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**News Service 119 – ASQA RTO warning, Call for army of skilled workers, RTO guide for trainers, Unemployment rate declines, ANZSCO review, Woolies WRD open day, NSW to conduct VET review, Join NSW Women’s Council, Women careers, Training initiative launched for regional NSW, Nextgen applications open, Fatal electric shock, Electrical disciplinary hearings, SWA Carcinogens survey, NSW electrical safety in construction, Solar warning, Banning gas connections, and Safety of solar traffic.**

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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

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## 1. ASQA ISSUES WARNING OVER POOR TRAINING PRACTICES - ELECTRICAL



Master Electricians Australia (MEA) reports in its MEA Industry News of 5 June 2023 that the Australian Skills Quality Authority has issued a warning to training organisations that it is concerned about the way some RTOs are assessing UE30820 - Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician.

The article states, “ASQA is concerned some RTOs are issuing qualifications for the certificate completed mainly through recognition of prior learning, without conducting sufficient assessment.

Information ASQA has received from industry and regulatory stakeholders indicates students are applying to their State licencing authority for electrical licencing, without being able to demonstrate the required skills and knowledge to obtain their licence.

ASQA will be conducting an audit of RTOs where they are concerned about poor practices.”

In this regard, the NSW UE ITAB and its Board of industry representatives applauds the decision and warning statement issues by ASQA to RTOs. However, more than a warning is required. We need investigations, as candidates/learners are paying good money to a cohort of RTOs for a service which subsequently appears, in many instances, to be deficient, defective and may lead to serious consequences or incidents in the community. We need closer industry involvement in the audit process.

As further evidence of the industry’s growing concerns and why industry should be co-jointly involved in the audit process is that recent research has revealed a number of RTOs are no longer awarding RPL to candidates/learners and instead, whilst using the same methodology to assess evidence to that used for RPL, are now choosing to award candidates/learners ‘Competent’ (C) on their transcripts. When evidence is sought from the candidates/learners as to the training and assessment delivery strategy that they undertook and was delivered to them by the RTO, the applicants are unable to state or furnish any additional activity. Specifically, this is in relation to the training and assessment undertaken for the knowledge and skills aspects of evidence for each of the units of competency. Little has been undertaken for the UEE308111/UEE30820 qualification. That is, there is no formally structured competency development plan or training program/course provided by the RTO to the candidate/learner for each unit of competency making up the qualification. It is all based on evidentiary submissions, typically associated with RPL.

When the candidates/learners are challenged as to whether or asked to explain how they have gained the necessary knowledge and skills evidence underpinning each of the units of competency, many fail to respond as to how, or correctly answer any technical relevant questions. In fact, recent Trade Tests conducted in NSW have found that 9 in every 10 issued a qualification by one these RTOs, failed the trade test. Most failed in the knowledge and skills aspects of evidence of the units of competency.

This suggests strongly that the necessary knowledge and skills evidence underpinning each of the units of competency is not being delivered by these RTOs, leading to a high-risk situation where the candidate/learner has a deficit of technical knowledge and skills evidence that could result in catastrophic results to themselves, colleagues and the community.

The NSW UE ITAB has also learnt that candidates/learners have in some instances be asked by the RTO to assemble and construct their own simulation skill and work practices at their employer’s place, with some purchasing their own equipment to create the simulation for the ‘capstone’ unit

of competency in the qualification. Then, asked to video themselves or with a supervisor whilst undertaking the practice. And where that was not possible – like creating faults or deploying specialist equipment, advised there was no need to perform them. In relation to knowledge and skills test, these were often performed on a computer with no invigilation.

These deficient practices, which the ITAB is aware of, are not confined to one RTO. However, almost all of the candidates/learners have paid a considerable sum of money to be awarded the UEE308111/UEE30820 electrician qualification, blindsided by the fact they truly believe they have done everything right. However, it is clear these RTOs have not provided the full service against each unit of competency. An issue that should ring alarm bells for ASQA.

It is safe to suggest that in NSW, many of these RTOs are not part of the NSW Smart and Skilled funding model covering electrical apprenticeships in NSW and this in itself, may reveal why their respective approaches maybe suspect.



Many in the Utilities and Electrotechnology industry may or may not be aware that the NSW VETAB, the previous regulator to ASQA in NSW, had an arrangement in place in NSW, where the industry in addition to a VETAB audit conducted a pre-clearance review of an RTO's operation. This typically related to the technical capability of the RTO to deliver the CIII Electrotechnology Electrician's qualification from a technical perspective such as infrastructure, correct quality and quantity of equipment and consumables, and teachers. It was called the 'Pink Slip' scheme, where VETAB would not audit the prospective RTO until they had received the Pink Slip from the industry body. This occurred at renewal time also.

