
News Service 104 – Don't rush skills reform, VET vs Uni graduate pathways, HBA Review, Energy and Electrotechnology Training Package IRC updates, ASQA, Foundation Skills, 2023 Women Awards, Electric Shock, Dead or Alive, Safety and Energy news

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

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1. DON'T RUSH ON SKILLS REFORM



Australian Government
The Treasury



The education section of the Australia Financial Review (AFR) 13 September 2022 edition included an opinion piece by Claire Field, managing director of

Claire Field and Associates. The article suggests government should pause and reflect before embarking on yet another rushed VET policy reform without deeper and critical thought. There have been many policy changes over recent years, and one thing that has remained constant is increase in federal funding and decrease in states' funding.

Claire writes, “Anthony Albanese’s opening address to the Jobs and Skills Summit committed an extra \$1.1 billion to the TAFE sector next year. The funding delivers 60,000 new places and the conversion of 120,000 existing places to fee-free positions – and, understandably, it’s been warmly received.

The government intends to deliver further reform, including converting another 360,000 existing places to free positions, through a \$3.7 billion investment in a five-year National Skills Agreement with the states and territories.

Some criticised the former government for not doing enough in vocational education and training, and yet over the past five years the Commonwealth’s share of recurrent VET funding increased from 26 per cent to 34 per cent, and the Coalition went to the election with \$3.7 billion in new funding for 800,000 extra VET places.

What has been missed in a lot of the post-summit discussions is the level of VET funding from the states and territories. If they had increased their funding at the same rate as the Commonwealth, the sector would have delivered tens of thousands more VET graduates and the present skill shortages would not be as acute.

Funding alone, though, isn’t enough.

One of the biggest differences between the Australian VET system and those in similar countries is our incredible rate of policy churn.

TAFE Directors Australia recently pointed out that unlike federated systems in Canada or Germany, where there is widespread agreement on the design and operation of their vocational education systems, in Australia in the past 24 years governments have introduced 752 VET policy reforms that have affected student enrolments or completions. That’s equivalent to one new reform every fortnight, every year, for nearly a quarter of a century.

Obviously, not every reform impacts every provider, but we have a situation in Australia where VET is treated as a de facto political plaything. No training provider can plan long term. We need the next wave of reforms in the National Skills Agreement to be comprehensive, integrated and to have bipartisan support at all levels of government.

Last week, Skills Minister Brendan O’Connor announced changes to reduce the duplication and complexity in VET qualifications. It’s welcome, but before we untangle the present level of complexity, it’s worth reflecting on how we got to this point.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

2. VET GRADUATES MORE JOB READY – UNIVERSITY GRADUATES MORE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES



National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) has released its latest research report on Vocational Education and Training (VET) pathway outcomes, authored by Bridget Wibrow.

The Media Release of 7 September 2022 states, “Vocational education and training (VET) qualifications enable graduates to be more job ready compared to graduates with higher education qualifications, according to the latest research from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). Over time, however, graduates with higher education qualifications tend to have higher pay, more autonomy, and more opportunities for career progression.

VET and higher education pathways – do outcomes differ for the same occupation? examined the employment outcomes of individuals with VET qualifications and those with higher education qualifications, focusing on four selected occupations, to evaluate if they are doing the same tasks and have the same salary and career outcomes.

The research also found that employers actively recruit for and employ both VET and higher education qualified individuals. For them, experience, skills and fit with the company are often more important than the qualification when assessing candidates for positions.

Another research finding was that VET and higher education qualified individuals in the same occupation are equally satisfied with their job, including work life balance, hours of work and job security. ...

This report explores occupations that can be entered into via either a vocational education and training (VET) pathway or a higher education pathway. It examines whether these individuals do the same job tasks and roles, if there are differences in how well the qualifications prepare them for the role and whether they have the same occupation and employment outcomes, such as salary and career pathways. ...

