

Plan work force now



Kevin McLaughlin

By **DENICE RICE**

THE next decade holds one certainty for Australian businesses — there will not be enough workers.

And while businesses will have little control over the nation's birthrate and therefore the number of people entering the workforce, those who begin planning now will be able to influence the rate at which workers leave.

Kevin McLaughlin, manager of strategic people management at the Department of Water, said businesses must not only plan to attract and retain older workers, they must also develop strategies to "download" the wealth of knowledge and experience held by those workers.



"Ten or 15 years ago workers were being encouraged to leave the workforce early and enjoy a long retirement," he said.

"Now, businesses and government are encouraging people to work longer.

"Companies will need to develop a culture that values older workers and makes them want to stay in the workforce when the caravan is calling.

"Strategies can include flexible working arrangements and

creating roles for older workers to be mentors and trainers.

"While they may not have the technological skills of the up-and-coming generations, and may not wish to be trained in them, they still have a wealth of knowledge that businesses must try to retain."

Mr McLaughlin will be a speaker at the next Australasian Management Centre Innovation Forum, at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre on June 12, where the theme will be Ageing Workplace Population Strategies — the Extinction of the Baby Boomer.

For inquiries contact AMC on 1300 466 688. Tickets are \$110 each, or \$600 for tables of six, and are available online at www.amcinnovation.com.