
News Service 115 – Updated apprenticeship priority list includes green jobs, Qualifications reform survey closes soon, What’s wrong with Australia’s VET system, Can women be tradies, Jobs & Skills Australia paper and skills classification review, 2023 Training Awards, Smart & Skilled update, VET Reps inquiry, Next generation RAC tradies, Safety and Industry news

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

News Service this month covers:

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

WISHING YOU MUCH PROSPERITY AND HAPPINESS IN 2023



Compliments of the season. Welcome back to 2023.

We wish our readers had a happy start to the new year and hope that 2023 brings you and your loved ones good health, happiness and much prosperity.

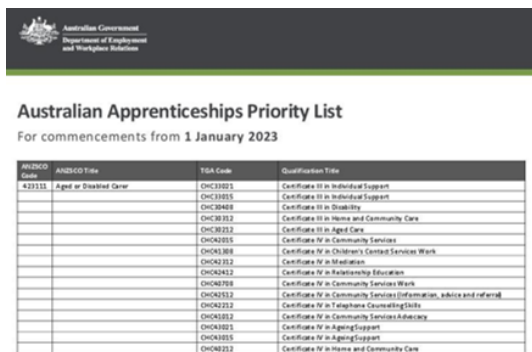
This year, given the lessening of COVID19, we are more likely to be out and about engaging and conducting more face-to-face meetings with our stakeholders. As a result, we see greater prospects from this form of engagement and feel that the News Service can best be reverted to a monthly option to ensure our resources are spread more effectively and efficiently. Hence, as of next month we will issue a News Service once a month, on the **3rd Tuesday of every Month**.

We trust you will understand the move to this new arrangement. We look forward to meeting many of you in due course face-to-face or in other fora such as stakeholder engagement forums and meetings.

THE NSW UE ITAB NEWS SERVICE WILL NOW BECOME A MONTHLY SERVICE

Again, we hope you enjoyed the News Service in 2022, and look forward to engaging with you in 2023.

1. AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS PRIORITY LIST UPDATED AND INCLUDE GREEN JOBS



The federal government announced an update to the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List. It stated that it was, "taking action to support apprentices and address widespread skills shortages by expanding a list of priority occupations that will receive additional financial support."

The Australian Apprenticeships Priority List ([Priority List](#)) identifies priority occupations for the

Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System.

The Media Release issued by the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, Minister for Skills and Training stated, "The number of occupations covered by the Australian Apprenticeship Priority List has been expanded from 77 to 111, as part of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System.

This will increase the number of occupations eligible for additional support, including up to \$5,000 in direct payments to apprentices, and a wage subsidy of up to \$15,000 for employers.

Minister for Skills and Training, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, said widespread skill shortages pose one of the greatest economic challenges in decades.

"Wherever you look, there are skills gaps, with the latest analysis showing 47 per cent of trade and technician occupations are in shortage, up from 42 per cent in 2021," Minister O'Connor said.

"Providing targeted support to increase the uptake and completion of apprenticeships in critical sectors is essential to plugging the skills gaps we face.

"The expanded list will benefit occupations and industries like Electronic Equipment Trades Workers, Screen Printers, Swimming Coaches, Shearers, Veterinary Nurses and Travel Consultants."

The updated Priority List is based on independent analysis from Jobs and Skills Australia, through the annual release of the Skills Priority List.

"Apprentice completion rates have been steadily declining over the past decade and we must arrest that decline to provide meaningful career pathways and jobs where industry needs them," Minister O'Connor said.

"Of all the apprentices and trainees that commenced training in 2017, the latest available figures show just 55.7% reached completion.

"Targeting areas with current and emerging skills demand will ensure apprentices have secure employment for years to come and ultimately fill urgently needed skills vacancies."

The occupations on the Priority List are:

- assessed by Jobs and Skills Australia as being in national shortage; and
- by the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) as either Technicians and Trades Workers (ANZSCO Major Group 3) or Community and Personal Service Workers (ANZSCO Major Group 4).
- **Clean Energy specific:**
Present skills in demand that align to the needs of the Clean Energy sector as identified through consultation and feedback from industry.