In addition, better and more accurate career guidance is needed to enable individuals to better understand the qualifications required for an occupation and the pathways available to them. This was a common theme across all occupations examined during the employer interviews... .”

[DOWNLOAD A COPY OF THE REPORT HERE](#)

3. NSW HBA BUILDING REFORMS – HAVE YOUR SAY



NSW Fair Trading has advised that the NSW Government is undertaking a reform of the building laws. The promotion states, “The NSW Government has proposed wide-ranging reforms that aim to ensure people can own, occupy and use compliant, safe and resilient buildings.”

It advises that the reform proposals are now available for public consultation. There are two public consultations.

1. Reforming building laws in NSW

This consultation is **open until Friday, 25 November** at www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/reforming-building-laws.

The reforms have been grouped into seven areas of change:

1. making home building fairer and easier
2. supplying and using safer building products
3. regulating prefabricated and manufactured homes
4. strengthening building compliance and enforcement
- 5. licensing commercial and home building work**
- 6. upskilling the building and construction industry**
7. securing prompt and fair payment for building work.

NSW Fair Trading would like to hear from anyone who has an opinion on the building industry in NSW – whether they work as tradies, designers, suppliers or any other role. Or, if

they are building or renovating their home, strata managers or owners of lots within a strata or community land scheme.

2. More compliant and fire-safe buildings

This consultation is **open until Friday, 7 October** at www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/more-compliant-and-fire-safe-buildings.

Proposals focus on:

- ensuring compliant design and building work in shared accommodation and residential care facilities
- enhancing fire safety measures across all buildings.

NSW Fair Trading want to hear from builders, specialist tradespeople, building professionals, developers, building owners, designers, certifiers, strata managers, fire safety practitioners and members of the public.

Have your say

NSW Fair Trading invites you to give us your views using the two have your say consultation pages. You can:

- find more information about the proposed changes and who they impact
- access copies of the proposed Bills, Regulations and Regulatory Impact Statements
- give feedback on all the reforms or just the ones you are interested in, by undertaking the following:
 - complete a survey
 - make a formal submission using an online form on questions in the Regulatory Impact Statements
 - complete quick polls
 - check on frequently asked questions and other updates.

All feedback will help ensure the reforms meet the industry's and community's needs and interests.

For more information email: HBAReview@customerservice.nsw.gov.au

4. ESI TRANSMISSION, DISTRIBUTION AND RAIL IRC SUBMITS CASE OF ENDORSEMENT



Australian Industry Standards (AIS) advises that the ESI Transmission, Distribution and Rail Industry (TDR) Reference Committee has submitted its Case for Endorsement along with draft Training Package materials for the Powerline Safety project to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) for their consideration.

This includes a new Skill Set and Unit of Competency.

Powerline Safety

The new Unit of Competency addresses the skills and knowledge required by 'ordinary persons' (non-Electricity Supply Industry workers), to work safely around electrical powerlines.

This will enable training to build awareness of ordinary persons across industries about the risks and hazards associated with working around powerlines.

[VIEW POWERLINE SAFETY PROJECT PAGE](#)

For more information on this project, please contact the Industry Skills Manager, Erin Knudsen on M: 0418 434 302 or E: erin.knudsen@aistnds.org.au

5. ESI GENERATION IRC SUBMITS CASE OF ENDORSEMENT



Australian Industry Standards (AIS) advises that the ESI Generation Industry Reference Committee has submitted its Case for Endorsement along with draft Training Package materials for the Control Room Operations project to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) for their consideration. This includes:

- three new Skill Sets,
- five new Units of Competency, and
- one updated qualification.

Control Room Operations

The draft materials address skills requirements for control room operations relating to power generation in both fossil fuels and renewable energies, encompassing automated control systems.

