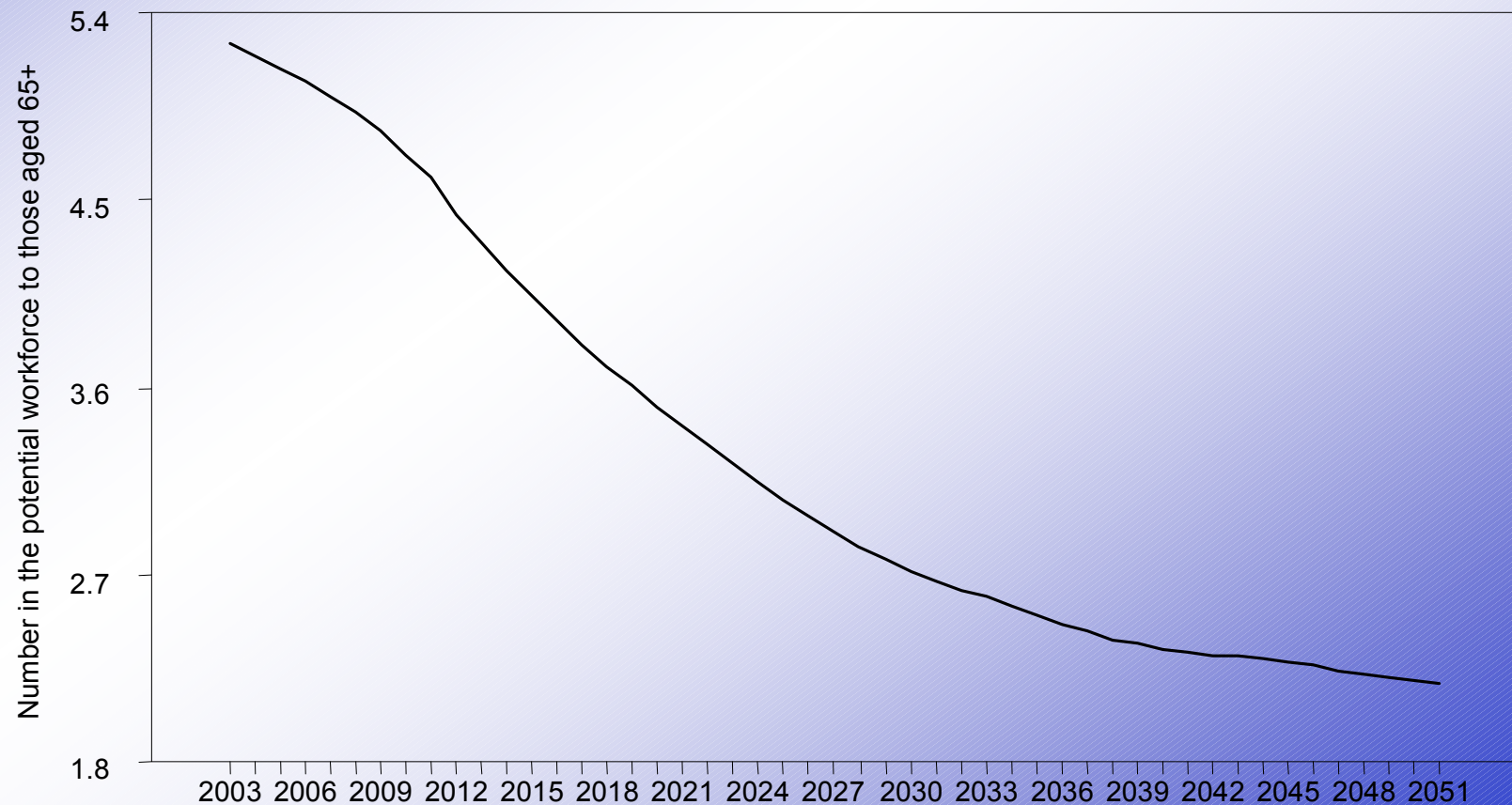


•Source: ABS Labour Force Survey data, adjusted for seasonality and the effects of Labour Force redefinitions. Estimated effects are derived by calculating the effect of changing population shares on the overall participation rate, assuming age-group-specific participation rates remain unchanged. The demographic assumptions used are the base case from the econTECH MM2 Demographic model.



