



Fill job void with minorities

Opportunity for employers, reports **Lachlan Pryor**

AS BABY boomers approach retirement age, the skilled workforce will begin to take a hit. New Bedford chief executive Sally Powell says the industry should take on more workers from minority groups to fill the void.

“This is the first year boomers turn 65 so we will have a large group of skilled people leaving the workforce,” Powell says.

“What we see is a real opportunity for people with diverse backgrounds to enter into the level entry work.”

Powell says employers need to realise the possibilities for minority workers.

“There is a misconception that hiring a disabled person,

migrant or indigenous Australian is going to take a lot of time, energy and resources,” she says.

“We work with employers to show that we can create a job for a person that actually saves them time and money.”

Migrant Resource Centre SA acting chief executive Regina Betts says migrants need understanding from their employer. “New arrivals not only need an understanding of their plight but support in their employment,” she says.

“We work closely in terms of referring clients to employers and link them to different employment groups.

“Language is often a barrier but when a new arrival does

speak English they need to learn workplace language, which is different.”

National Australia Bank has an Adelaide-based program called A Future You Can Bank On which gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders the opportunity to gain employment in the financial services industry.

Katie Withers has accomplished her long-held personal goal to begin a career in financial services, completing a finance and broker course.

“The program provided me with the opportunity to gain a good banking foundation and learn how to build genuine relationships with customers,” she says.



GOAL ACCOMPLISHED: Katie Withers has begun a career in financial services