[VIEW CONTROL ROOM OPERATIONS PROJECT PAGE](#)

For more information on this project, please contact the Industry Skills Specialist, Shaun Thomas on M: 0409 505 196 or E: shaun.thomas@aistnds.org.au

6. GAS IRC SUBMITS CASE OF ENDORSEMENT



Australian Industry Standards (AIS) advises that the Gas Industry Reference Committee has submitted its Case for Endorsement along with draft Training Package materials for the Gas Supply Industry Skills project to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) for their consideration.

The Training Package has been updated to include:

- one new Unit of Competency (*Control industrial Gas storage/processing operations*),
- four revised Qualifications, and
- 59 revised Units to meet the contemporary needs of the gas supply industry.

[VIEW CONTROL ROOM OPERATIONS PROJECT PAGE](#)

For more information on this project, please contact the Industry Skills Specialist, Shaun Thomas on M: 0409 505 196 or E: shaun.thomas@aistnds.org.au

7. ELECTROTECHNOLOGY IRC SUBMITS CASE OF ENDORSEMENT



Australian Industry Standards (AIS) advises that the Electrotechnology Industry Reference Committee has submitted its Case for Endorsement along with draft Training Package materials to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) for their consideration.

Materials developed through the projects below address priority skills needs for the Electrotechnology Industry.

- **Computer Systems Engineering**

This project involved the review of the Advanced Diploma of Computer Systems Engineering and 24 associated Units of Competency.

A detailed desk-top review identified that content of the 24 UEE units is extensively covered in current qualifications and Units of competency from the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Training Package which reflect contemporary industry practice. Subsequently, the UEE units have been replaced with the ICT equivalents across all qualifications in which they appear. It is proposed to also delete the two UEE Computer Systems Advanced Diploma Qualifications.

[VIEW COMPUTER SYSTEMS ENGINEERING PROJECT PAGE](#)

- **Rail Signalling**

Three new Units of Competency and two new Skill Sets have been developed and one qualification and 15 existing units updated to address the disparity between the qualification outcomes and employers' skill and knowledge needs.

In addition, deletion of five existing Units of Competency is proposed.

[VIEW RAIL SIGNALLING PROJECT PAGE](#)

- **Renewables**

13 new Units of Competency have been developed and four qualifications and 38 units updated.

A further four qualifications and 14 units have been recommended for deletion. Nine of these units have had their content absorbed across other new and existing units. The materials have been updated to better address skills required to design, install, maintain and inspect renewable energy systems.

[VIEW RENEWABLES PROJECT PAGE](#)

For more information on this project, please contact the Industry Skills Specialist, Paul Humphreys, on M: 0429 670 588 or E: paul.humphreys@aistnds.org.au

8. ASQA RELEASES CORPORATE PLAN 2022–23



The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) has published its [Corporate Plan 2022-23](#), which sets out the strategic direction for the national vocational education and training (VET) regulator for the next four years.

The website states, “Chief Executive Officer, Saxon Rice said the Corporate Plan outlines ASQA’s commitment to continuous improvement and builds on the significant enhancements to ASQA’s regulatory practice that were introduced in 2021-22.

“In 2021–22, we focused on supporting the shift in ASQA’s regulatory approach towards provider self-assurance and excellence in training outcomes, enhancing our educative approach and engagement with the VET sector, and driving the organisational and cultural change required to ensure sustained improvements over the longer term. Those improvements have shaped this year’s Corporate Plan, which also presents a refined performance framework with key actions and accountabilities that will support us to deliver on outcomes,” Ms Saxon said.

“The improvements to our approach in this year’s Corporate Plan have been informed by feedback from our sector stakeholders, advice from the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Advisory Council, and from our internal assurance outcomes”, Ms Rice said.

“The Corporate Plan 2022-23 also reflects our readiness to respond to the dynamic environment within which the sector continues to operate, including how our regulation supports government priorities to equip Australians with the skills needed for emerging jobs and to enable economic growth by addressing current skills shortages.”