CLEAN ENERGY APPRENTICESHIPS

The Priority List includes a subset of occupations and qualifications that have been identified as leading to clean energy occupations. These are shaded in green and have a diamond symbol.

To download a copy of the 2023 Australian Apprenticeships Priority List, visit the link: [HERE](#)

Find more information on apprenticeships visit: www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/ or learn more about the services the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) provide for employers and apprentices at: [Australian Apprenticeship Support Network provider](#).

2. QUALIFICATION MODEL CONSULTATION



Previous articles have been included in the NSW UE ITAB News Service outlining the consultation phase the Department of Employment and Workforce Relations (DEWR) is conducting to elicit feedback on work it has commissioned and is undertaking to develop a new model for VET training products, including qualifications and skill sets. DEWR is seeking to ensure the final products are relevant to Australian labour market needs.

The DEWR website states: “Australian, state and territory governments are seeking your feedback on the proposed qualifications model through an [ONLINE SURVEY](#).”

This survey has fourteen (14) questions and asks for your feedback on the following:

- Training product design;
- Terminology used;
- Training delivery and approaches;
- Collaboration and engagement; and
- Implementation and transition.

There is the opportunity to provide feedback against prescribed questions, or to provide your own written feedback about the issues relevant to you. You can answer all questions or just the questions that are relevant to you and how you engage with the VET system.

The survey will **close at 5pm AEDT, 17 March 2023.**”

The assertion is that the “current VET system has become cluttered and difficult to navigate over the years, with over 1200 qualifications, 1500 skill sets, and 15,000 Units of Competency. Highly prescriptive content stifles innovation and flexibility in training delivery and hinders the recognition of transferable skills and learner mobility.”

[Qualifications Reform templates and examples](#)

To that end the Departments commissioned consultants to develop and propose three new training products.

PWC Consulting developed for the Government templates covering the following, which are to be used to supposedly improve learner outcome and clearer employment pathways:

- **[Skill Standard Template:](#)**
Proposed Skill Standard template that may be used as part of the proposed qualifications model.
- **[Training and Assessment Requirement \(TAR\) Template:](#)**
Proposed Training and Assessment Requirement (TAR) template that may be used as part of the proposed qualifications model.
[NOTE: There may be more than one TAR per Skill Standard!]
- **[Completion Rules Template:](#)**
Proposed Completion Rules template that may be used as part of the proposed qualifications model.
- **[Proposed Qualification Model Examples:](#)**
Examples of how Skill Standards, Training and Assessment Requirements and Completion Rules may be written as part of the proposed qualifications model.

These back to the future products it is suggested, will provide the basic building blocks of the new VET system, which is said to have, *“become cluttered and difficult to navigate over the years, with over 1,200 qualifications, 1,500 skill sets, and 15,000 Units of Competency.”*

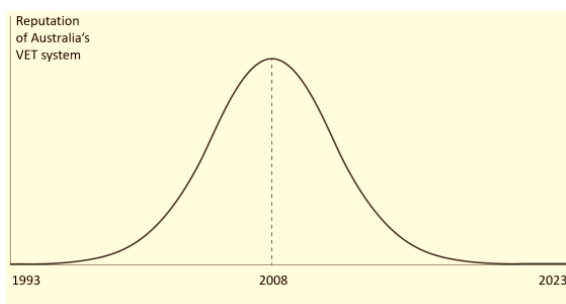
This statement somehow implies these new products will be a simple fix the very complex set of issued that pervade the VET sector. The VET system is multidimensional and the suggestion that by simply adjusted the product that this will fix downstream issues. This is a real naive leap of faith given the history of changes to the TAE which notwithstanding the frequent changes continue to beset stakeholders in industry and RTOs.

The issue, as stated previously, is not the products but the management and administration arrangement around them. If there is poor leadership and poor-quality management oversight and lack of understanding by leaders of the products, we end up where we are now, claiming it's the products' fault and not what or who manages it.

