



# A Partnership for Growth

In September 2023, leading home furnishings brand Adairs needed to move its workforce from outsourced to in-house in just six weeks. Adairs made a strategic decision to take over operational control of its National Distribution Centre. The result has become the benchmark for collaboration and shared success in the warehousing and distribution sector for both Adairs and National Workforce.

## The Company

Adairs Limited is Australia's largest omnichannel specialty retailer of home furnishings and home decoration products. The group owns and operates three vertically integrated brands in the category.

Under the Adairs brand, the group has 170+ stores across Australia and New Zealand and a growing online channel. Its value proposition lies in high-quality, on-trend products and superior customer service.

## The Challenge

To ensure and accommodate continued growth, Adairs made the decision to bring its National Distribution Centre in-house, transitioning from a third-party logistics provider (3PL) to self-operation.

The project encompassed the transition of the incumbent 3PL workforce, their incumbent supplier employees and existing Adairs employees, and the recruitment of additional staff to fill any staffing gaps that might arise.

There were three main areas that required National Workforce's assistance:

1. The recruitment of fixed management salaried roles
2. Adairs required 80 employees to either be transitioned from the 3PL workforce or newly hired to be permanently engaged at the distribution centre (DC)
3. In addition to the permanent workforce, National Workforce was to build a labour hire workforce and ensure the ongoing management of a casual labour pool for the site.

"To make this a success, we knew that we would have to transition the workforce from our existing 3PL provider into our own workforce. We knew that it would require significant recruitment to find the right people. We also knew there would be several unknowns along the way," explains David Lyons, GM, People and Culture at Adairs.

## The Partnership

National Workforce had been supporting Adairs across distribution and supply chain for nine years on a much smaller scale. In mid-2023, Adairs approached the team to discuss a larger, closer and more detailed partnership to assist with a complex and multifaceted transition.

"Our Head of Logistics had worked closely with National Workforce and formed a great relationship. He knew that the team could provide exceptional service," says David.

Following a detailed RFP process, Adairs selected National Workforce based on the strength of their service offerings.

David says he and his team were immediately impressed with National Workforce's approach.

“National Workforce listened, heard and understood. They also thought ahead about all those unknowns and made it clear that they would build in significant flex so that we could adapt as we went along. That was impressive from the outset.”

All of this occurred in September and October as Adairs geared up for peak times, including its Linen Lovers Sale and Christmas rush, so there was pressure to get it right – fast.

This meant mobilising a project team from across the National Workforce footprint. The team not only included recruitment and staffing experts, but technology, contracts and administration leaders too.

This team was 100% focused on Adairs’ success, delivering the staff Adairs needed in just six weeks.

In an unprecedented project within a tight timeframe, National Workforce:

1. Held sixteen candidate information sessions, attracting 216 interested candidates across existing team members and new candidates
2. Interviewed and provided recommendations on over 100 interested candidates
3. Filled six salaried management roles, following 97 candidate interviews
4. Delivered a customised onboarding experience tailored to Adairs’ culture
5. Issued offers of employment and contracts for all staff
6. Created a bespoke payroll infrastructure suited to an industrial site. From EBA translation onward, National Workforce built the process to ensure seamless payroll for the Adairs team.

David adds that National Workforce went above and beyond, even delivering the unexpected. He points to the fact that the Adairs team used National Workforce’s office as a base during the transition period. The centre was

still managed by the outgoing workforce provider at that time, and Adairs staff were not able to work from the site as a result.

“National Workforce has an office in Truganina near our DC, and they gave us full access to the space while we couldn’t use our own. We were able to recruit from, hold project meetings and base some of our team there. National Workforce is always thinking about the additional services, support and value they can provide us.”

## The Results

In just 6 weeks, National Workforce secured 107 permanent employees and bolstered the Adairs workforce with 60 casuals to continue delivering superior customer service and fast delivery. Today, National Workforce supplies 80+ casuals to the site.

“We thought we knew what we needed from a partner at the outset, but National Workforce exceeded every expectation, becoming a genuine partner in our broader journey,” David explains.

“As we were working through tight timelines and complex problems, the expert, adaptive and adaptable nature of National Workforce was readily apparent. From finding us the right people and onboarding them to giving our team access to office space when it was needed.

“National Workforce helped us anticipate and solve emerging challenges at every step. That was invaluable for Adairs and the success of this project,” he concludes.



## Ready to get started?

Your friendly National Workforce team is here to help get the ball rolling, providing seamless staffing solutions for your business.

Contact 1300 WORKING (1300 9675 464) or [info@nationalworkforce.com.au](mailto:info@nationalworkforce.com.au)

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