ASQA’s strategic objectives to achieve its purpose include:

- A regulatory approach that promotes a culture of self-assurance and continuous improvement
- Regulation that is best practice, integrated, risk-based and proportionate
- A regulatory approach that is transparent and accountable
- Engaging, consulting and partnering with stakeholders to improve regulatory outcomes
- Add value and are efficient, effective and continuously improve

The Corporate Plan includes information about:

- key activities and deliverables for 2022-23 to achieve its strategic objectives,
- performance measurement standards for key activities, and
- ASQA’s purpose and role.

[DOWNLOAD A COPY OF THE ASQA 2022-23 CORPORATE PLAN HERE](#)

9. THE IMPORTANCE OF FOUNDATION SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE



Alan Maguire, CEO of On Target Work Skills has released a very important and timely analysis and digest of the importance of foundation skills and knowledge in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

The article states, “The Australian competency-based VET system defines competency as the consistent application of knowledge and skills to the standard of performance required in the workplace¹.”

This definition highlights the importance of skills and knowledge as foundations for effective performance at work.

Two types of foundation skills

The Australian VET system has two types of foundation skills:

- Foundation skills from the FSK Foundation Skills Training Package
- Foundation skills for each Unit of Competency

Foundation skills from the FSK Foundation Skills Training Package

The FSK Foundation Skills Training Package describe the skills and knowledge that underpin vocational performance. It provides an opportunity for registered training organisations (RTOs) to select and deliver foundation skills units and qualifications that will enable learners to build the specific foundation skills required to achieve vocational competency².

The following are four units of competency from the **FSK Foundation Skills Training Package**:

Foundation skill	Unit of Competency
Learning	FSKLRG002 Identify strategies to respond to short and simple workplace problems
Oral communication	FSKOCM004 Use oral communication skills to participate in workplace meetings
Reading	FSKRDG010 Read and respond to routine workplace information
Writing	FSKWTG009 Write routine workplace texts
Numeracy	FSKNUM014 Calculate with whole numbers and familiar fractions, decimals and percentages for work
Digital literacy	FSKDIG002 Use digital technology for routine and simple workplace tasks

The above examples shows how the FSK units of competency focus on the development of learning, reading, writing, oral communication, and technology skills at a really low level.

Foundation skills for each Unit of Competency

Foundation skills are described or implied within all units of competency in the Australian VET system. These are the focus of this article, covering:

- A brief history of foundation skills
- Integration of foundation skills
- Integration of knowledge
- Putting it all together

¹ Standards for RTOs 2015, Glossary

² Foundation Skills Training Package Implementation Guide v1.1

Examples are provided throughout this article. Please prepare yourself for a long but informative read.

A brief history of foundation skills

It has been 30 years since Australia commenced the implementation of the competency-based VET system that operates today (this article was published in 2022). At the very beginning, there was a recognition that skills were needed to perform work tasks, and it wasn't just about having the technical skills. Non-technical skills, such as communication skills and other generic skills, were recognised as being essential for effectiveness in the workplace."

Alan concludes the article with a timely suggestion, "A competent person at work will require knowledge, technical skills, and non-technical skills. Elements and Performance Criteria specify the performance of a particular work task. Knowledge Evidence specify the required knowledge and Foundation Skills specify the required skills. **We need to unpack and re-assemble the information in a Unit of Competency and Assessment Requirements to deliver effective training that integrates knowledge, skills and performance.**"

This is a really important article of a subject area and critical work that has been lost in the constant reshaping and reforming of the VET system. It is essential that we refocus efforts to again bring light and importance of foundation skills in learning and workplace development.

Well done, Alan.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

10. 2023 NSW WOMEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN



Do you know the next NSW Woman of the Year?

Nominate an incredible woman today!

Women NSW has announced that Nominations for the 2023 NSW Women of

the Year Awards are now open in the following categories:

- NSW Woman of Excellence Award
- NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year
- NSW Community Hero
- NSW Regional Woman of the Year
- NSW Young Woman of the Year
- The One to Watch Award for girls aged 7 to 17

Who can be nominated?