Maybe the better approach might be, to work with what we have and gradually improve them (units of competency). But a first priority should be to address the heart of the problem alluded to by Professor Tracey Horton in her paper *“[AISC Reflections and Opportunities Paper](#)”*, and a litany of other eminent experts including the Honourable Steven Joyce, or Productivity Commission on ideas for improving the VET system. Fix what is broken not what might be working.

DEWR have provided stakeholders with the opportunity to provide feedback. The opportunity closes **at 5pm AEDT, 17 March 2023.**

3. WHAT'S ONE THING THAT IS WRONG WITH THE AUSTRALIAN VET SYSTEM?



Alan Maguire at On Target Work Skill has release a very timely and rightful critic of the effectiveness and quality of Australia's VET system. The critic provides a summary of the rise and fall of the Australian VET system, the impact of the continuing plethora of changes imposed, the impact of political influence and what the likely future of the Australian VET system is if it is permitted to be destroyed.

He concludes by stating that, “our politicians, is one thing that is wrong with the Australian VET system. They seem to think short term. They seem to lack understanding of the VET system and its history. They seem to lack systemic thinking. They seem to rely on advice or ideas from ignorant, naïve, self-interested or conflicted advisers, bureaucrats, lobbyists, VET experts and academics. I am not saying that our politicians are bad people. I am saying that the decisions they make can be bad.

It is a shame that the current changes to the VET system were not stopped when the Anthony Albanese government was elected. But they probably didn't have a VET policy apart from 'Free TAFE'. The current government probably didn't, or doesn't, understand the current changes to the VET system, or they agree with the changes.

It is probably too late. ...”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

4. JOBS & SKILLS AUSTRALIA DISCUSSION PAPER OUT



The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations has released a Jobs and Skills Australia [discussion paper](#). The paper presents an opportunity for interested parties to provide their views to the Australian Government about the ongoing arrangements of JSA, ahead of permanent arrangements being finalised.

Submissions close 5pm AEDT 10 February 2023.

Submissions can be made at the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEWR) website at: [MAKE A SUBMISSION](#)

The Australian Government established JSA as an independent agency, responsible for providing insights to the Australian Government to underpin Australia's response to current, emerging and future labour market and workforce skills and training needs. Legislation was passed by Parliament on 27 October 2022 and the agency formally commenced on 16 November 2022.

5. MAE CAREERS PATHFINDERS SHOWCASE DAYS FOR WOMEN ACROSS NSW (MARCH 2023)



Agrifood has partnered up with the NSW Utilities and Electrotechnology ITAB to promote careers to women in non-traditional roles, under a National Careers Institute project. The project is called Manufacturing, Agrifood and Electrotechnology (MAE) Career Pathfinder Project.

The project is delivering a series of **industry specific showcase days** for women. Several were held in late 2022 with several more in early 2023.

The showcase days include demonstrations from female industry leaders and practitioners. Industries that are being showcased are:

- **food science & beverage manufacture:** (food processing, industry 4.0, A/C, instrumentation)
- **advanced manufacturing:** (aerospace, industry 4.0, laboratory operations, robotics)
- **agriculture:** (beekeeping, pollination servicing, production horticulture, irrigation)
- **racing:** (3 codes of thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing)
- **amenity horticulture:** (landscaping, landscape design, arboriculture, production nursery)
- **utilities:** (renewable energy, gas/hydrogen, systems control and HV switching/linework)
- **electrotechnology:** (electrical, data communication, air-conditioning and refrigeration, instrumentation and process automation control)

SHOWCASE DAYS:

The showcase days are a unique opportunity for interested women aged 16-64, careers advisors and influencers to attend and experience the industry firsthand. In each Showcase Day attendees have the opportunity to:

- **meet and talk with female industry leaders**
- **gain hands-on experience**
- **access the latest career information**
- **ask questions and have them answered by industry experts**
- **register and reserve a place for obligation free opportunities to do work experience with local MAE industries**
- **free networking opportunity**

Career aspirants hear from leading female industry champions about career paths and opportunities. They also are able to have questions answered including income potential and working conditions or access post showcase day work experience matching services for candidates, if they are interested.

REGISTER TO PARTICIPATE

To participate eligible interested **women aged 16-64, female students, careers advisors and influencers** need to register for a scheduled event.

