
News Service 116 – Minister’s address to JSCs, JSA Clean Energy Capacity Study, House Reps Public Hearing – Perceptions of VET, JSA latest labour market data, Productivity Commission urges broader access to VET, Proposed New Training Product Model, MAE Careers Showcase Days for Women, Mentoring female apprentices, NCVER report student equity in VET, Smart & Skilled Update, Trade Pathways Grant Open, Electrical incidents, Wellbeing training for workers and apprentices, Safety and Industry news (electrify everything!)

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

News Service this month covers:

1. [MINISTER ADDRESSES TO THE NEW JOBS AND SKILLS COUNCILS \(JSCs\)](#)
 2. [JSA TO CONDUCT CLEAN ENERGY CAPACITY STUDY](#)
 3. [DEWR & JSA TO MAKE SUBMISSION TO PUBLIC HEARING – PERCEPTIONS OF VET](#)
 4. [JSA RELEASES LATEST NSW LABOUR MARKET DATA](#)
 5. [PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION URGES BROADER ACCESS TO VET COURSES](#)
 6. [THE PROPOSED TRAINING PRODUCT MODEL](#)
 7. [MAE CAREERS PATHFINDERS SHOWCASE DAYS FOR WOMEN ACROSS NSW \(MARCH 2023\)](#)
 8. [MENTORING FEMALE APPRENTICES](#)
 9. [NCVER – STUDENT EQUITY IN VET 2021 - PARTICIPATION, ACHIEVEMENT AND OUTCOMES](#)
 10. [SMART & SKILLED UPDATE – NO. 199 & 201, Mar 2023](#)
 11. [TRADE PATHWAYS INNOVATION FUND – OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS](#)
 12. [ARC FLASH INCIDENT – WORK SAFELY WITH SWITCHBOARDS](#)
 13. [NO SUBSTITUTE FOR WORK EXPERIENCE](#)
 14. [APPRENTICES IN TRAINING FOR WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE](#)
 15. [APPRENTICES STRUGGLE TO GET OVER THE FINISH LINE](#)
 16. [NEW SNAPSHOT OF WORKERS’ EXPERIENCES RETURNING TO WORK DURING COVID-19](#)
 17. [SAFework NSW CHARGES COMPANY FOR RISK OF FALL - INSTALLING POWER CABLE](#)
 18. ['ELECTRIFY EVERYTHING' - SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC INNOVATION SUMMIT](#)
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1. MINISTER ADDRESSES TO THE NEW JOBS AND SKILLS COUNCILS (JSCs)



The Minister for Skills and Training, The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, delivered a keynote address to the Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) Onboarding Forum on 28 February 2023. The Minister highlighted the expectations and opportunities the new model of JSCs offers for industry leadership and participation in Vocational Education and Training (VET).

The Onboarding Forum was held over two days and explored the proposed structure and scope of coverage of the new arrangements as well as governance issues for the new and emerging Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs). Complementary issues covered were workforce planning, the key features of the new Training Package framework of skill standards and training and assessment requirements, the quality assurance function of DEWR in product endorsement, first year of operation of the JSCs and cross-council collaboration consideration to support a consistent and cooperative approaches to addressing workforce challenges.

The Minister for his part drew attention to the central role JSCs would play in the overall architecture of the revitalised and refocused Vocational Education and Training (VET) system, and that he was fully supportive of the direction of the new approach.

The Ministers when onto state, “The first thing to say is what it is not. JSCs are not just bigger versions of Industry Reference Committees. They are different and more ambitious.

...

In another century, I was involved an earlier iteration of industry engagement.

I was Chair of the Australian Local Government Industry Training Board, so I have a long association with these processes and have seen them from your vantage point.

And to prevent being doomed by repeating history, we must learn from this past.

So, some may be wondering, what has been learned? I would answer that in three parts:

First, the need for strategic scale – the goldilocks zone of big enough to see the context and yet manageable enough to get the specific detail of each sector right;

Secondly, sufficient resources – both financial resources, and the mandate to lead;

And finally cohesion and collaboration – the “how” of what you do in bringing views together within and among JSCs.

The first and second are built into the structure. The third is how the work is done from this point on.

The responsibility for training products clearly transfers to you. But JSCs are responsible for much more.

The aggregation from 67 IRCs to 10 JSCs is important to give you scale and critical mass. It is easier to be strategic when taking a wider perspective.