- We want to hear about extraordinary women and girls in our communities from all walks of life.
- We're looking for ground-breaking thinkers, unsung heroes and women who challenge inequality, innovate and inspire.
- The Awards celebrate the incredible women and girls among us who improve the lives of people in NSW.

[NOMINATE NOW](#)

Nominations close at 11.59pm on Friday 30 September 2022

The Premier's Award for NSW Woman of the Year is selected by the Premier from the winners of the above categories.

The winners will be announced at the NSW Women of the Year Awards ceremony on 9 March 2023.

For more information, email WomenOfTheYear@dpc.nsw.gov.au

Eligibility Criteria and Terms & Conditions can be found at www.nsw.gov.au/women-nsw/awards-and-events/nsw-women-of-year-awards.

11. SAFEWORK NSW INSPECTOR RECRUITMENT INFORMATION SESSIONS



SafeWork NSW will hold a SafeWork NSW Inspector Information Session.

It will be held on **Wednesday, September 28, 2022, from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM AEST.**

Location: Dee Why RSL Club, 932 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why, NSW 2099

SafeWork NSW is looking for people that are passionate about workplace safety? Then why not look at becoming a SafeWork NSW Metro Inspector!!

SafeWork Inspectors have a genuine passion for workplace health and safety. A typical day for an Inspector may include:

- Conducting site visits.
- Investigating workplace incidents.
- Providing workplace health and safety advice.
- Checking licenses and registrations for high-risk work.
- Enforcing NSW work health and safety laws.

To learn more about how to become a Metro Inspector please register for one of SafeWork NSW's upcoming Information Sessions where you can learn more about the role, team arrangements, and the application process.

The main event is:

- **WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER,
6:30PM-8:00PM
DEE WHY RSL OR PARRAMATTA RSL**

[REGISTER FOR THE EVENT HERE](#)

There are two other events on also, on Tuesday 27 September, 6:30pm-8:00pm - Liverpool RSL or Penrith RSL and Thursday 29 September, 6:30pm-8:00pm - Parramatta RSL.

For the full collection of Collection SafeWork NSW Inspector Information Sessions visit the following link: [INSPECTOR INFORMATION SESSIONS](#)

12. ELECTRIC SHOCK FROM WIRING ERROR



The Building and Energy division of the WA Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety has fined a Western Australian Wanneroo electrician \$7,500 after incorrectly installing a window shutter power cord, causing another tradesman to receive an electric shock from the live plug pins.

The Building and Energy division's announcement states, "At Perth Magistrates Court on 19 August, Angelo Betti (EW149661) of Best Bet Electrics (EC9599) entered a written guilty plea for breaching WA's electricity licensing regulations by carrying out substandard and unsafe work.

According to information presented in court by Building and Energy, Mr Betti attended a Trigg home in July 2020 to install the electrical components of a newly fitted window shutter.

The work included connecting the wall switch to a flexible power cord and a three-pin "male" plug so the shutter controls could link to a back-up uninterruptable power supply (UPS).

When another electrician came to the house a week later for an unrelated issue, he received an electric shock after touching the metal pins on the shutter power cord plug.

Rather than connecting the cord just to the shutter controls, Mr Betti had incorrectly also wired it into a nearby socket outlet. This meant the plug's metal pins were continuously live with 240 volts of electricity while mains power was supplied to the house.

Magistrate Richard Huston also ordered Mr Betti to pay costs of \$573.50 and noted that the substandard work could have resulted in a fatality."

- *Tradesman received an electric shock from live parts of a shutter power cord*
- *Electrician had mistakenly wired the cord into a mains power socket outlet*
- *Fortunate that the electric shock was not more serious or fatal*

[READ MORE HERE](#)

13. PILOT PROGRAM TO TRAIN SOLAR-SAVVY PLUMBERS



The Utility Magazine in its 8 September 2022 edition reports the Victorian Government is to offer plumbers and fourth-year plumbing apprentices with a pathway toward gaining emerging and essential skills in solar technology.

