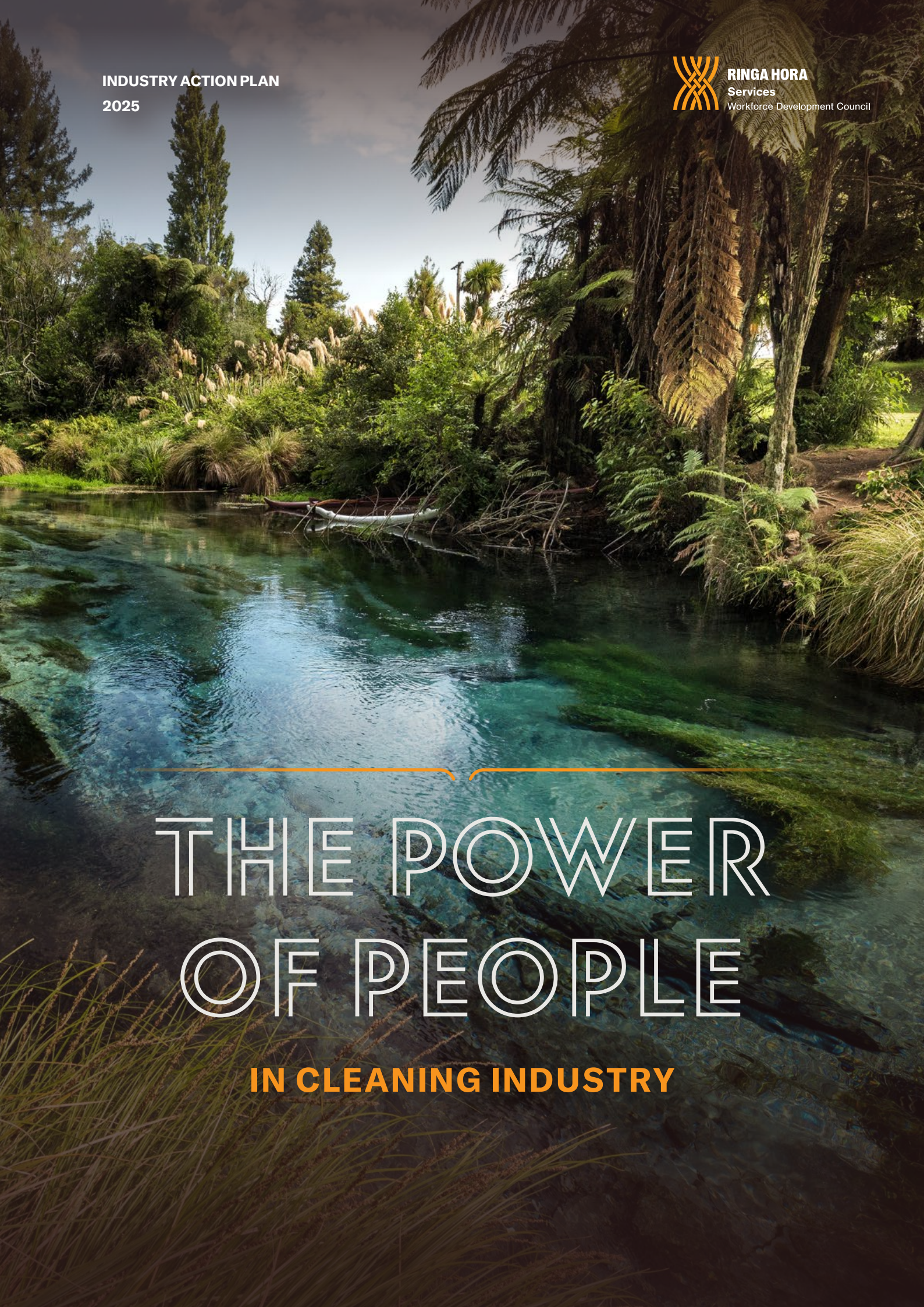




THE POWER OF PEOPLE

IN CLEANING INDUSTRY

ACTION

Putting this into action for the Cleaning industry

Transformational change in the Service sector workforce will take time but to achieve that change we need to start taking action now. The following plan includes the key areas of focus, medium term actions and short-term initiatives. These initiatives and actions can be thought of as individual threads that weave together to achieve workforce transformation.