FACTS & FIGURES

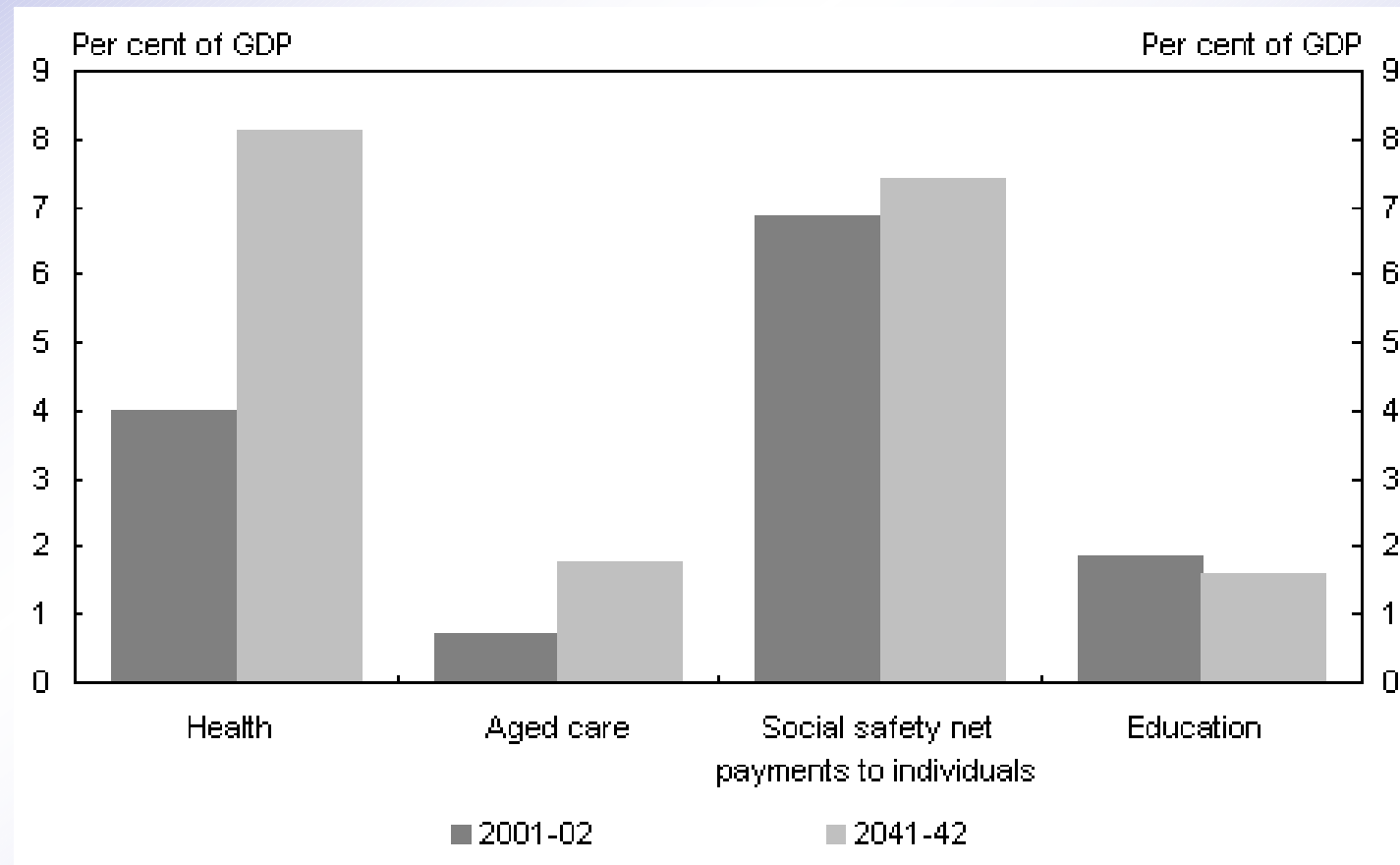
- By 2050, Australia can only expect to have around 2 workers for every person aged over 65. The ratio of potential workers will more than halve.





FACTS & FIGURES

- With current trends, Government spending will more than double on health and there will be a significant increase in spending on aged care and social security.