The extra resources are necessary, but the wider perspective is most important. Each JSC is responsible for large and significant segments of the economy.

This is what gives JSCs the mandate to think broadly, and to lead.

Training products are an important output. But they are the last part of the process, and only one of the tools in your larger toolkit.

The start of the process is understanding the economy and industry – as it is now, as it is changing, and most importantly as we want to shape it.”

...

“We all recognise that Australia’s labour market is vastly different than when the VET qualification system was envisaged in the 1980s and 1990s.

We are clear about what we want to achieve, but we are entirely open about how we do it.

I don’t have a pre-determined answer. And neither do my state and territory Ministerial colleagues. And nor does my department.

We want to achieve a system which focuses on the needs of the learner.

I would like to make it easier for workers to gain transferable skills so that they have more mobility, and more choice and control over their lives.

I would like to make it easier for students to more easily gain recognition for what they have learned – be it on the job or as part of previous study. Currently it is cumbersome, in part because of the level of prescription in training packages, and therefore the take up of RPL is low.

And I want to speed up the system so that we can respond more quickly as the economy shifts. The average time to develop or update a qualification is 18 months.

Qualifications will be led and developed by JSCs. Whatever is done will be done in partnership with you, and will be sensitive to particular needs of each industry.”

[READ MORE OF THE MINISTER’S ADDRESS HERE](#)

Download a copy of the Jobs and Skills Councils – Stage One Outcomes Factsheet - [HERE](#)

2. JSA TO CONDUCT CLEAN ENERGY CAPACITY STUDY



Job and Skills Australia (JSA) reports in its latest newsletter of 2 March 2023 that The Government has commissioned JSA to undertake a capacity study on the workforce needs for Australia’s transition to a clean energy economy.

A summary of the study states, it “will provide critical evidence and insights to support workforce planning, policy development and program design, needed to build a strong and vibrant Clean Energy sector, and contribute to the Government’s Powering Australia Plan.”

The Terms of Reference for the study are: The “Study will identify and analyse occupations, supply and demand factors and geographical considerations to support Australia’s transition from ‘brown’ to ‘green’ energy. It will:

1. Develop an appropriate definition of the Australian clean energy workforce.
2. Establish the current state of the clean energy workforce – including a demographic overview, numbers of employers, job vacancies, and reliance on international specialists.
3. Analyse future demand (at the national, state and regional level) for clean energy roles over the next 30 years in the context of Australia’s transition plans, alongside the impact on demand for employment in high-emitting sectors undergoing transition.
4. Analyse the potential supply (at the national, state and regional level) of clean energy workers over the next 30 years.

5. Explore sector specific barriers faced by small, medium, and large employers in employing and retaining a skilled, diverse workforce in the clean energy sector.
6. Explore opportunities for, and barriers to, full participation in the clean energy sector for priority cohorts, including women, First Nations Australians, people with a disability and culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.
7. Consider the experiences of the transition to clean energy in other countries, especially those that have also traditionally relied on high-emissions forms of energy generation and analyse the impact of international initiatives on the global skilled workforce.

Governance and Consultation

The Capacity Study will be underpinned by close consultation and collaboration with State and Territory governments and industry stakeholders, including peak bodies, employers, unions, universities, and training providers.

Jobs and Skills Australia will establish a Project Steering Group, with membership to include representatives from other key Australian Government agencies, state and territory governments, industry peak bodies and employers, unions, universities, and training providers. The draft terms of reference will be reviewed by the Steering Group.

Process

Jobs and Skills Australia will deliver an interim report by May 2023 and a final report by July 2023.

...

A discussion paper about the study will open for public comment soon. Keep an eye out on our website and social media for more information.”

Download a copy of the draft Terms of Reference [HERE](#)

3. DEWR & JSA TO MAKE SUBMISSION TO PUBLIC HEARING – PERCEPTIONS OF VET



THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training conducting an inquiry into the Perceptions and Status of Vocational Education and Training will hear public submissions from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) on Wednesday 22 March 2023 at Parliament House, Canberra. The House Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training has been asked by the Minister for Skills and Training, the Hon Brendan O’Connor MP to inquire into and report on the perceptions and status of vocational education and training.

The Committee is to inquire into and report on the perceptions and status of vocational education and training (VET), and Commonwealth supported information on VET available to students, and how they impact:

- education and training choices of students, particularly those who lack the necessary foundation skills, or experience other disadvantages; and
- employer views and practices in relation to engagement with VET.