The following three Showcases will be held in partnership with stakeholder in March. Click on the highlighted link below to learn more and register:

Newcastle – Adamstown	Thursday, 16 March 2023	9:30 am to 2.00pm	FREE REGISTRATION
Albury	Thursday, 23 March 2023	9:30 am to 2.00pm	FREE REGISTRATION
Parkes	Wednesday, 29 March 2023	9:30 am to 2.00pm	FREE REGISTRATION

Download a copy of the flyer for the respective event:

- [MAE Showcase flyer NEWCASTLE – Adamstown, NSW](#)
- [MAE Showcase flyer ALBURY, NSW](#)
- [MAE Showcase flyer PARKES, NSW](#)

Showcase day participants numbers are limited and registrations are essential.

For more information: [AGRIFOOD WEBSITE](#)

6. WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY INNOVATION PROGRAM GRANT



Training Services NSW has announced that funding grants are now available to industry through the Women in Construction Industry Innovation Program (IIP).

The NSW Government has allocated up to \$10 million for the IIP to support industry initiatives that will encourage female participation and retention in the construction industry and across the supply chain.

Successful applicants will be awarded grant amounts **from \$30,000 up to a maximum of \$300,000.**

Greater female representation across the construction industry will help to create a more inclusive, productive and diverse workforce and show future generations of women the range of career opportunities construction has to offer!

The IIP is part of the NSW Government's \$20.2 million investment to increase the number of women occupying trade and non-traditional construction roles to **15 per cent by 2030.**

Visit the [Women in Construction website](#) to learn more, including eligibility criteria and how to apply.

Successful applicants will be awarded grant amounts **from \$30,000 up to a maximum of \$300,000.**

Applications for round one funding close at **2pm on Wednesday 15 March 2023.**

To launch the IIP, Training Services NSW is running an online **Industry Briefing on Wednesday 8 February 2023** to provide an overview of the grant funding opportunity. Attendees will be able to ask questions about the program and application process.

You are invited to participate and ask if you can send this information out to your colleagues to promote interest and registrations. To attend, participants can register [[REGISTER HERE](#)] or email industry@infrastructure.nsw.gov.au

To learn more and apply for the IIP, please visit the NSW Women in Construction website.

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/employment/women-construction/industry-and-employers>

7. NSW TRAINING AWARDS – APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN



The countdown is on! Applications are now open!!

Applications to the 2023 NSW Training Awards have opened. The Awards honour and reward the achievements of students, teachers, training organisations and employers.

The NSW Training Awards are conducted annually by Training Services NSW within the Department of Education. The Awards recognises outstanding achievement in the vocational education and training (VET) sector.

The achievements of students, trainers/teachers, training organisations, and large and small employers are celebrated and rewarded through the annual NSW Training Awards.

A key aim of the Awards program is uncovering VET Ambassadors; individuals who are exceptional representatives for the VET sector, their industry, and their communities.

Key dates and events for 2023 will be announced shortly. The Awards categories are:

- **Individual Awards (Close 19 March 2023)**
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year
 - Apprentice of the Year
 - School-based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year
 - Trainee of the Year
 - VET Trainer/Teacher of the Year
 - Vocational Student of the Year
 - VET in Schools Student of the Year
- **Organisation Awards (Close 2 April 2023)**
 - Large Training Provider of the Year
 - Small Training Provider of the Year
 - Industry Collaboration Award
 - Large Employer of the Year
 - Small Employer of the Year
- **2023 NSW Training Awards Presentations will be held September 2023 (Sydney Town Hall)**

[LEARN MORE HOW TO APPLY HERE](#)

8. SMART AND SKILLED UPDATE – NO. 192 – 198, FEBRUARY 2023

Smart and Skilled
www.smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au

Smart and Skilled Update No. 192-198 ([DOWNLOAD](#)) – February 2023, has been published by Training Services NSW.

Smart and Skilled is an NSW Government program that helps people get qualifications in in-demand skills and industries. It's a key part of the NSW [vocational education and training](#) system.

