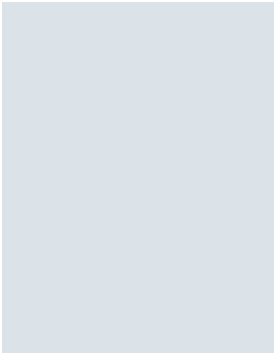
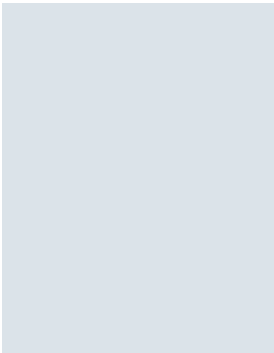




**DEPARTMENT OF TRAINING
AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**



**State priority occupation list – Summary and results
July 2017**



The *State priority occupation list 2017*

Summary

1. Introduction

This information paper summarises the process undertaken to create the *State priority occupation list (SPOL)* released in 2017 (SPOL2017).

The SPOL is produced each year by the Department (DTWD) in consultation with key stakeholders, including the State's industry training councils, to inform and guide workforce planning and development for Western Australia. It is a list of occupations rated according to their priority status for WA.¹

The SPOL reviews the Western Australian Labour Market by analysing each occupation independently for criticality, unmet demand and non-market factors.²

More detailed information on the SPOL2017 can be found in the Scope and Methodology document, produced in conjunction with this paper.

2. Background

The main use of the SPOL is to help guide purchasing of publicly-funded training in Western Australia through the State Training Plan.³

It is also used for migration purposes, such as informing the development of the *Western Australian Skilled Migration Occupation List (WASMOL)*, used to guide State Nominated migration to target those occupations where there is a genuine need to attract overseas workers and where such jobs cannot be filled by local workers.⁴

¹ It should be noted that the SPOL is not designed as a 'skills shortage' list for Western Australia. It is also not designed as a forecasting tool or as an exact measure of demand and supply. The methodology behind the SPOL includes a number of considerations beyond market factors (outlined in the 'SPOL Indicators' section below), which ensure it is robust, defensible and fit for the purposes listed under Section 2, and preclude its use as a 'skills shortages' list.

² Further details relating to these three indicators can be found in the *Scope and Methodology* document.

³ Section 21(1)(a) of Western Australia's *Vocational Education and Training Act (1996)* requires the State Training Board to prepare for the Minister's approval a State Training Plan. The Plan contributes to the policy and purchasing direction for the training system in Western Australia (for more information, see stb.wa.gov.au/stp2017).

A diagrammatic representation of the SPOL's Policy Framework is provided in Appendix 2.

⁴ For further information on the WASMOL, see migration.wa.gov.au/services/skilled-migration-western-australia/occupations-in-demand.

The list and background evidence is also used to form the basis for any labour market submissions the DTWD is asked to make to other agencies (both at a Commonwealth and State level) that relate to the State's occupational priorities, if and when required.

In addition, the SPOL is used to inform workforce development planning in the State and is used as a key source of labour market evidence in a number of policy areas.

3. Structure of the SPOL

Ratings

An occupation listed on the SPOL may be assigned to one of five separate categories:

- **State Priority 1**
These are the highest priority occupations. They will generally be of a high skill level (critical occupations), ranked in the top 50% on the SPOL's Occupational Priority Index (OPI)⁵ and experiencing unmet demand.
- **State Priority 2A**
These are at the second highest level of priority. They will generally be of a high skill level and ranked in the top 50% on the OPI. While these occupations may not be currently experiencing unmet demand, it is highly desirable to ensure supply is maintained to avoid skills shortages in the future.
- **State Priority 2B**
These are also at the second highest level of priority. They are not necessarily occupations of the highest skill levels, but they are ranked in the top 50% on the OPI and are experiencing unmet demand.
- **Priority 3**
These are the third tier and represent industry or regional-level priority occupations. They tend to be either occupations experiencing unmet demand or highly-skilled occupations. Typically, they will be ranked lower on the OPI than occupations appearing in the State Priority categories listed above.
- **Other Identified Occupation**
These refer to occupations where there is some evidence of demand for workers at a regional or industry level. However, there is no evidence that demand is not currently being satisfied through existing supply streams. Any reported issues are likely to relate to factors other than education, training or migration pathways. These occupations are closely monitored by DTWD.