To date there has been 93 submissions made by an array of organisations, governments and individuals providing information, experiences and recommendations for House of Representatives Standing Committee members to review. Submission closed on 1 March 2023.

It appears the Committee may continue to accept new submissions as the Inquiry Status shows ‘accepting submissions’.

To review the submission, terms of reference and more information regarding the inquiry visit the Committee’s submissions page: [HERE](#)

4. JSA RELEASES LATEST NSW LABOUR MARKET DATA

Job and Skills Australia has released the latest Labour Market Data for NSW, which provides a summary of the key indicators for the New South Wales labour market.

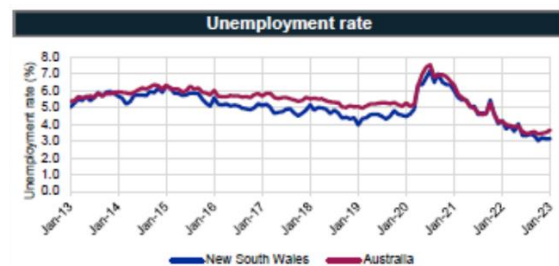
	Labour market summary table											
	Employed persons			Unemployed persons			Unemployment rate		Participation rate		Youth unemployment rate	
	Jan-23 ('000)	Jan-22 ('000)	Change (%)	Jan-23 ('000)	Jan-22 ('000)	Change (%)	Jan-23 (%)	Jan-22 (%)	Jan-23 (%)	Jan-22 (%)	Jan-23 (%)	Jan-22 (%)
New South Wales	4,300.8	4,101.3	4.9	139.7	180.6	-22.6	3.1	4.2	66.1	64.9	7.2	10.6
Australia	13,721.9	13,327.8	3.0	523.2	579.6	-9.7	3.7	4.2	66.5	66.3	7.9	9.0

Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, Jan-23

NSW Labour Market Summary Table as at 25 February 2023

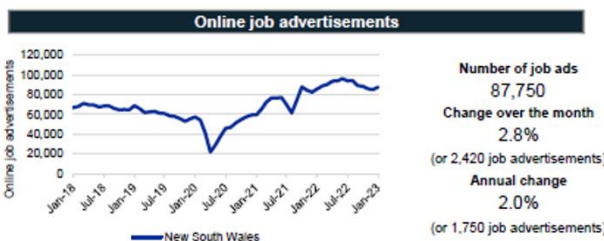


Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, seasonally adjusted data, Jan-23

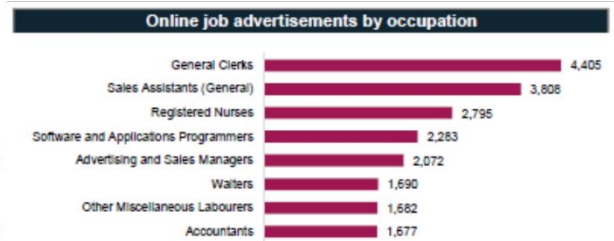


Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, seasonally adjusted data, Jan-23

NSW Employed Persons Labour data and the Unemployment Rate as at 25 Feb 2023



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Internet Vacancy Index, seasonally adjusted data, Jan-23



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Internet Vacancy Index, seasonally adjusted data, Jan-23

NSW online job advertisements and by occupation as at 25 Feb 2023



Largest employing industries in NSW as at 25 Feb 2023

For more information visit the Job and Skills Australia website at:

www.jobsandskills.gov.au/work/monthly-labour-market-dashboards

5. PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION URGES BROADER ACCESS TO VET COURSES



The 20 March 2023 TDA Newsletter issued by TAFE Directors Australia reports on a series of recommendations and Reform Directives proposed by the Productivity Commission related to Vocational Education and Training (VET).

The article states, “The Productivity Commission has recommended a series of reforms designed to expand access to VET and develop what it says would be broader, more adaptive, less occupation specific skills.

A key recommendation in the Commission’s 5-year Productivity Inquiry is for the expansion of VET Student Loans (VSL) beyond the current limited number of diploma and advanced diploma level courses.

It says access to VSL should extend to all diploma and advanced diploma courses, except those primarily taken for leisure or with poor employment outcomes.

Following an evaluation, consideration should be given to extending VSL to Certificate III and Certificate IV courses.