FACTS & FIGURES

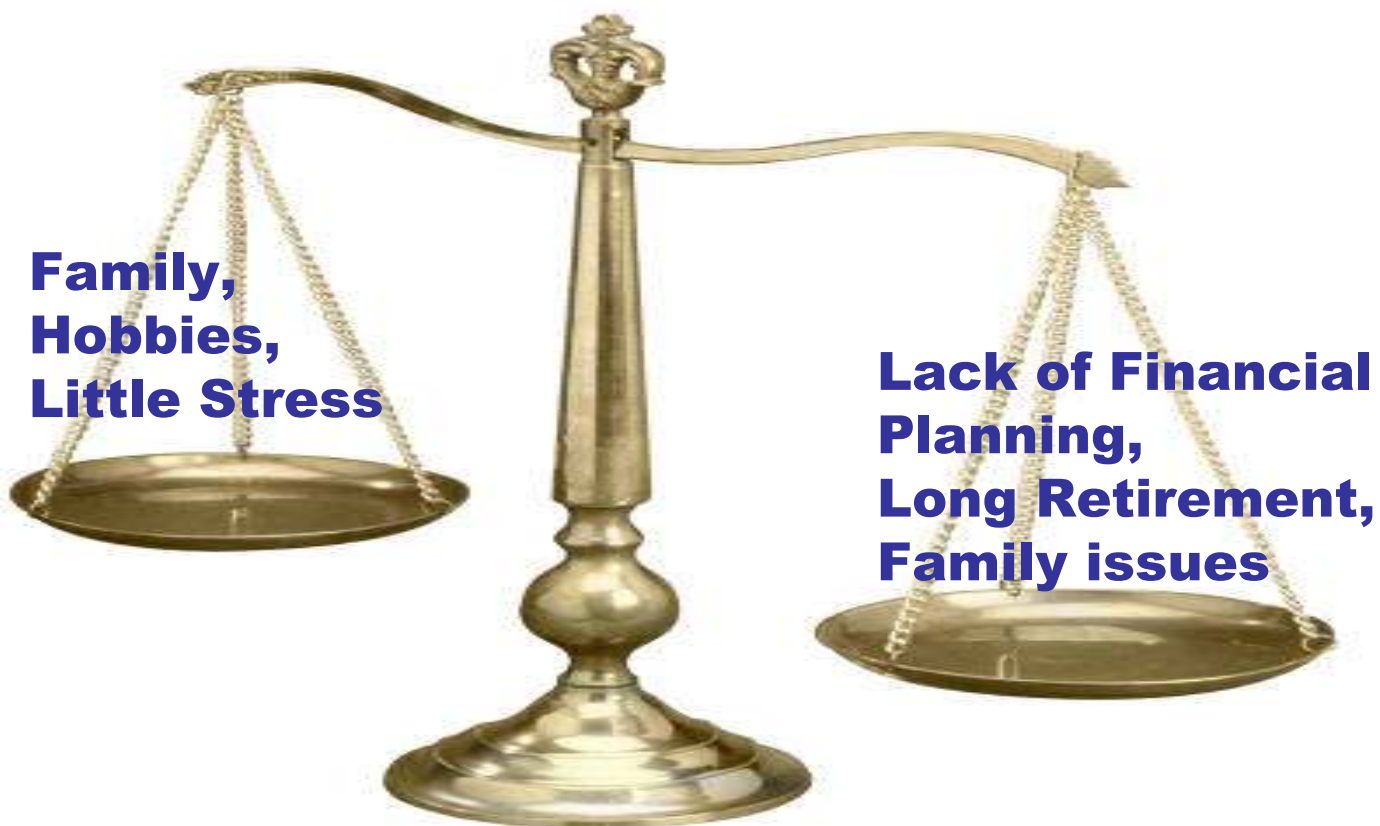
Mature age workers who stay in the workforce :