The NSW UE ITAB contends, that it might be timely for ASQA to consider the same, as the ITAB is aware that several technical regulators have also contacted ASQA in relation to their concerns with some RTOs, inappropriately delivering qualifications in regulated occupations such as electrical and Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (RAC). Introducing this measure may assist ASQA in its performance review assessments (audit) activities and reduce potential risk.

The NSW UE ITAB has amassed an array of related evidence it has advised ASQA of, to evince that there is some serious defects and malpractices in some of these RTOs, that would clearly establish the fact they would in all good conscience be de-registered or least be sanctioned until they corrected their practices. Given this experience, the NSW UE ITAB would be more than happy to provide an outline how the 'Pink Slip' scheme works. It is very similar to the Green Slip used by regulators for vehicle registrations.

The ITAB maintains a continued level of concern and has asked ASQA to engage in more direct performance assessments of these RTOs in collaboration with simultaneous support of industry experts to evaluate the quality of the organisation's infrastructure and capability to deliver quality technical outcomes consistent with the requirements detailed in the respective units of competency. The NSW UE ITAB continues to advocate for ASQA moving to collaborative performance assessments (audits) of registered providers, where industry jointly participates in ASQA audits.

Without this approach ASQA will continue to be perceived and burdened with credibility issues about the integrity and quality of its audits. Continuing to evade the opportunity to directly involve industry experts in the performance assessment (audit) process from a technical delivery point of view, will continue to reinforce a lack of confidence of industry and regulators in the ASQA's capability to assure quality of outcomes of the candidate's/learner's.

A matter ASQA must consider before a serious incident occurs.

## 2. MINISTER CALLS FOR AN ARMY OF SKILLED WORKERS



San Williams reports in the 16 June 2023 edition of Electrical Connection that the Minister of Parliament Hon Brendan O'Connor has called for an army of skilled workers to power the Australia of the future.

The article states that, "at a recent gathering of industry professionals during the National Electrical Contractors Association's (NECA) National Electrotechnical Industry Lunch event in Melbourne", the Minister for Skills and Training, The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, said, "We will need an army of skilled workers to power the Australia of the future."

"Australia is undergoing a significant transformation towards a clean energy future, and with that comes many opportunities."

With several key announcements in this year's federal budget around clean energy initiatives, and the unveiling this week of the government's Net Zero Agency and Advisory board, a clean energy future is seen to be ranked high on the government's list of priorities.

The federal budget has set aside \$3.7 billion for a five-year national skills agreement to make skills and training more accessible and equitable.

"I want to thank you for your hard work in getting this Jobs and Skills Council (JSC) off the ground. The quicker they can start the work, the sooner we will have a more complete picture of the sector's skills needs," Brendan says.

"Your collaboration with Master Electricians Australia (MEA) and the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) will help develop the skills needed for the workforce of tomorrow."

## 3. RTO GUIDE FOR TRAINERS WORKING UNDER SUPERVISION



The latest June 2023 edition of ASQA Update, monthly newsletter, ASQA draws attention to the updated version of the guidance for providers which has been published, when RTOs use a person who does not hold the required competencies as a trainer and assessor.

The article states, "The [Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#) (the Standards), sets out what is required when using a person who does not hold the required competencies as a trainer and assessor. Whereas the [Users' guide to the Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#) details what an RTO must give consideration to when determining supervision requirements.

Working under supervision is a great way for people with trade or vocational experience to take that first step in delivering training and assessment in the VET sector.

Where a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) engages a person who does not hold the required competencies to be a trainer and assessor, that person needs to be supervised by a qualified trainer to maintain the quality of your training and assessment. ...

Regardless of their skills and knowledge, a person that does not hold the required competencies:

- must be formally supervised.
- must not determine assessment outcomes.

People working under supervision arrangements can only provide training if they have the vocational competencies and current industry skills and knowledge relevant to the training being delivered. Training is best provided by those who can undertake—to an industry-standard level—all of the tasks defined in the elements of units of competency and modules.”

**Clause 1.17** of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 states, “Where the RTO, in delivering training and assessment, engages an individual who is not a trainer or assessor, the individual works under the supervision of a trainer and does not determine assessment outcomes.

**Clause 1.18** - The RTO ensures that any individual working under the supervision of a trainer under clause 1.17:

- holds the training and assessment credential specified in [Item 6 of Schedule 1](#)
- has vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed
- has current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

## 4. DECLINE IN MARCH 2023 QUARTER UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN SA2 AND LGA LEVELS



The latest March quarter 2023 Small Area Labour Markets report has been published by Jobs and Skills Australia.