The Commission says the 20% student loan fee should be extended, and lowered, across the full tertiary sector.

It urges the development of cross sectoral skills standards that are applicable across industries to reduce duplication in training package development.

It also recommends extra training and development programs for VET trainers and assessors so they can adequately perform independent and proficiency based assessment.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

Hear TDA CEO Jenny Dodd's response to the inquiry on [ABC's PM program](#) on Friday.

The recommendations and reform directives in the report are organised by broad policy theme, proposing 29 reform directives and drawing on 71 separate recommendations.

See the [Productivity Commission 5-year Productivity Inquiry report](#)

6. THE PROPOSED NEW TRAINING PRODUCT MODEL



The Department of Employment and Workforce Relations (DEWR) has concluded the consultation round regarding the design of new national Training Products. The DEWR website states, “Stakeholders have indicated that they want a system of VET qualifications and skill sets that is clear and relevant, accessible, flexible and transferable.

The development of high-quality training products starts with a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the workforce.

Jobs and Skills Councils will work with Jobs and Skills Australia to align workforce planning activities for their industry sectors, creating a uniform understanding of the skills landscape and developing appropriate strategies to address workforce challenges and skill gaps, which may include developing VET training products.

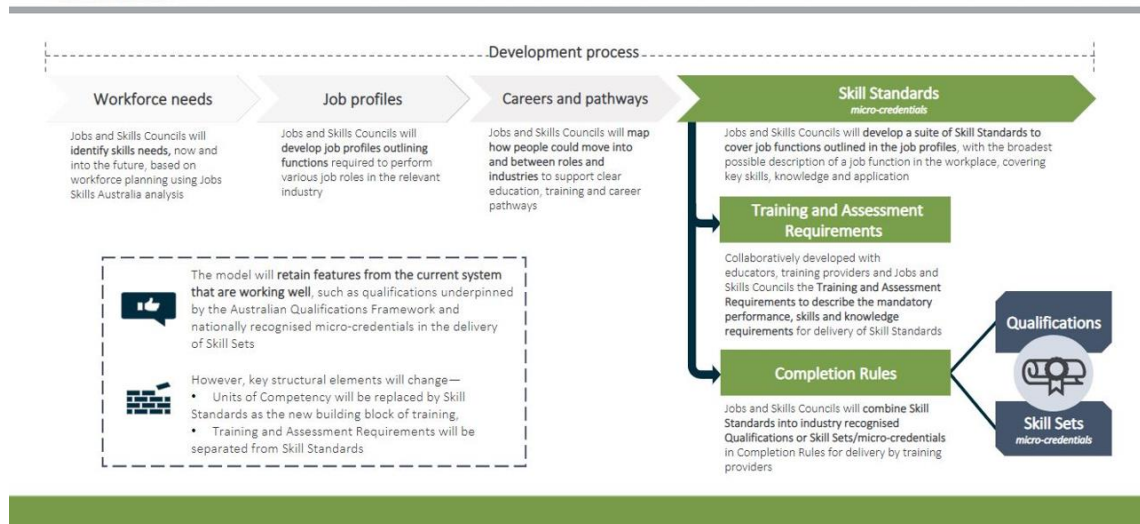
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Units of Competency are to be replaced as the building block of the system by Skill Standards with associated Training and Assessment Requirements. The separation into two new training products acknowledges the different uses and users of these training products and ensures they are fit for purpose. Industry continues to drive identification of job roles and the specification of required skills and knowledge. Industry and educators together develop training products to guide quality delivery and assessment.

The training product development process is described in the diagram below.

Training product development process

Jobs and Skills Councils are responsible for the training product development process, working with industry, unions, training providers and relevant experts on the development of training products



“Skill Standards will be used to describe skills and knowledge that is required broadly across industry sector or to describe industry-specific skills and knowledge. Skill Standards will clearly articulate their applicable industries.

Each Training and Assessment Requirement could be a separate training product with its own code and linked to a Skill Standard. Training and Assessment Requirements should provide necessary industry context and, where there is a demonstrated need, there may be more than one Training and Assessment Requirement linked to a Skill Standard.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

7. 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. 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:

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

Showcase day participants numbers are limited and registrations are essential.

For more information: [AGRIFOOD WEBSITE](#)

8. MENTORING FEMALE APPRENTICES



Editor Sandra Rossi reports in the 15 March edition of Climate Control News (CCN) that Charles Darwin University (CDU) has a new Women in Trades mentoring program.