This Smart and Skilled Update covers the following:

- 1) Additional fee free training places in 2023
 - a) The NSW Fee Free Initiative
 - b) Notification of Enrolment (NoE) process
 - c) Fee Free Arrangements – Quick Reference Guide
 - d) Financial Caps
 - e) Updates to Smart and Skilled documents and related websites
- 2) AgSkilled 2.0 Program: Updated Course and Unit of Competency listing, newly endorsed Training Providers and updated webpage on www.nsw.gov.au
 - a) Updated Courses and Units of Competency (UoCs) available for delivery and recommendations sought
 - b) Recommendations sought for additional courses/UoCs
 - c) Fodder and forage crop-growing primary producers eligible for AgSkilled 2.0
 - d) Additional training providers endorsed to deliver AgSkilled 2.0 training – EOIs for training delivery sought
 - e) Updated AgSkilled 2.0 webpage on nsw.gov.au and case studies
 - f) Further information
- 3) Market Operations now Customer Service & Operations
- 4) 2023 Targeted Price Review Process
- 5) NSW Skills List updated – Version 13.4
 - a) NSW Fee Free initiative
 - b) Updates to the NSW Skills List – incorporating Training Package revisions
 - c) VTO changes affecting the NSW Skills List
 - d) Qualification incorrectly flagged as being included in the Trade Related Policy
- 6) New information resources on the Disability Standards for Education
 - a) What are the resources?
 - b) Where can we access the resources?
- 7) Updated versions of the Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy and Smart and Skilled Policy for the Skilling For Recovery Initiative
 - a) Summary of changes to the Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy (v2.8)
 - b) Summary of changes to the Smart and Skilled Policy for the Skilling for Recovery Initiative (v3.0)
- 8) Trade Pathways for Experienced Workers (TPEW)
 - a) Changes to Trade Pathways for Experienced Workers (TPEW)
 - b) How the program operates
 - c) Enquiries
 - d) TPEW Priority Qualifications List

- 9) End of transition period for superseded Early Childhood Education and Care training packages
 - a) Overview
 - b) ASQA information to support providers with transitioning Full Entitlement students and Trainees
 - c) New Vocational Training Guidelines (VTG) for Early Childhood Education and Care traineeships
 - d) Transitioning trainees to the new qualifications
 - e) Fees for students transitioning from superseded qualifications
 - f) Update Training Activity Data
- 10) NSW Fee Free Part Qualifications 2023 – Intent to Participate now open until 1 February 2023
 - a) Student eligibility
 - b) Priority industry areas
 - c) Training commencement
 - d) Communications and engagement
 - e) How to register your intent to participate
 - f) Key dates for the Intent to Participate
 - g) Further information

For more information visit: [FUNDING AND SUPPORT – SMART AND SKILLED](#)

Or, for technical support in relation to this update, contact Training Market Customer Support at Training.Market@det.nsw.edu.au

For the Smart and Skilled – NSW Skills List visit: [NSW SKILLS LIST – SMART AND SKILLED](#)

9. JSA STARTS REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN SKILLS CLASSIFICATION



TAFE Directors Australia reports that Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) has commenced an update of the Australian Skills Classification (ASC) which will include a range of both new and revised occupation profiles.

The article states, “JSA now manages the ASC, which provides the skills profiles for more than 1,100 occupations, along with information on similarities between occupations and also skills transferability.

The update is due mid-year. JSA invites feedback about the draft profiles which can be seen at the [JSA Consultations](#) page.



The consultation period closes March 1. To discuss or for more information, email: SkillsClassification@jobsandskills.gov.au

Meanwhile, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has opened the first round of consultation into a review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

This round will cover areas including computer system design, welfare and social assistance, education and training, aged care and disability services, management and related consulting services, and childcare services.

After consultations during 2023 and 2024, the ABS expects to release the updated classification in time for the 2026 Census.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

10. REPS INQUIRY INTO THE PERCEPTIONS AND STATUS OF VET



The Minister for Skills and Training, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, requested on the 30 November 2022 for the House Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training to commence an inquiry into the perceptions and status of vocational education and training.