The latest results show there has been a significant increase in the number of SA2s with an unemployment rate of less than 5% over the past year (up from 1,433 to 1,726). The number of SA2s with an unemployment rate of 10% or higher has fallen considerably (down from 131 to 78). These results reflect the strong recovery in labour market conditions that occurred following the end of the 2021 COVID-19 related lockdowns. See Chart 1.

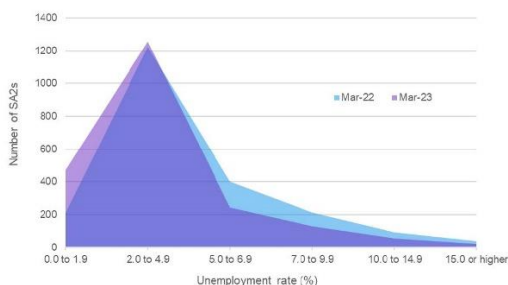


Chart 2: Distribution of SA2s by unemployment rate

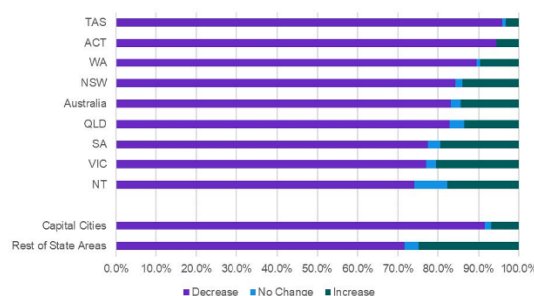







Chart 1: Annual change in unemployment rate by state/territory (% of SA2s)

The data also show that more than 8 in 10 SA2s (or 83.2%) recorded a decrease in their unemployment rate over the year to the March quarter 2023. SA2s located in capital cities were more likely to record a fall in their unemployment rate over the year than those in rest of state areas (91.5% compared with 71.5%). Refer Chart 2.

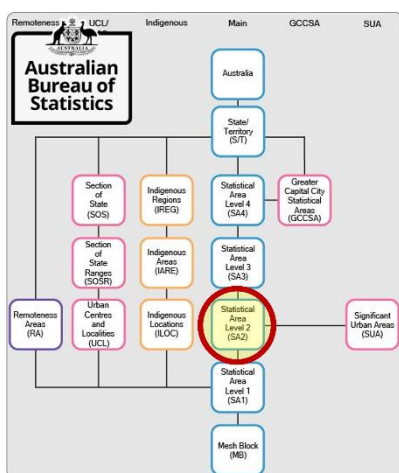
Jobs and Skills Australia produces quarterly Small Area Labour Markets (SALM) estimates of unemployment and the unemployment rate at the Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) and Local Government Area (LGA).



State/territory	Increase 	Decrease 	Steady 	Less than 5%	10% or more
NSW 	27.9	69.0	3.1	83.7	2.3
Australia 	27.6	67.6	4.8	76.6	5.9

Distribution of LGAs by state/territory (%), change over the year to the March quarter 2023

Note - Small Area Labour Markets (SALM) presents regional estimates of unemployment and the unemployment rate at two small area levels:



**Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2)**

There are around 2,300 SA2s in Australia.

- The SA2s are a geographical unit that aggregate to the Statistical Area Level 4s in the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ (ABS) [2016 Australian Statistical Geography Standard](#) (ASGS).
- ABS Labour Force Survey data are based on the ASGS.

**Local Government Areas (LGAs)**

There are around 540 LGAs in Australia.

- LGAs are based on the boundaries of the smallest government units (local councils) in Australia.
- Jobs and Skills Australia produces the SALM LGA estimates using the latest available SA2 to LGA correspondence from the ABS.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

## 5. ANZSCO COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW - CONSULTATION ROUND 2 - FEEDBACK



The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has advised that it has opened its Round 2 consultation for the comprehensive review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). The Review aims to reflect the

contemporary labour market and better meet stakeholders’ needs.

This is an opportunity for stakeholders to make a significant impact by providing feedback on selected occupations, helping shape the quality of Australia’s future occupation and labour market information.

**Round 2 Focus Areas**

The ABS is now welcoming submissions via the [ABS Consultation Hub](#) on the following industry-based focus areas:

Air and space transport	Allied health
Architectural, engineering and technical services	Construction
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	Manufacturing

Medical, nursing and other health care services	Mining
Property operators and real estate	Repair and maintenance
Spatial, surveying and mapping services	Telecommunications
Tourism services	

The full list of [occupations within each of these focus areas](#) is available on the ABS website. For instance, in relation to Utilities and Electrotechnology occupations under review, these are:

- [341111 Electrician \(General\)](#)
- [341112 Electrician \(Special Class\)](#)
- [341113 Lift Mechanic](#)
- [399212 Gas or Petroleum Operator](#)
- [399213 Power Generation Plant Operator](#)
- [899914 Electrical or Telecommunications Trades Assistant](#)
- [342111 Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic](#)
- [342211 Electrical Linesworker / Electrical Line Mechanic](#)
- [342212 Technical Cable Joints](#)
- [342411 Cabler \(Data and Telecommunications\)](#)

The ABS is particularly interested in understanding which occupations have evolved, been replaced, or changed.