The article states, “The new program connects young women commencing their apprenticeships with women working in the NT trades sector.

CDU Careers Centre has partnered with the NT chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction to facilitate the new initiative and support female apprentices in non-traditional TAFE disciplines such as construction and refrigeration.

CDU employability programs officer Caroline Thompson said the new mentoring program offers an opportunity for female apprentices from various disciplines to meet and to hear from experienced female tradespeople who have already walked the path of the apprentices.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

9. NCVER – STUDENT EQUITY IN VET 2021 - PARTICIPATION, ACHIEVEMENT AND OUTCOMES



The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) has published its latest report covering student equity in VET 2021. The report was released on 16 March 2023 and presents information on how different equity groups fare in their VET journey.

NCVER’s description of the report states, “The featured equity groups have historically been disadvantaged in accessing and benefiting from education in Australia. We focus on their participation, achievement in and outcomes from VET.” The report is presented in a visual infographic format snapshotting how different equity groups fare in their VET journey.



Download the infographic report [HERE](#)

10. SMART & SKILLED UPDATE – NO. 199 & 201, Mar 2023



Smart and Skilled Update No. 201 ([DOWNLOAD](#)) – 7 March 2023, and the Smart and Skilled Update 199 ([DOWNLOAD](#)) – March 2023 have 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 201 covers the following:

- 1) Skilling for Recovery Part Qualifications training activity data – Review and submit updated data, and

- 2) Price increase for all current **Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician (UEE30820)** students.

This Smart and Skilled Update 199 covers the following:

- 1) NSW Skills List updated – Version 13.5
 - a. Updates to the NSW Skills List – incorporating Training Package revisions
 - b. VTO changes affecting the NSW Skills List
 - c. NSW Fee Free qualifications
- 2) Changes to Smart and Skilled qualification prices
 - a. Qualification price increases
 - b. Qualification price and fee decreases from 1 July 2023
- 3) NSW Fee Free – deferral of training
- 4) Smart and Skilled Provider Webinar held Friday, 10 February 2023 – Recording available

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](#)

11. TRADE PATHWAYS INNOVATION FUND – OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS



Training Services NSW has advised in a recently circular that submission to the Trade Pathways Innovation Fund closes at 5:00PM 4 April 2023. Submission can be made via the online grant application service. Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria.

The scope of the fund is:

“The Trade Pathways Innovation Fund will support industry-led projects that trial and test new approaches to obtaining trade

qualifications.

The fund will improve the accessibility of trade training for women, mature age workers and school leavers.

...

The Trade Pathways Innovation Fund will respond to the unique skills needs of different trade sectors. It provides the opportunity to trial and test new approaches to obtaining trade qualifications which may be occupation or student specific.

The Trade Pathways Innovation Fund will enable industry-led projects to establish new pathways to trade qualification or enhance existing non-traditional pathways to trade qualification (i.e. those outside of an apprenticeship or traineeship training contract). Establishing and enhancing these pathways will lead to an increase in qualified workers in trade occupations facing skills shortages.

Grants of up to \$500,000 (GST exclusive) will fund innovative projects that enhance existing non-traditional pathways or build new pathways to trade and trade-like qualifications.

The Fund will improve the accessibility of trade training, particularly for students such as women, mature workers and school leavers. Occupation-specific pathways developed by industry will result in an uplift in students engaging with and achieving trade qualification.”

Industry-led projects will commence in May 2023 for a period of 12-months.

For more information download the information presentation: [HERE](#)

Application can be submitted via the SmartyGrants website at:

<https://trainingservicesnsw.smartygrants.com.au/tradepathwaysinnovationfund>

12. ARC FLASH INCIDENT – WORK SAFELY WITH SWITCHBOARDS



The latest eSafe Electrical bulletin, 17 March 2023, reports on the investigation the Electrical Safety Office is conducting of yet another arc flash incident which resulted in a worker sustaining burns while working on an energised electrical distribution board.

The report states, “A short circuit created an arc flash while the worker was attempting to change out a circuit breaker in the distribution board. This incident is a good reminder that working with switchboards carries an increased risk of injury due to a greater presence of high fault current. As a precaution, you should isolate the power to the entire switchboard, even if this means rescheduling the work to another time.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

13. NO SUBSTITUTE FOR WORK EXPERIENCE



The latest eSafe Electrical bulletin, 17 March 2023, reports also on the issue of work experience, particularly those undertaking the Certificate II Electrotechnology (Career Start).