⁵ Further information on the calculation of the OPI is available in the in the SPOL Scope and Methodology Paper.

- **Not Identified as a Priority**

These refer to occupations where there have been no reported issues relating to the demand or supply of workers. While they are still important to the State economy, they are not currently considered a priority for VET or migration.

SPOL Indicators

Occupations will be considered for the SPOL if one or more of the following conditions can be met:

- the occupation is considered a *critical occupation*;
- there is significant evidence of *unmet demand* for the occupation, that is, where employers have faced difficulties in filling vacancies due to skills and training related issues (sometimes called 'skill shortages'); and / or
- there are *non-market factors* impacting on the occupation (such as changes in regulations and licensing arrangements).

Criteria for consideration

The following criteria are applied to determine whether an occupation should be considered for the SPOL.

a) Valid data

There must be an adequate level of quality information in order to assess and validate the needs of occupations. In practice, this means that the occupation must have a valid Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) code from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) at the six-digit level.

b) High levels of skill

The occupation must have specialised skills that require extended learning and preparation time. Occupations that do not require post-school qualifications prior to entry, such as construction labourers, process workers, and kitchen hands, are excluded from the list of eligible occupations.

c) Clear and open pathways

The occupation should have clear education and/or training pathways or qualifications that can be obtained within Australia, and where the skills learnt can be matched to the requirements of the occupation. Where an occupation does not have any higher educational or VET qualifications associated with it, it is excluded from the eligibility list. Examples of these include judges and members of parliament.

The occupation must also operate in the normal labour market, that is, there is a regular recruitment process to fill vacancies and there are multiple employers available. Occupations that are highly regulated, or with tightly controlled recruitment practices with specialist training usually obtained through the employers are not eligible for inclusion. Examples of these include defence force personnel, police officers and air traffic controllers.

d) Occupational impact

An occupation will be considered if any disruption in its supply would result in significant impacts more broadly across the industry or the State's economy. These impacts may manifest themselves in higher unemployment and/or slower growth due to supply bottlenecks.

More detailed commentary on the structure and scope of SPOL can be found in the *Scope and Methodology Paper*.

4. Outcomes for 2017

Economic outlook

Over the past five years, the Western Australian labour market has entered a period of moderation as a result of the end of the record levels of capital investment within the resources sector, coupled with falling commodity prices and uncertainty on global markets.

With an economy quite reliant on exports, Western Australia also has a higher level of exposure to potential international shocks compared to most other Australian states and Territories.

Locally, this has contributed to weak business and consumer confidence levels, and reduced spending and investment on the part of businesses and households, which in turn has resulted in reduced overall demand for workers.

This reduction is reflected in official ABS labour force statistics, as well as other key labour market research undertaken by various government and private sector organisations.

Employment growth has remained subdued well below long term averages, (particularly for full time employment), while the State's total number of unemployed and unemployment rate have both trended higher since June 2012.

In addition a growing number of Western Australians who are employed are reporting underemployment; that is they are employed but want to and are available for additional hours of work.

At the end of 2016, around 220 000 Western Australians were reported as either being unemployed or underemployed out of a total labour force of 1.45 million.⁶

This equates to around one in every seven persons in the State's labour force and reflects a high level of underutilised labour.