The article states, "The State Government via Solar Victoria has engaged the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre (PICAC) to develop and run training and upskilling for plumbers.

The targeted training will support Victorian plumbing industry workers to gain specialised new skills in both the design and installation of heat pumps and solar hot water systems.

Victoria's Minister for Solar Homes, Lily D'Ambrosio, said demand for new skills in alternative energy has and will continue to grow ahead of the nation wide net-zero transition.

"Victoria's solar and renewable energy sector is booming and demand for a skilled workforce will grow significantly over the next decade, as we target a 50 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030," Ms D'Ambrosio said.

“This is an excellent opportunity for Victoria’s plumbing workforce to upskill for the transition to solar and heat pump hot water for free and I encourage all who are eligible to enrol when the training opens.”

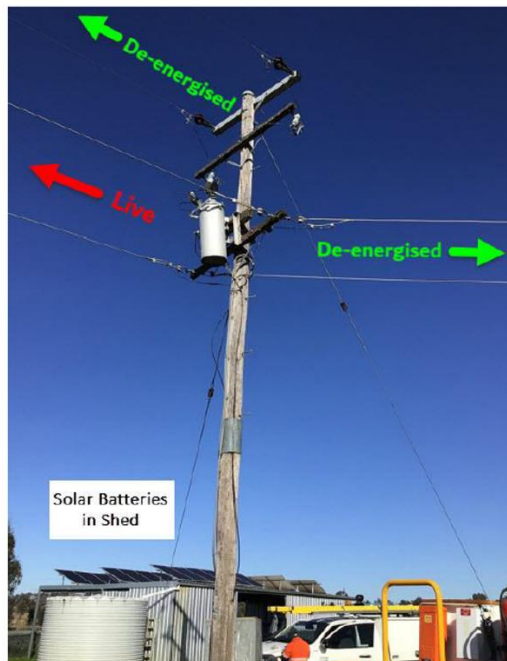
Following an evaluation of the pilot, plumbers and fourth-year apprentices will be able to access free training from the end of this year through to late 2023.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

14. BE SAFE - DEAD OR ALIVE - A REMINDER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TESTING

Sharing the knowledge.

DEAD OR ALIVE?



SILENT BUT DEADLY

The importance of LV testing was reinforced for the team when proving de-energised for a LV crossarm change. One circuit of LV was still energised due to a NON-COMPLIANT SOLAR BATTERY INSTALLATION

A recent scenario brings to mind the importance of safety systems compliance when testing.

A Tamworth crew were tasked with replacing a LV crossarm on a Sub pole and when instructed to prove de-energised and apply AP earths discovered one circuit of LV OH conductors energised. Upon investigation, it was discovered that the metered LV circuit was energised from an incorrectly connected solar battery installation which was being used to supply the customer’s house.

Through correct LV testing procedures, a high potential incident was avoided.

Reinforcing the importance of testing all LV circuits de-energised in organisational safe system of work are paramount and lucky in this instance not incident ensued.

A reminder from issued by supervisors, “don’t assume if one circuit is de-energised, all circuits are de-energised”.

15. TUNE IN TO SAFEWORK SMALL BUSINESS REBATE



SafeWork NSW announced small business owners in NSW, maybe eligible for a \$1,000 rebate to help purchase safety items that aims to improve work health and safety for the business and its workers.

Who can apply?

Small business owners and sole traders who have an ABN and less than 50 full time employees. Charities and not-for-profits can also apply.

The application must be in the name of the registered business owner. The registered business owner must agree to the [terms and conditions](#).

Learn more by tuning in on SafeWork NSW's next SafetyCast where Senior Inspector Shaleeni Nagpal is joined by Senior Project Officer Astrid Harriott and Assistant State Inspector Steven North, to discuss the recent changes to the SafeWork Small Business Rebate available to eligible businesses in the construction industry. SafeWork's SafetyCast is in its 2nd Season, and the Small Business Rebate recording is Episode 6.