	Māori succeeding as Māori	Attracting and retaining the future workforce
Actions Where we would like to be	▲ Māori business and workforces have opportunities to connect. ▲ The Service sector and vocational education system understands and acts on Māori views of success. ▲ The vocational education system is shaped by a Mātauranga Māori lens.	▲ Improve the availability and use of high-quality information about Service sector businesses and workforce. ▲ Improve participation of Māori, Pacific peoples, tāngata whaikaha, and other population groups. ▲ Industry is visible and promoted to a wide range of potential ākonga and kaimahi. ▲ Roles and responsibilities of system level players are understood and have arrangements in place to work well together.
Initiatives What we can do to get there Service sector initiatives	▲ Establish and grow the Māori Service Sector Forum. ▲ Ohu Ahumahi collaboration (Rōpū Kaitakawaenga) to build relationships with iwi and hapū to better understand Māori aspirations. ▲ Te Kāhui Mātauranga Māori to provide Mātauranga Māori lens to Ringa Hora product design and quality assurance approaches.	▲ Undertake the Future Workforce project that aims to understand work, skills and training in New Zealand in 2040. ▲ Amplify work that aims to grow participation of particular groups such as, Pasifika Navigators of Tomorrow or Jobs for Mums. ▲ Promote the use of Te Mata Raraunga, a collection of vocational education and workforce data.
Cleaning Specific initiatives	▲ Improve cultural competency to support the adoption of contextually appropriate cultural practice e.g. observing tikanga when cleaning in morgues. ▲ Create opportunities to develop business skills that are specifically targeted at the growing number of Māori business owners.	▲ Advocate for cleaning as an important entry point for people entering the workforce for the first time. ▲ Support and collaborate with existing organisations that provide pastoral care to new entrants, such as Work and Income and, community organisations.

Developing broad skills for the future	Creating mana-uplifting jobs and opportunities
▲ Vocational education and training is flexible and adaptable to current training, and emerging industry requirements. ▲ Workforces and businesses are well prepared to adapt and innovate. ▲ Investment decisions are transparent and based on high quality advice.	▲ Workplaces are accessible and attractive to the current and future workforce. ▲ The workforce is recognised, valued, and safe. ▲ The workforce and businesses move through the cycle of employment (recruitment, on-boarding, retention, and progression) in ways that suit them. ▲ The range of roles is articulated and available. ▲ Learning and skills development supports upwards and lateral progression.
▲ Create a package of short, sharp, stackable credentials that meet industry needs through Waihangatia te Āmua Ao Shaping the Future of Service Skills project. ▲ Amplify work that supports people to learn about broad skills for the Service sector, such as MBIE's Digital Boost initiative.	▲ Develop an 'employer hub' that shares resources, information, and case studies of Service sector excellence – Targeted at SMEs. ▲ Amplify approaches that improve diversity, equity and inclusion, such as Diversity Works NZ, Disabled Persons Assembly Information Exchange resources for employers, and Rainbow Tick.
▲ Improve the accessibility of training by providing choices of delivery modes: ▲ online, ▲ in other languages, or with the support of an interpreter, ▲ That have flexible hours for completion, ▲ That allow for the demonstration of aptitude, rather than written tests. ▲ Support industry to recognise micro-credentials, qualifications and on-the-job training. ▲ Refine existing courses and training to ensure it prepares people for the cleaning industry. ▲ Industry, in conjunction with Ringa Hora, to further explore support for industry specific Language Literacy and Numeracy initiatives.	▲ I Promote and endorse 'Thank Your Cleaner Day', an initiative by BSCNZ that aims to increase the visibility of cleaners across Aotearoa, and to encourage businesses that employ cleaners to establish a stronger relationship with them. ▲ Articulate and promote pathways to leadership for Māori and Pacific Peoples.

PROGRESS

To support progress with these actions, we have monitored what has been achieved in the last 12 months and what more will be delivered in the future.

Cleaning Workforce Action Plan	Industry Goals	What has been delivered in 2025	More information
Māori succeeding as Māori	Improve cultural competency to support the adoption of contextually appropriate cultural practices e.g., observing tikanga when cleaning in morgues.	Scheduled for delivery in late 2025. This initiative led by Ringa Hora in collaboration with industry stakeholders represents a shift in how the cleaning sector acknowledges and supports its workforce. It highlights the quiet leadership and dignity of kaimahi who carry out essential work in sensitive environments often unseen, yet deeply impactful. This work aims to guide industry in elevating standards of care, cultural responsiveness, and organisational support, recognising that valuing kaimahi means not only acknowledging their contribution but also improving the conditions in which they work. Rather than focusing on formal training, the initiative signals a broader movement toward industry leadership that honours the mana in the mahi and the people behind it, normalising culturally aware practices as a natural part of how we care for both spaces and those who maintain them. In addition to this initiative, cleaning businesses and platforms like CleaningNZ are increasingly advocating for specialised training in culturally sensitive cleaning contexts. They are also promoting inclusive workforce practices that reflect the diversity of the communities served and exploring flexible learning options such as stackable credentials and short courses. These efforts reflect a growing commitment to both cultural integrity and workforce development within the cleaning sector.	Contact Ringa Hora for more information.
Attracting and retaining the future workforce	Advocate for cleaning as an important entry point for people entering the workforce for the first time.	The CleanNZ Expo, held on 6–7 November 2024 at Te Pae Christchurch, is New Zealand’s leading professional cleaning trade show. It brings together cleaning businesses, suppliers, and contractors for a free seminar programme covering topics such as AI, robotics, health and safety, ESG, and specialist cleaning. The event also features innovation showcases and networking opportunities, highlighting the sector’s growing sophistication and its role in providing accessible, skilled employment across Aotearoa. In 2025, Auckland hosted the BSCNZ World Federation Congress, a global event that showcased emerging technologies like robotic floor cleaners, which improve task consistency and make upskilling more efficient. The congress emphasised that technology should support, not replace, cleaners, and stressed the importance of provider-led training to ensure safety and quality. Complementing these efforts, the Workforce Futures Fund, opening in February 2025 and supported by BSCNZ and government partners, will support training and development across the cleaning and wider service sectors, creating pathways for first-time workers to enter the workforce through cleaning roles.	<u>CleanNZ Expo</u>
	Support and collaborate with existing organisations that provide pastoral care to new entrants, such as Work and Income.	The 2024–25 NZ Cleaning Contractors Multi-Employer Collective Agreement (MECA) outlines employment conditions and support for cleaners, including school caretakers. It emphasises the importance of safe, supportive working environments aligned with pastoral care principles and reinforces employer responsibility for training and wellbeing, particularly in sensitive cleaning contexts. Complementing this, the 2025 MBIE Employment Monitor highlights that the cleaning industry continues to report high levels of employment concerns, especially around pay and hours. However, it also shows growing employer awareness of the need for pastoral support	<u>NZ Cleaners and cleaning contractors multi-employer collective employment agreement</u>