- Longevity in Jobs
- Positive Attitudes
- Lower Absenteeism
- Job Satisfaction





EXPECTATIONS OF RETIREMENT





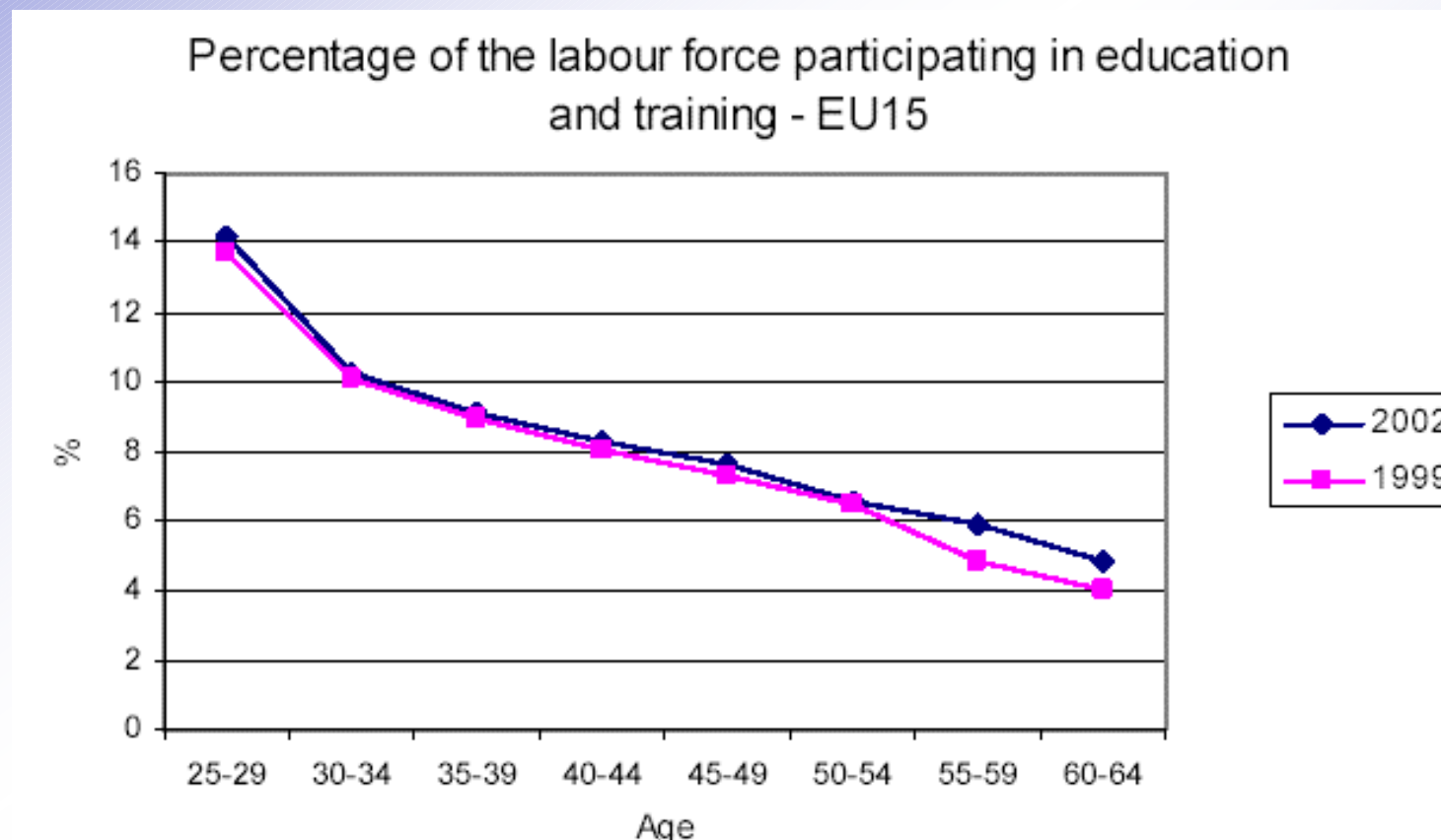
MATURE AGE WORKERS ATTITUDES

- Satisfied with workplace relationships & work/life balance
- Unsatisfied with career development opportunities & skill utilisation
- Generally feel undervalued in the workplace
- Unsatisfied with levels of training provided to older workers
- Most wish to retire between 55 and 65 years of age but few are financially prepared





TRAINING LEVELS



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey, spring results





GOOD WORK – GOOD HEALTH

- Older Workers = Better Health
- Skill Use = Health & Wellbeing
- Employment better for health than voluntary retirement
- Social Aspects = Maintain Psychological Health





GOOD WORK – GOOD HEALTH

Improved health of older workers will lead to:

- improved labour force participation
 - improved productivity
 - greater sense of well being
- contained growth in health expenditure.





DEWR HEALTH & WELL BEING PROGRAM

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the DEWR Intranet. The address bar shows the URL: <http://epsps002v1.application.enet/C8/C5/Health%20and%20we>. The page title is "Intranet - Health and wellbeing - Microsoft Internet Explorer".