The Committee has commenced its work and has invited interested persons and organisations to make a **submission to the inquiry addressing the terms of reference by Wednesday 1 March 2023**.

The terms of reference are, for the Committee to give consideration to:

1. information available to students about VET qualifications and related career pathways along a student's journey through secondary schools, vocational education, higher education, and work transitions, with a focus on how this combines with other sources of advice, including informal advice, to influence student choices, and how Commonwealth funded information for students about VET may be improved;
2. perceptions and status of the VET sector and how this may be impacting student enrolment choices, employer engagement, and recruitment and retention of the VET educator workforce, and how perceptions and status of the VET sector can be improved. International best practices in relation to VET perception and qualifications status should be examined;
3. successful partnerships between VET providers and employers that have demonstrably created career pathways and secure employment opportunities for students, considering the best practice elements of these successful partnerships, and how more partnering may be encouraged among VET providers and employers; and
4. Commonwealth programs which could influence the above, and intersections with state and territory, industry, and philanthropic efforts, including any structural barriers to improvement.

For more information and how to make a submission visit: [INQUIRY INTO THE PERCEPTIONS AND STATUS OF VET](#)

11. SEARCH BEGINS FOR SUPER RAC TECHNICIANS



Sandra Rossi, Editor at Climate Control News (CCN) reports on the search for Australia's Top 20 Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (RAC) technicians under the age of 25 in the latest issue of CCN News (2 February 2023).

The article states, "CCN has partnered with the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) once again to showcase the industry's most talented next generation tradies.

Employers are invited to nominate technicians from all parts of Australia, especially regional areas, to showcase technical excellence in the field of refrigeration and air conditioning.

So what are we looking for?

The skills of a good tradie are always evolving as they stay abreast of changes in technology to meet customer expectations in a highly competitive market.

We want young apprentices with the potential to be the best in the business.

This is a person passionate about their trade, who goes above and beyond to ensure they do a good job every time.

They work well with others and take pride in their work. In addition to a high level of technical skill, they have great communication skills and demonstrate a good understanding of the business from problem solving and safety awareness to trouble shooting skills."

Nominations opened 1 February 2023 and close 1 April 2023.

To nominate go to www.climatecontrolnews.com.au/nextgen

[READ MORE HERE](#)

12. KEEP WORKERS SAFE AROUND ELECTRICITY OR GET ZAPPED WITH A FINE



SafeWork NSW January Wrap newsletter includes an article covering workers' safety around electricity.

The article states, "Over the past four years more than 2,000 people have received electric shocks in NSW workplaces. Of these, six were permanently disabled and five people died.

From **February**, SafeWork NSW Inspectors will be visiting work sites to talk with businesses, principal contractors, site supervisors and workers about the dangers of working with electrical equipment.

Inspectors will focus on:

- safe temporary power installations
- overhead and underground services
- electrical testing of power tools, leads, and other site equipment
- ensuring all workers are adequately supervised.

SafeWork NSW has zero tolerance of employers putting workers' lives at risk. Inspectors will issue on-the-spot fines to employers who do not adequately protect workers from electrical hazards – \$3,600 for businesses and \$1,200 for individuals.”

- [Watch the Electrical Safety in Construction webinar](#)
- Use [residual current devices](#) (RCDs) or safety switches
- If you're doing electrical work on a construction site, you must comply with [AS/NZS 3012: 2010 Electrical installation – construction and demolition sites](#). You can also refer to the [Electrical safety in construction inspection checklist](#)

Read also: [Scaffold company fined \\$2 million after death of apprentice](#)

[READ MORE HERE](#)

13. BATTERY-OPERATED DRILL SPARKS IN UNDERGROUND COAL MINE



The NSW Resources Regulator reports in its [Weekly Incident Summary](#), ending 20 January 2023 of a high potential incident [IncNot0043872] in an underground coalmine that could have caused a fire or explosion.