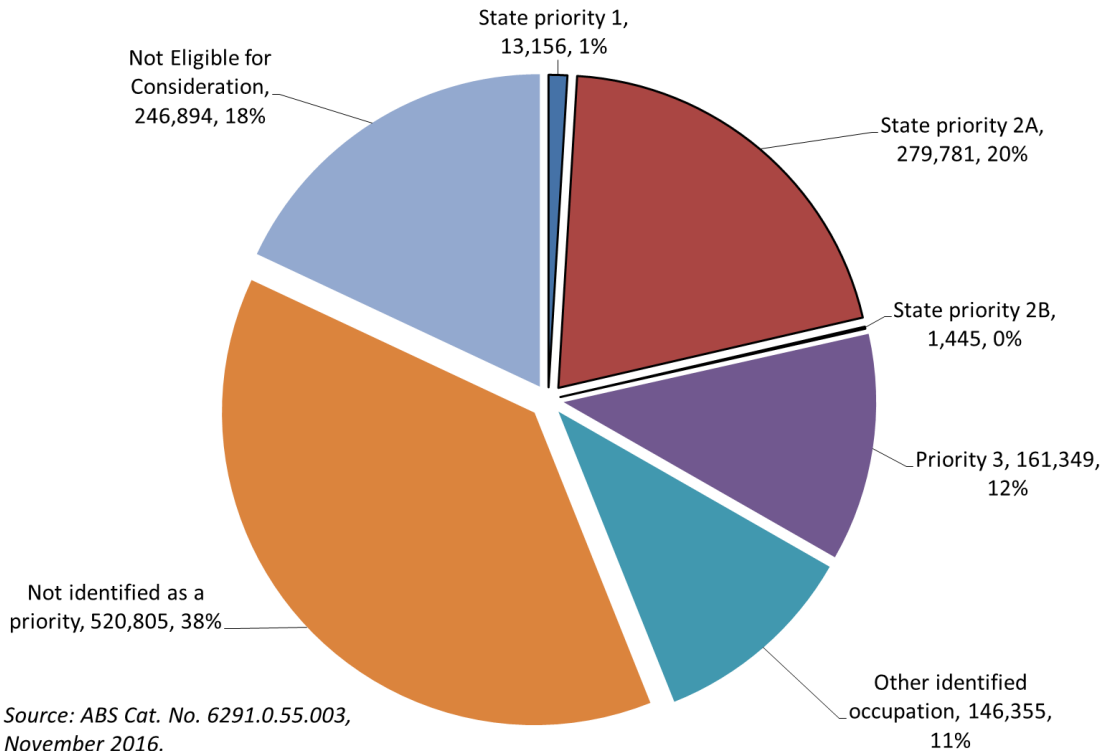
⁶ Source: ABS, *Labour Force, Australia Summary*, ABS Cat. No. 6202.0, December 2016.

Occupations on SPOL in 2017

Overall, the occupations analysed for SPOL2017 cover just under half of the number of employed persons in Western Australia, with 33.3% employed in occupations covered by the 'State Priority 1 / 2A / 2B' or 'Priority 3' categories.

The breakdown is illustrated in Figure 1, below:

Figure 1: Employment level by SPOL Priority (2017)



The total number of occupations deemed to be State priorities has increased, encompassing 187 occupations, up from 178 occupations in 2016 and 185 in 2015. This shift upwards in the number of State Priority occupations has primarily been due to changing occupational circumstances rather than driven by reported shortages and demand from the labour market.

The distribution of occupations by priority status is illustrated in Table 1, below:

Table 1: Number of Occupations by SPOL Priority (2013 to 2017)

Priority Status	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
State Priority 1	93	47	23	27	24
State Priority 2A	61	116	155	147	158
State Priority 2B	43	18	7	4	5
Priority 3	103	84	57	72	59
Total Priority Occupations	300	265	242	250	246
Other Identified Occupation	-	-	76	57	37
Not a priority	441	432	426	436	460
Total ANZSCO (6 Digit)	741	744	744	743	743

NB: Other Identified Occupations were introduced in 2014.

ANZSCO reviews by the Australian Bureau of Statistics also saw the addition of new ANZSCOs in 2014.

The total number of priority occupations (State Priority and Priority 3 rated occupations combined), fell to 246 in 2017 compared to 250 in 2016. The majority of decreases in the number of priority occupations have been due to the shifts in lower tiered Priority 3 category.

Some occupations that were previously State Priorities have seen their status fall to Priority 3 due to weak labour market demand and / or an abundance of new skilled workers in the area, as identified via labour market surveying, training and/or migration data.

In many cases this has occurred due to rates of new skilled labour supply (through training and migration pathways) outpacing the demand for new and replacement workers from the State's labour market.

Of the 59 occupations now rated as Priority 3, 48 are being held as priority occupations solely due to them being identified as 'Critical' to Western Australia.

Though a 'Critical' occupation requires a steady supply of newly qualified skilled workers, the labour market situation in these cases shows that the availability of workers is at such a high level to suggest an oversupply on the market. This reflects the lower levels of unmet demand being experienced during the State's current softer labour market conditions.

The priority occupations are still predominantly skewed towards the higher-skilled management and professional occupations, as well as technicians and trade workers.