To learn more about the SafeWork small business rebate and learn how to start an application, visit: www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/1000-safework-small-business-rebate

To read more about the different categories of eligible safety items based on the types of hazards and risks in the workplace visit: www.nsw.gov.au/safework-small-business-rebate-eligible-safety-items

Find the Full episode visit and login at: www.buzzsprout.com/1344256/episodes/11242270

16. RENEWABLE ENERGY SECTOR BOARD'S PLAN RELEASED



The NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap team have issued advice that the NSW Government has published the NSW Renewable Energy Sector Board's plan. The Minister for Energy has appointed the Renewable Energy Sector Board co-chairs and members, and the NSW Government has made regulations on the Board's functions and procedures.

The Board has representatives from unions, the steel, electricity and manufacturing sectors, the renewable energy industry, and electricity customers. It held its first meeting on 5 March 2021.

The Board has developed a plan for the NSW renewable energy sector to achieve objectives in relation to the construction of generation, storage and network infrastructure in a cost-effective way. These objectives include:

- the use of locally produced and supplied goods and services
- employment of suitable qualified local workers
- opportunities for apprentices and trainees.

The [Board's plan](#) aims to ensure local workers, communities and industries in NSW reap the full economic benefits of the transition to cheap, reliable and clean electricity.

The Media Release of 8 September 2022, states, "By setting out ways to maximise local content and jobs in the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap projects (the Roadmap projects), the Board's

plan is set to boost the ongoing jobs created by the Roadmap by 670 to a total of nearly 3,500 and deliver a \$520 million boost to the State's economy.

The Minister for Energy has approved the Board's recommended minimum requirements for local content and jobs. These will inform the first tenders for Long-Term Energy Service Agreements and Renewable Energy Zone access rights.

The plan also highlights additional avenues to invest in local skills and training, ramp up the capacity of local supply chains and expand domestic production under the Government's \$250 million Renewable Manufacturing Fund.

The NSW Government supports or supports in principle all of the recommendations in the Board's advice to NSW Government on how to build the capacity and capability of the NSW renewable energy sector."

[READ MORE ABOUT THE RENEWABLE ENERGY SECTOR BOARD'S PLAN HERE](#)

17. BACK TO THE FUTURE FOR CALIFORNIA AND GERMANY



The 8 September 2022 edition of *EneergyInsider*, a joint publication of Energy Networks Australia (ENA) and Australian Energy Council (AEC) included an interesting article on conceptions that have and are occurring in real time in the energy sectors of purportedly advanced western civilisations, including Australia.

The article states, "This has been a year where extreme events have converged requiring extraordinary measures to manage energy supplies and avoid load shedding, not just in Australia but also in Europe and the US. In response to extreme weather and gas limitations California and Germany respectively have had to take steps to keep nuclear plants that were scheduled to close soon online.

Earlier this year the National Electricity Market (NEM) was suspended for the first time as the result of a coincidence of events, ranging from geopolitical impacts on the price of gas and coal, plant availability and high winter demand due to a cold snap on the east coast.

Now, in response to extreme weather and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, California and Germany have both had to take steps to keep nuclear plants that were scheduled to close soon online to support their electricity systems. Below we look at the factors at play and the respective responses.

Late night, last minute

California, in what was described as a "[late night, last minute vote](#)" agreed to [extend the life of the state's only nuclear power plant, the 2.2GW Diablo Canyon](#), by five years to 2030 and approved [a \\$1.4 billion government loan](#) to Pacific Gas and Electric to continue operations at the plant. This was a reversal of a 2016 commitment by the operator, Pacific Gas and Electric, to retire the power plant by 2025. In 2018 the [California Public Utilities Commission officially approved a plan](#) to close the first reactor unit in 2024 and the second the following year.

The about turn has stemmed from California's tight demand-supply balance. With heatwave conditions this summer and [record high demand of 52,610MW](#) this week has come the risk of load shedding again. The state faced a similar challenge in 2020 (see [California dreaming of secure supplies](#)).