The website header includes the "DEWR Intranet" logo and navigation links: Intranet, My Site, Corporate Directory, BIS, Service Desk, DEWR, and Workplace. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, Topics, Organisation, Documents, Bulletin Board, and Special Interests.

The main content area is titled "Health and wellbeing" and includes a search box with the text "This topic" and a search button. The current location is indicated as: Home > Topics > Occupational health and safety > Health and wellbeing.

The page is organized into three main columns:

- Topics:** A list of topics with checkboxes, including "Compensation and injury management", "Health and wellbeing" (checked), and "Workplace safety".
- Actions:** A list of actions with checkboxes, including "Add to My Links" and "Alert Me".
- Information:** A list of informational links, including "Balanced Meals", "Breast Cancer", "Can You Relax", "Cancer Council ACT - Quit Services", "Cancer Council ACT Information Sheet", "Cholesterol Explained", "CISAC Health Club Corporate Membership", "Deep Vein Thrombosis", "Developing Flexibility by Stretching", "Depression in Men", "diabetes explained", "dieting on the job", "Dyslexia explained", "Fitting fitness into a busy day", "Health Weeks", "Hepatitis C the facts", "Holiday security check list", and "Mens Health".
- Forms:** A list of forms, including "Eyesight test form and Information sheet".
- Guidelines:** A list of guidelines, including "Bereavement Guide", "Eyesight testing", "Substance Abuse", and "Smoking in the Workplace Guide".



WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

- Flexible work arrangements
- Career extension programs for Mature Age Workers
- Communication of all information regarding age diversity to all employees





MYTHS & FACTS

MYTH: *Older workers are not as productive as younger workers*

FACT: Age has no bearing on productivity

MYTH: *It takes longer to train an older worker*

FACT: Older workers learn new skills & tasks in roughly the same time as younger workers

MYTH: *Older employees have higher levels of absenteeism*

FACT: Absenteeism levels fall the older a worker becomes





POLICIES

DEWR: Mature Age Employer Champion Awards

Acknowledge organisations who work towards developing Mature Age Employment Strategies and implementing them.

Business must meet 3 criteria –

- Formal or informal Mature Age Employment Strategy
- A balance of ages in their workplace
- Management and staff who are aware of the policies and put them into practice





EMPLOYER EXAMPLES

Coates Hire

- DEWR's first Mature Age Employer Champion
- 18% of staff are over 50 years of age
- Developed HR initiatives to recognise what Mature Age Workers bring to their business
- Recognise attributes that the business can develop with Mature Age Workers to further enhance their skills



Malcolm Jackman, CEO of Coates Hire Ltd
at the Mature Age Employment Futures Forum.





EMPLOYER EXAMPLES

Aurora Energy

- Phased retirement
- Training Initiatives
- Mature Age Apprenticeships
- Alternative roles for older workers moving from physically demanding roles
- Temporary or contractual employment for former employees
- Offer discounted gym memberships and fitness evaluations





EMPLOYER EXAMPLES

IBM

- Over 200 employees aged 50 years or over – oldest worker is in his 80's
- Phased retirement
- Retiree Program – database of retirees willing to return on contract/consultancy
- IBM Retiree Alumni
- Access to IBM Health Insurance Training
- Conducted studies into further Mature Age Worker retention





STRATEGIES

- **Redefine Retirement Views** – promote more choice and flexibility in the workplace
- **Establish New Attitudes Towards Mature Age Workers** – get the message to managers & businesses that older workers are a source of knowledge & are highly productive
- **Flexible Work Arrangements** – part time, flexible hours, phased retirement, purchase of additional leave





STRATEGIES

- **Retain Corporate Knowledge** – mentoring by senior employees of junior staff, return of retirees on contract/consultancy during peak periods
- **Training of Mature Age Workers** – increase to level that younger employees receive to further older workers skill set





SUMMARY

“Australian organisations who learn the lesson that mature workers are too valuable to waste will have a competitive edge on those organisations that are slower on the uptake.”

Access Economics





SUMMARY

- Encourage workplaces to see ageing as an opportunity for knowledge & experience
- Reaffirm Mature Age Workers of their value in the workplace
- Develop and implement policies to encourage Governments & businesses to invest in their people
- Develop strategies today to prepare for the make up of the workforce of tomorrow