The distribution of SPOL2017 priorities by ANZSCO Major groups is demonstrated in the following Table 2.

Table 2: ANZSCO Major Groups by SPOL Priority (2013 to 2017)

ANZSCO	State Priority 1	State Priority 2A	State Priority 2B	Priority 3	Total	Other Identified Occupation
SPOL 2017						
1. Managers	2	21	-	2	25	5
2. Professionals	21	113	-	5	139	3
3. Technicians and Trades Workers	1	18	4	35	58	10
4. Community and Personal Service Workers	-	5	1	14	20	8
5. Clerical and Administrative Workers	-	1	-	1	2	1
6. Sales Workers	-	-	-	-	0	3
7. Machinery Operators and Drivers	-	-	-	2	2	7
8. Labourers	-	-	-	-	0	-
Total	24	158	5	59	246	37
SPOL 2016						
1. Managers	1	17	1	4	23	9
2. Professionals	26	106	-	7	139	7
3. Technicians and Trades Workers	-	19	2	37	58	16
4. Community and Personal Service Workers	-	4	1	15	20	9
5. Clerical and Administrative Workers	-	1	-	2	3	9
6. Sales Workers	-	-	-	3	3	1
7. Machinery Operators and Drivers	-	-	-	2	2	5
8. Labourers	-	-	-	2	2	1
Total	27	147	4	72	250	57
SPOL 2015						
1. Managers	1	13	3	4	21	13
2. Professionals	22	111	-	1	134	12
3. Technicians and Trades Workers	-	23	3	31	57	19
4. Community and Personal Service Workers	-	8	-	10	18	12
5. Clerical and Administrative Workers	-	-	1	3	4	6
6. Sales Workers	-	-	-	3	3	1
7. Machinery Operators and Drivers	-	-	-	2	2	9
8. Labourers	-	-	-	3	3	4
Total	23	155	7	57	242	76
SPOL 2014						
1. Managers	6	8	7	2	23	-**
2. Professionals	34	90	3	8	135	-**
3. Technicians and Trades Workers	4	16	5	40	65	-**
4. Community and Personal Service Workers	3	2	1	18	24	-**
5. Clerical and Administrative Workers	-	-	2	3	5	-**
6. Sales Workers	-	-	-	4	4	-**
7. Machinery Operators and Drivers	-	-	-	7	7	-**
8. Labourers	-	-	-	2	2	-**
Total	47	116	18	84	265	0
SPOL 2013						
1. Managers	5	25	-*	4	34	-**
2. Professionals	61	51	-*	4	116	-**
3. Technicians and Trades Workers	24	22	-*	31	77	-**
4. Community and Personal Service Workers	1	3	-*	28	32	-**
5. Clerical and Administrative Workers	-	3	-*	6	9	-**
6. Sales Workers	-	-	-*	4	4	-**
7. Machinery Operators and Drivers	-	-	-*	16	16	-**
8. Labourers	-	-	-*	10	10	-**
Total	91	104	0	103	298	0

* Prior to SPOL 2014, State Priority 2 ratings were not divided between 2A (Critical occupation only), and 2B (Unmet Demand occupation only).

** Prior to SPOL 2015, the 'Other Identified Occupation' rating was not collated and published as part of the annual SPOL process.

Compared to SPOL2016, 36 priority occupations experienced a drop in their rating, with 8 of these occupations experiencing a fall from State Priority status. A further 15 of these occupations dropped off the priority list entirely. All occupations except one, to fall from priority status for SPOL2017 were rated as Priority 3 for SPOL2016.

At the same time, 30 priority occupations experienced a rating increase compared to SPOL2016, with 11 of these occupations moving onto the Priority list for the first time. From the 30 priority occupations experiencing a rating increase, 17 occupations were elevated to State Priority status in 2017.

State priority occupation list 2017

State Priority, Priority and Other Identified Occupations

State Priority 1

These are the highest priority occupations. They will generally be of a high skill level (critical occupations), ranked in the top 50% on the occupational priority index⁷ and experiencing unmet demand.

