



**SUBMISSION TO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT,  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

**The Draft Statement of Requirements, The Green Army Programme**

**31<sup>st</sup> January, 2014**

ACSO's Employment Services, as a member of the Job Futures consortium have taken the opportunity to review the draft Statement of Requirements (SOR) prepared by the Australian Government to deliver the Green Army Programme. As a member of Job Futures, we are excited to see the progress being made with the Green Army Programme, with our fellow members providing Green Government programs (Green Corps and National Green Jobs Corps) for around 10 Years.

We are satisfied that the draft Statement of Requirements is clear in its intent and purpose, and recognize and commend the efforts towards building a standing environmental workforce of young in providing environmental rejuvenation and sustainability projects.

We believe this is of real value and interest individually to our organisation, and more broadly to the Job Futures consortium. As a State-wide provider across Victoria, we value the opportunities presented in the document including the potential to be engaged in recruiting participants to Green Army projects as well as service delivery. Building upon our existing infrastructure across the State, we have identified opportunities to deliver Green Army projects, including those delivered locally throughout rural and remote locations in partnership with our existing network of service providers.

In particular, we acknowledge the diversity of young people which will be recruited to the Programme including Indigenous Australians, school leavers, gap year students and graduates. ACSO can offer support to the program through our existing relationships with Aboriginal Controlled Organisations across Victoria established through our Koori Liaison officer.

In addition to the scope of participants identified in the draft SOR, ACSO would like to recommend that the Forensic population also be considered. As a specialist service provider for people who have come in contact or are at risk of contact with the Criminal Justice system, we acknowledge the unique needs presented by this group in securing training and employment opportunities whilst reintegrating to the community. Whilst the SOR has identified young people as being a priority target group for the Programme, ACSO has identified the potential for expansion to include forensic clients in the future. This could see enhanced pathways and improved employment outcomes for ex-offenders engaged in similar projects from the point of imprisonment, through to the community. Currently, a number of prison settings and offender reintegration programs offer a number of horticulture training and industry programs. A clear pathway between these programs and ongoing projects such as the Green Army Programme could see vast opportunities to engage and divert people away from a life of committing crime and into ongoing employment opportunities with providers.

ACSO would be very interested in pursuing further dialogue with Job Futures and the Department about opportunities presented in relation to this cohort and further potential for expansion of the Green Army Programme in the future. We are available for further discussion and face to face meetings in relation to these ideas.

Yours Sincerely,

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