The article states, “Work experience provides a great opportunity for people interested in seeing what it could be like working in the electrical industry. Work experience is also a requirement for students undertaking industry placement for their Certificate II Electrotechnology (Career Start).

While industry placement allows students to experience the electrical trade, employers and supervising workers must remember the limited scope they can perform.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

14. APPRENTICES IN TRAINING FOR WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE



ADA Australia has announced that it is ramping up its training offerings to provide greater opportunities for apprentices in training to learn more about issues related to depression, anxiety and alcohol and drug dependence.

All workers, and most especially younger workers in industry settings, face a range of challenges and psychological hazards that can impact their employment, safety at work and personal wellbeing. Many, in fact, particularly those in workplaces with poor management practices, poor relationships (or aggressive workplace cultures) can be made quite unwell by the mere fact of going to work.

As a result, ADA Australia has developed its Best Life, Best Work Wellbeing Program. In the past year, more than 600 Apprentices across Australia have participated in this training.

ADA Australia's vision, as the footprint of this program grows, is to reach all Australian apprentices with this important training.

But it doesn't stop with educating the next generation of workers. They also run a Delegates and HSR Masterclass which covers compliance obligations around worker mental health and wellbeing, around processes and procedures, on recognising psychological risk, recognising struggle, and tips on providing support.

This program will equip employees with the tools to identify psychological risk and individuals who may be struggling and offers approaches on how to have the often-difficult conversations around mental health, wellbeing and in encouraging help-seeking behaviours.

It also addresses Workplace Health and Safety obligations, and policies and procedures, to minimise risk.

In addition to their robust training programs, ADA Australia also offers 24/7 support through their Friendly Ear Helpline Service. Their Friendly Ear operators bring a special understanding to this support service.

Reach out and talk to ADA Australia to learn more about the programs they offer or to connect and arrange for them to visit your workplace and identify or deliver a relevant program.

ADA Australia has operations since 2016 offering a range of training options to assist workplaces to identify, manage and address psychological hazards at work, to foster mentally healthy workplace behaviours and to promote better wellbeing and safety practices around drugs and alcohol.

Contact ADA Australia on 1300 378 429 or Email them at: enquiry@adaaus.com.au

Website: www.adaaus.com.au



15. APPRENTICES STRUGGLE TO GET OVER THE FINISH LINE



Sean Carroll, editor at Electrical Connection explores in the 10 March 2023 edition the continued decline in apprenticeship completion rates. The article states, “The rate of Australians starting apprenticeships has risen but it’s in stark contrast to the record levels of non-completion. Sean Carroll finds out what’s going wrong for a trade industry that needs an injection of skilled workers.

The post-COVID working environment is much different to the world that preceded it with labour shortages, supply chain issues and the Great Resignation adding additional pressure to the world.

There is no exception for skilled trades as the building and construction industry is struggling to stay on top of workloads.

The most recent data from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NVCER) reports that while apprentices and trainees have increased by almost 17% on the previous year, a record number of workers aren’t finishing their apprenticeship. Over the past decade, the rate of completion is now at 55.7%.

This data is in stark contrast to that of the National Skills Commission which, in its annual report for 2021, revealed that almost half of employers (45%) reported having recruitment difficulty for their most recent vacancies. The most recent national Skills Priority List found that 42% of technician and trade occupations are currently in shortage.

NECA manager, projects and governance, Michelle Ellis, says that the electrical industry is suffering the most severe skills shortages of all industries, saying that a large majority of NECA electrical apprentices who graduate with their Certificate III are employed almost immediately as electricians.

“If they don’t go straight into the trade, it’s generally because they have decided to move on to further study, like engineering, or pursuing another career path for which a trade is considered beneficial like defence, fire or police force,” she says.

“It’s not because they can’t secure a job at the other end.”

So, with so many job opportunities there to be snatched up, what’s gone wrong??

Apprenticeship Employment Network executive director, Gary Workman, says that addressing the disconnect between high apprenticeship numbers and ongoing skills shortages is crucial in keeping the lights on for some businesses across the country.

“Apprenticeships are a long-term solution to address skill gaps in the workforce, the current apprenticeship boom needs to be continued to assist with addressing those gaps,” he says.