Developing broad skills for the future	Improve the accessibility of training by providing delivery modes: ▲ Online ▲ In other languages, or with the support of an interpreter ▲ That have flexible hours for completion ▲ That allow for the demonstration of aptitude, rather than written tests
Developing broad skills for the future	Support industry to recognise micro-credentials, qualifications and on-the-job training. Refine existing courses and training to ensure it prepares people for the cleaning industry, e.g. adding HR skills to the Savvy Intro Skills for team leaders course Industry, in conjunction with Ringa Hora, to further explore support for industry specific Language Literacy and Numeracy initiatives.
Creating mana-uplifting jobs and opportunities	Promote and endorse ‘Thank Your Cleaner Day’, an initiative by BSCNZ that aims to increase the visibility of cleaners across Aotearoa, and encourage businesses that employ cleaners to establish a stronger relationship with them. Promote and endorse ‘Thank Your Cleaner Day’, an initiative by BSCNZ that aims to increase the visibility of cleaners across Aotearoa and encourage businesses that employ cleaners to establish a stronger relationship with them.

Ringa Hora has collaboratively worked with industry and providers across a range of work to gather data, insights, industry skills needs, and provider feedback to shape and inform investment funding advice for qualifications to the Tertiary Education Commission. This also includes advise on how this training can be made more accessible to learners, whether by online delivery, flexible hours or more language options. The next round of advice is due November 2025 for the funding year 2027.	Ringa Hora 2025 Investment Advice - Ringa Hora
Ringa Hora supports the development of provider-led micro-credentials when backed by clear evidence of industry demand, regional workforce priorities, and opportunities to upskill or reskill kaimahi in targeted, flexible ways. This approach enables faster, more responsive training solutions that can adapt to evolving sector needs, which is especially valuable in dynamic industries like security. To assist providers, Ringa Hora offers a dedicated support page with step-by-step guidance for micro-credential registration, a streamlined application process with a 20-working-day review period, and a letter of support for successful applications. This letter is submitted to NZQA alongside the provider’s formal application, helping ensure quality and alignment with workforce development goals.	Micro-credential listing, approval, and accreditation - NZQA
In 2025, the cleaning industry in New Zealand has strengthened its training programmes to better prepare kaimahi for leadership and frontline roles. This includes integrating human resources and soft skills into existing courses and promoting structured development pathways. The Savvy Intro Skills for Team Leaders course, widely used in the sector, has been updated to include HR fundamentals such as team management, conflict resolution, and basic employment law, alongside communication and leadership skills tailored for supervisory roles. These enhancements are supported by cleaning businesses and industry bodies to ensure relevance to real-world team leadership needs. Globally, the ISSA Training Programme has been aligned with New Zealand standards and offers modules on customer service, safety, and employee engagement, with a strong emphasis on consistency and quality—key for managing diverse cleaning teams. These resources are being adapted locally to support onboarding and leadership development. Additionally, Ringa Hora is working with Building Service Contractors of New Zealand (BSCNZ) to produce training videos for lone workers, aiming to protect those operating in isolated or potentially risky environments, such as carparks behind office blocks.	Contact BSCNZ for more information.
As outlined in the 2024 Cleaning Workforce Development Action Plan, Ringa Hora and industry stakeholders are exploring targeted literacy, language, and numeracy (LLN) support tailored to the cleaning sector. This includes identifying foundational skill gaps that affect job performance, safety, and career progression, and advocating for flexible, industry-aligned solutions that can be integrated into existing training and induction pathways. Although still in the exploratory phase, this work reflects a shared understanding that LLN challenges are a significant barrier to workforce development and retention. The initiative signals a commitment to building a more capable and resilient cleaning workforce by addressing core competencies alongside technical skills.	Cleaning Industry Action Plan 2024 - Ringa Hora
This year ‘Thank Your Cleaner Day’ was October 16. Opportunities to create more awareness of the role cleaners play in our daily lives included inviting office cleaners into the office for a shared lunch provided by Ohu Ahumahi staff and more promotion across all media platforms to raise awareness.	Thank your cleaner day



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