ANZSCO	ANZSCO Description
133611	Supply and distribution manager
149411	Fleet manager
231111	Aeroplane pilot
233916	Naval architect
251214	Sonographer
251412	Orthoptist
253316	Gastroenterologist
253323	Rheumatologist
253324	Thoracic medicine specialist
253399	Specialist physicians not elsewhere classified
253411	Psychiatrist
253513	Neurosurgeon
253515	Otorhinolaryngologist
253516	Paediatric surgeon
253517	Plastic and reconstructive surgeon
253521	Vascular surgeon
253913	Obstetrician and gynaecologist
253918	Radiation oncologist
254415	Registered nurse (critical care and emergency)
254422	Registered nurse (mental health)
254423	Registered nurse (perioperative)
262112	ICT security specialist
272112	Drug and alcohol counsellor
312113	Building inspector

State Priority 2A

These are at the second highest level of priority. They will generally be of a high skill level and ranked in the top 50% on the occupational priority index. While these occupations may not be currently experiencing unmet demand, it is highly desirable to ensure supply is maintained to avoid skills shortages in the future.

ANZSCO	ANZSCO Description
111111	Chief executive or managing director
121214	Grain, oilseed or pasture grower
121216	Mixed crop farmer
121312	Beef cattle farmer
121313	Dairy cattle farmer
121317	Mixed livestock farmer
121322	Sheep farmer
121411	Mixed crop and livestock farmer
132211	Finance manager
132311	Human resource manager
132511	Research and development manager
133111	Construction project manager
133112	Project builder
133211	Engineering manager
134111	Child care centre manager
134211	Medical administrator
134212	Nursing clinical director
134311	School principal
135112	ICT project manager
139912	Environmental manager
141311	Hotel or motel manager
221111	Accountant (general)
222311	Financial investment adviser
222312	Financial investment manager
231113	Flying instructor
231114	Helicopter pilot
231211	Master fisher
231212	Ship's engineer
231213	Ship's master
231214	Ship's officer
231215	Marine surveyor
232111	Architect
232212	Surveyor
232611	Urban and regional planner

⁷ Further information on the calculation of the occupational priority index is available in the in the SPOL Scope and Methodology Paper.

ANZSCO	ANZSCO Description	ANZSCO	ANZSCO Description
233111	Chemical engineer	252711	Audiologist
233112	Materials engineer	252712	Speech pathologist
233211	Civil engineer	253111	General medical practitioner
233212	Geotechnical engineer	253112	Resident medical officer
233213	Quantity surveyor	253211	Anaesthetist
233214	Structural engineer	253311	Specialist physician (general medicine)
233215	Transport engineer	253312	Cardiologist
233311	Electrical engineer	253313	Clinical haematologist
233411	Electronics engineer	253314	Medical oncologist
233511	Industrial engineer	253315	Endocrinologist
233512	Mechanical engineer	253317	Intensive care specialist
233513	Production or plant engineer	253318	Neurologist
233611	Mining engineer (excluding petroleum)	253321	Paediatrician
233612	Petroleum engineer	253322	Renal medicine specialist
233911	Aeronautical engineer	253511	Surgeon (general)
233912	Agricultural engineer	253512	Cardiothoracic surgeon
233913	Biomedical engineer	253514	Orthopaedic surgeon
233915	Environmental engineer	253518	Urologist
234111	Agricultural consultant	253911	Dermatologist
234112	Agricultural scientist	253912	Emergency medicine specialist
234211	Chemist	253914	Ophthalmologist
234411	Geologist	253915	Pathologist
234412	Geophysicist	253917	Diagnostic and interventional radiologist
234514	Biotechnologist	253999	Medical practitioners not elsewhere classified
234611	Medical laboratory scientist	254111	Midwife
234711	Veterinarian	254211	Nurse educator
241111	Early childhood (pre-primary school) teacher	254311	Nurse manager
241213	Primary school teacher	254411	Nurse practitioner
241311	Middle school teacher	254412	Registered nurse (aged care)
241411	Secondary school teacher	254413	Registered nurse (child and family health)
241511	Special needs teacher	254414	Registered nurse (community health)
241512	Teacher of the hearing impaired	254416	Registered nurse (developmental disability)
241513	Teacher of the sight impaired	254417	Registered nurse (disability and rehabilitation)
251211	Medical diagnostic radiographer	254418	Registered nurse (medical)
251212	Medical radiation therapist	254421	Registered nurse (medical practice)
251213	Nuclear medicine technologist	254424	Registered nurse (surgical)
251311	Environmental health officer	254425	Registered nurse (paediatrics)
251312	Occupational health and safety adviser	254499	Registered nurses not elsewhere classified
251411	Optometrist	263111	Computer network and systems engineer
251511	Hospital pharmacist	263112	Network administrator
251512	Industrial pharmacist	263113	Network analyst
251912	Orthotist or prosthetist	263311	Telecommunications engineer
252112	Osteopath	263312	Telecommunications network
252311	Dental specialist		
252312	Dentist		
252411	Occupational therapist		
252511	Physiotherapist		
252611	Podiatrist		