With the extreme heat the Independent System Operator (ISO) recently called on Californians to reduce their energy use to avoid blackouts and said [the grid was being pushed to its limits](#) as residents turned to air conditioning to cope with the extreme conditions.

German Grid Under Stress

Germany's decision to keep two of its nuclear power plants open beyond the end of this year when they were scheduled to close is the result of the real potential of energy shortages as a result of Russia's "[weaponisation](#)" of gas supplies to Europe following its invasion of Ukraine. [Germany is seeking to make itself independent of Russian energy imports.](#)

[READ MORE HERE](#)

For more, contact [Carl Kitchen](#), Australian Energy Council

18. HOW DEMAND FLEXIBILITY COULD UNLOCK THE RENEWABLE AGE



ARENAWIRE, a newsletter publication of the Australian Renewable energy Agency (ARENA) included an article in its September 2022 edition, of how demand flexibility could unlock the renewable age.

The article states, "Using more electricity at times when wind and solar power are plentiful will help to improve energy affordability and security.

Australia's electricity systems are having to cope with far greater variations in energy supply as new wind and solar farms are connected to the grid, and millions of households install rooftop panels.

Output from wind farms and solar farms can fluctuate with the time of day and with changes in the weather. There are now regular gluts of cheap solar supply during the day, when the sun is shining, but zero when night falls. Unfortunately, demand for power tends to peak during the evening, not during the day.

The mismatch between supply and demand at different times of day is one of the major challenges of our future electricity system.

When supply is much higher than demand, consumers with rooftop solar and renewable generators have been unable to export their full capacity, and have faced curtailments.

And when demand outstrips supply, it can threaten the system's reliability and stability.

...

What about storage?

Storing more energy from times of plentiful generation will help to balance fluctuations in supply and demand, but technologies like batteries and pumped hydro cannot economically compensate for all variability.

So, looking to a future where renewables contribute more of our energy, there is a need for new ways to balance the grid.

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19. QUARTERLY CARBON MARKET REPORT – HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE JUNE QUARTER 2022



The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) has issued its quarterly [June 2022 Quarterly Carbon Market Report \(QCMR\) is now available.](#)

The Media Release states, “The QCMR is the leading source of data on Australia’s carbon markets.

See below for the highlights.

ACCU market maturing as trading volumes reach record levels:

- More volume was transacted in the ACCU secondary market in Q2 2022 than in any previous quarter. The total transacted volume of 5.5 million ACCUs is nearly 400% more than the same quarter in 2021
- 231 ERF projects were registered in H1 2022 - higher than total registrations in any previous full year. Soil carbon projects abound, with some relatively small in size.
- Voluntary cancellations in H1 2022 rose 80% compared to H1 2021, to 724,155 ACCUs.
- Generic ACCU spot prices increased 15% over the quarter to reach \$35.10 and price differential between generic ACCUs and those with environmental and First Nations benefits is also increasing. Savanna fire management ACCUs are reported to have fetched a premium as high as \$22.50 over the generic ACCU spot price.

Large scale renewables investment maintains strength:

- 1.6 GW of renewables capacity reached final investment decision in H1 2022 and could exceed the 2.9 GW seen in 2021.
- LGC prices passed \$50 for the first time since November 2019 in the quarter, signalling further investment in renewables is needed.

Small scale solar PV stable at the lower level seen in Q1:

- Small-scale solar PV installed capacity was 1,144 MW in H1, 27% lower than the same period in 2021. It still remains on track for 2.3 GW to be installed in 2022.

The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) would like to hear from stakeholders about their experience reading and using the QCMR.

Take this quick [3-minute survey](#) to share your thoughts with us.

Visit the Clean Energy Regulator website to read the latest [report](#).

If you would like to contribute to this News Service, please feel free to write to the undersigned accordingly. Thank you.

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