“Additional measures are also needed to ensure youth have sustainable career options and businesses can continue to build the skills they need.”

He adds that the Federal Treasurer, Jim Chalmers, and the Minister for Skills and Training, Brendan O’Connor, are looking at more efficient ways to address the skill shortages of today and tomorrow.

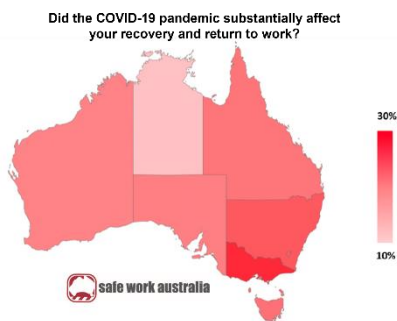
“It became clear to me in the first days of my role in the Skills and Training portfolio, that one of the biggest issues for the sector is the poor completion rates for our apprentices and trainees,” Brendan said in a speech at the ACCI & VECCI Business Lunch in October 2022.

“Over the last decade, the proportion of people completing apprenticeships fell, with the rate now at 55.7%. Low completion rates derail potential careers, they’re costly and deprive the economy of much-needed skills.

“That’s clearly not good enough.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

16. NEW SNAPSHOT OF WORKERS’ EXPERIENCES RETURNING TO WORK DURING COVID-19



Safe Work Australia has reported in its latest newsletter of 16 March 2023 that it has published a new snapshot exploring the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on workers returning to work after an injury or illness.

The article states, “The snapshot provides valuable insights for workers’ compensation authorities and other key stakeholders about what it was like for workers making a return to work during the pandemic.

Download the [Returning to work during COVID-19 snapshot](#).

Key findings

- 1 in 5 injured or ill workers said the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on their return to work and recovery.
- Workers suffering from a psychological injury and those experiencing distress were more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted their recovery and return to work.
- Limited access to social and family support was the most frequently reported adverse effect of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Injured workers under the age of 25 were the most likely to respond they had been stood down or had their hours reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- More than 20% of workers surveyed responded that the COVID-19 pandemic had positively influenced their recovery and return to work.

The snapshot is based on findings from the [2021 National Return to Work Survey summary report](#), which is a key data source guiding the delivery of the [National Return to Work Strategy 2020-2030](#).

Find out more about [how Safe Work Australia measures return to work outcomes](#).”

17. SAFEWORK NSW CHARGES COMPANY FOR RISK OF FALL - INSTALLING POWER CABLE



Safe Work NSW reports in its August 2022 prosecutions page that after a SafeWork NSW investigation, the defendant, HMO Electromasters Pty Ltd, was charged with a breach of clause 39(2) and 299(1) of the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017.

The incident related to an electrical supervisor and two apprentices being placed at risk of falling 7 metres to the ground of a multi storey construction building in Newcastle while installing a power cable for the tower crane on 15 November 2021.

The defendant was convicted by the Local Court and fined \$10,000 for each offence on the 29 August 2022.

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18. 'ELECTRIFY EVERYTHING' - SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC INNOVATION SUMMIT



The 15 March 2023 edition of Electrical Comms Data reports on a summit hosted by Schneider Electric at its Innovation Summit which hear the call for 'Electrify everything'. Katerina Sakkas reports in the article, "'Electrify everything' was one of the rallying cries at the annual [Schneider Electric Innovation Summit](#), held on 14 March at Sydney's ICC.

Also highlighted was the importance of digitalisation and industry partnerships in the race to meet emissions reduction targets."

The articles states, "The Innovation Summit brought together industry leaders, inventors and technical experts to discuss how companies can accelerate digitalisation and electrification to innovate for sustainability and achieve net zero while boosting profitability.

...

Keynote speakers at the summit included Schneider Electric's Executive Vice President International Operations, Manish Pant; Professor Veena Sahajwalla, the inventor transforming recycling science including through the invention of green steel; and scientist and innovator Saul Griffith, author of *Rewiring Australia* and a major advocate for 'electrifying everything'.

Griffith stressed that overhauling "the infrastructure of daily life" — focusing on HVAC, vehicles and where electricity comes from — was crucial in getting communities to zero emissions by 2040. "42% of the emissions in our domestic economy come from the decisions you make around your kitchen table," he said.

"Another 29% of emissions in Australia are from the small business/commercial sector, again from the same types of machines: HVAC, vehicles and where your electricity comes from," he continued.

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