ANZSCO	ANZSCO Description
	engineer
271111	Barrister
271311	Solicitor
272114	Rehabilitation counsellor
272311	Clinical psychologist
272399	Psychologists not elsewhere classified
272412	Interpreter
272413	Translator
272511	Social worker
272613	Welfare worker
311211	Anaesthetic technician
311214	Operating theatre technician
311312	Meat inspector
312411	Electronic engineering draftsman
312412	Electronic engineering technician
312913	Mine deputy
323211	Fitter ((general) - including mechanical fitters and plant mechanics)
332211	Painting trades worker
333211	Fibrous plasterer
342111	Airconditioning and refrigeration mechanic
342411	Cabler (data and telecommunications)
342412	Telecommunications cable jointer
342413	Telecommunications linesworker
342414	Telecommunications technician
351111	Baker
351112	Pastrycook
351211	Butcher or smallgoods maker
351311	Chef
411511	Aboriginal and torres strait islander health worker
411712	Disabilities services officer
422111	Aboriginal and torres strait islander education worker
423111	Aged or disabled carer
423313	Personal care assistant
512211	Health practice manager

State Priority 2B

These are also at the second highest level of priority. They are not necessarily occupations of the highest skill levels, but they are ranked in the top 50% on the occupational priority index and are experiencing unmet demand.

ANZSCO	ANZSCO Description
311111	Agricultural technician
311215	Pharmacy technician
322113	Farrier
361112	Horse trainer
451399	Funeral workers not elsewhere classified

Priority 3 Occupations

These are the third tier and represent industry or regional-level priority occupations. They tend to be either occupations experiencing unmet demand or highly-skilled occupations. Typically, they will be ranked lower on the occupational priority index than State priorities.

ANZSCO	ANZSCO Description
141111	Cafe or restaurant manager
142111	Retail manager (general)
234912	Metallurgist
242211	Vocational education teacher
261312	Developer programmer
261313	Software engineer
272111	Careers counsellor
311299	Medical technicians not elsewhere classified
312211	Civil engineering draftsperson
312212	Civil engineering technician
312311	Electrical engineering draftsperson
312312	Electrical engineering technician
312911	Maintenance planner
321111	Automotive electrician
321211	Motor mechanic (general)
321212	Diesel motor mechanic
322211	Sheetmetal trades worker
322311	Metal fabricator
322313	Welder (first class)
323111	Aircraft maintenance engineer (avionics)
323112	Aircraft maintenance engineer (mechanical)
323113	Aircraft maintenance engineer (structures)
323214	Metal machinist (first class)
331111	Bricklayer
331212	Carpenter (includes joiner)
332111	Floor finisher
333111	Glazier
333212	Solid plasterer

ANZSCO	ANZSCO Description
333411	Wall and floor tiler
334111	Plumber (general)
334112	Airconditioning and mechanical services plumber
334113	Drainer
334114	Gasfitter
334115	Roof plumber
341111	Electrician (general)
341112	Electrician (special class)
342211	Electrical linesworker
342314	Electronic instrument trades worker (general)
342315	Electronic instrument trades worker (special class)
361211	Shearer
361311	Veterinary nurse
394111	Cabinetmaker
411111	Ambulance officer
411112	Intensive care ambulance paramedic
411213	Dental technician
411411	Enrolled nurse
411711	Community worker
411715	Residential care officer
411716	Youth worker
421111	Child care worker
421112	Family day care worker
421114	Out of school hours care worker
423211	Dental assistant
441211	Emergency service worker
441212	Fire fighter
452215	Outdoor adventure instructor
591211	Despatching and receiving clerk
712918	Train controller
731311	Train driver

Information on other identified occupations and other non-priority occupations are available via the SPOL website.

SPOL Framework and Impacts