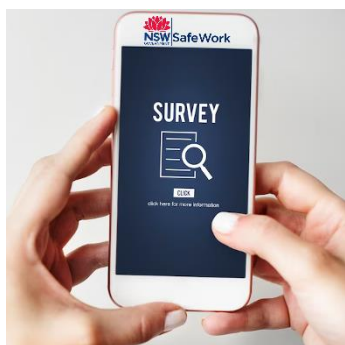
The report states, “A battery-operated drill was being used in an underground coal mine while building a ventilation stopping. A spark was observed inside the vents at the rear of a battery rattle gun.”

The Regulator's recommendation to the industry stated, “When battery-operated tools are used in hazardous zones of an underground coal mine, procedures must include the requirements of section 82 of the Work Health and Safety (Mines and Petroleum Sites) Regulations, additionally, only brushless motors should be used to avoid the possibility of sparking.

A safety bulletin was recently released about batteries and charging. Refer to Safety Bulletin [SB22-17 Fires on battery powered tools increase”](#)

[READ MORE HERE](#)

14. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY SURVEY—HELP US TO HELP YOU



SafeWork NSW is seeking your views in a special survey for the construction industry. They would like to understand what they are doing well to support WHS and what they can do better for the industry.

You can help them by completing a [survey](#).

What do you need to know?

Instinct and Reason has been engaged to complete this work on behalf of SafeWork NSW.

The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. You can access the survey [HERE](#)

Your responses are confidential.

[Instinct and Reason](#) will aggregate all survey responses, so it's not possible to identify any individual responses.

Instinct and Reason conduct research under the Market and Social Research Code of Practice, which ensures your information remains confidential. You can view Instinct and Reason's privacy policy [HERE](#).

SafeWork NSW appreciates your participation in the survey.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

15. NSW STRENGTHENS FIRE SAFETY REGULATIONS



The 3rd February 2023 edition of HVAC&R News reports that The NSW government has made important changes to its fire safety regime to address shortcomings of the system.

Report, Mark Vender states in the article, "The Fire Safety Regulation 2022, published in December 2022, requires engineers to seek comment from the Fire Commissioner when developing performance solutions for Class 2–9 buildings, ensuring that the NSW fire authority is more engaged in the design phase for proposed building works.

New templates and procedures have been introduced to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of fire safety schedules. And building owners must ensure that fire safety measures are maintained in line with AS 1851–2012, or, where a performance solution has been used, with the performance solution.

Also, the commissioning of fire safety systems will need to be performed by an "accredited fire safety professional", who must ensure not only that systems have been installed as per the design, but that they are performing correctly.

The Fire Safety Regulation forms part of the response to a report produced in 2021 that provided recommendations on how to improve fire safety in new and existing buildings.

The response from industry has generally been positive.

"It seems like a great response to real-world problems," says Brett Fairweather, M.AIRAH, from It's Engineered. "I'm looking forward to it and seeing how well the industry embraces these changes."

Information about the key changes in the *Fire Safety Regulation 2022*, when they commence and who is affected by the changes is now available on the [Fair Trading website](#).

[READ MORE HERE](#)

16. FORMER SOLAR PV INSTALLER CONVICTED



The Australian Clean Energy Council (CEC) reports in a circular issued 2 February 2023 of a former solar PV installer being convicted of falsely claiming to have installed 11 solar photovoltaic (PV) systems.

The circular states, "An investigation conducted by the Clean Energy Regulator (CER) has resulted in the conviction of Mr Gavin Brady,

Director of Shine Tech Solar Pty Ltd. Between October 2020 and April 2021, Mr Brady received a financial benefit by falsely claiming to have installed 11 solar photovoltaic (PV) systems that were never installed.

At the time of offending, Mr Brady was a Clean Energy Council (CEC) accredited solar PV installer. The CER's investigation found that Mr Brady submitted 11 false Small-scale Technology Certificate (STC) assignment forms along with certificates of electrical safety to a renewable energy certificate agent. The agent relied upon this information to improperly create 1,390 STCs for these non-installed solar PV systems. In return for the right to create these STCs, the agent paid Mr Brady \$50,000.

On 1 February 2023, Mr Brady pleaded guilty in the Moorabbin Justice Centre to five offences of dishonesty under the Commonwealth Criminal Code.

In sentencing the Magistrate found the offender had obtained money by submitting false documents to the tune of \$50,000, which the Magistrate described as not an insignificant sum.

The Magistrate stated the sentence must strongly emphasise general deterrence.

...

In December 2021, amendments to the [Renewable Energy \(Electricity\) Regulations 2001](#) passed into law. The amendments address the Australian Government's response to the recommendations made in the CER's [Integrity Review of the Rooftop Solar PV Sector](#). The new regulations provide the CER additional powers to disqualify installers and designers, retailers and component manufacturers from participating in the Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme.

If you have any information about potential fraudulent behaviour or activities in CER administered schemes, please contact us at cer-referrals@cer.gov.au or phone 1300 553 542.

See further information on [compliance and enforcement](#)."

17. ENGAGEMENT - WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER



EnergyInsider, a joint publication of Energy Networks Australia (ENA) and Australian Energy Council (AEC) reports in its 2 February 2023 edition consumers' energy expectations in 2023.

The article states, "Over recent months as energy prices have spiked around the world and governments have intervened in and capped fuel markets locally, consumers perceptions of Australia's energy market have changed. Consequently, energy prices have been front of mind for business, industry, government and consumers for an extended period of time. We take a look at recent research in the context of consumers' expectations as we enter 2023.

What do we know about consumer attitudes?

In October 2022, the Australian Energy Council commissioned its own research seeking to better understand consumer needs as Australia progresses through the energy transition. At the same time, [Energy Consumers Australia \(ECA\) published its bi-annual survey](#) looking at energy consumer sentiment. Both pieces of research provide insights that can help the sector frame and respond to consumers with the information they need, in the way they would like to be responded to.

ECA found that “While consumers agree the transition is necessary and a good thing, some are concerned that this may cause disruptions to reliability and won’t necessarily deliver cheaper bills.” Rightly or wrongly, price increases have signalled to consumers that there are invisible issues causing havoc in the market. Confidence loves certainty, and uncertainty is putting a handbrake on confidence.

In ECA focus groups, a number of participants voiced anxiety relating to price increases:

Based only on media reports I have heard in recent months, the energy market is desperately in need of an overhaul. I have heard of spiralling energy bills to consumers and the outlook is not improving which will further add to inflation pressures. There will be a continuous challenge to keep energy costs stay low for a considerable time into the future and it will be an ongoing effort for governments both state and federal to intervene and ensure stable prices.

(Female, QLD, 30-39 years, General public)

“The energy markets don’t make sense to the average person. How is it that cost has gone up so much, when more and more people are using Solar. It’s like they are saying we are using more power than years ago, when a lot of people have solar. The energy market is a joke. We in Melb generally have one choice of distributor, it doesn’t matter which retailer you go with, Power is Power from the same source. We pay various companies basically for it. These companies are created to create cost and jobs it seems. Can’t see any other reason, where there is more than one retailer, selling exactly the same thing as others, just for all confusing pricing.”

(Male, VIC, 40-49 years, Financially pressured consumer)

Consumers want information and meaningful engagement

In their research, ECA detected a sense of helplessness amongst consumers, with many unaware of what was changing or confused about the reason their bill had increased. A key indicator was a lack of clarity on how the market functions ...”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

18. \$100 MILLION FUND BOOSTS REGIONAL NSW JOBS



Manufactures’ Monthly’s 31 January 2023 edition reports that the NSW state government has released a of funding under its Regional Job Creation Fund. The Fund is now opened for expressions of interest from eligible businesses.

The article states, “The fund will provide grants for regional businesses to expand their operations, and attract interstate and international businesses to relocate to regional NSW.

During a visit to Cape Byron Distillery at Byron Bay, deputy premier and minister for regional NSW Paul Toole said the grants would allow businesses to boost production lines, deliver new equipment and embrace future technologies to drive efficiencies and productivity.

“The Regional Job Creation Fund will create 6,500 jobs across key industries, and this new round will build on that by attracting additional advanced manufacturing capability to our regions,” he said.

Eligible businesses can apply for grants of between \$100,000 and \$10 million for projects such as replacing plant equipment, upgrading technology and ensuring businesses that might otherwise have to relocate can remain based in regional areas.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

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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