- Have skill requirements shifted over time?
- Are there any emerging fields or unique jobs that you believe will shape the future?

Further information is available on [preparing a submission](#). Survey questions are available in the submission guide on the ABS Consultation Hub.

For information about the consultation schedule and latest development visit [Updating ANZSCO](#).

To provide feedback and learn more about the Review, visit: [ANZSCO COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW](#)

## 6. 2023 WRD WOOLWORTHS PLANTROOM OPEN DAY



**26th June 2023** is recognised as **World Refrigeration Day**.

Woolworths is offering interested career aspirants the great opportunity to go behind the scenes in their supermarkets.

Woolworths keen to showcase the career opportunities that Refrigeration has to offer at Woolworths. This is a great chance

to meet with some of Woolworths' apprentices, technicians and engineers. Encouraged, is anyone considering a career in refrigeration or not sure what about such a career to visit them!

The Refrigeration & Air Conditioning (RAC) sector is accountable for almost 25% of Australia's entire national electricity production and around 12% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

RAC enables people to live, travel and work comfortably. Refrigeration in particular boosts economic productivity, underpins countless industrial processes, reduces food waste, enables organ transplants and saves lives.

But the RAC industry's transition towards more sustainable, lower emissions and higher efficiency technologies demands a higher level of skill of the engineers and field technicians who work in this space.

World Refrigeration Day (WRD) is an international awareness campaign endorsed by the UN Environment Program (UNEP) to raise the profile of the refrigeration, air-conditioning and heat-pump sector. WRD aims to focus attention on the significant role that the industry plays in modern life and society. It draws attention to engineering and science that is all around us every day.

**When** Monday, 26th June 2023

**Where** Woolworths Supermarkets in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Hobart, Adelaide & Perth.

Each session will run for approximately 1 hour.

**To register your interest in attending please scan the QR code.**



On WRD this year (June 26th) Woolies will be throwing open the plantroom doors to the public to showcase the latest technology (transcritical CO2) in commercial refrigeration. And they'll be doing so in each state capital city. If you know someone who may just be interested in picking up a trade - or simply interested to learn more – please download the flyer and send it to.

[DOWNLOAD THE EVENT FLYER HERE](#)

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## 7. NSW SET TO COMMENCE VET REVIEW



TAFE Directors Australia latest newsletter of 19 June 2023 reports that the NSW government will shortly announce a panel to undertake a full review of vocational education and training in the state.

The article states, “The Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, Tim Crakanthorp told the Apprentice Employment Network NSW & ACT last week that he would soon announce the person to lead a panel that will undertake a review that will examine structural issues facing VET.

He said the review will address three main questions: “What does our state prepare for now? What do we need to do differently to prepare people for the future? And how does our provider and TAFE system, from schooling to tertiary, need to operate to deliver it?”

“The Minns government has been very clear on its commitment to rebuild TAFE NSW because TAFE NSW isn't just a provider, it is the provider. It is the public provider,” he said.

“And, in line with our election commitment, I'll soon be commissioning a full vocational education and training review across the entire sector.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)



## 8. JOIN THE NSW WOMEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL



Applications are now open for up to 12 new members to join the new NSW Women's Advisory Council (the Council). The Minister for Women is currently seeking applications to appoint up to 12 members to the NSW Women's Advisory Council, which plays a key role in advancing gender equality in NSW.

Each member will play a key role in advancing gender equality by advising the NSW Government on issues affecting women and girls across the state.

Applications are sought from people from diverse locations, backgrounds, and life experiences, with a demonstrated active interest in improving outcomes for women and girls. This may include involvement in such areas as:

- employment and industry
- education
- health and wellbeing
- community engagement
- diversity and inclusion

Council members will meet up to four times a year to discuss current issues affecting women and girls, and to provide advice to the NSW Government.

The Council replaces the former NSW Council for Women's Economic Opportunity, with an expanded scope to consider the broad range of issues affecting women and girls.

The objectives of the Council are to:

- provide specialist advice across the three key priority areas identified in the [NSW Women's Strategy 2023-2026](#) (the Strategy):
  - economic opportunity and advancement
  - health and wellbeing
  - participation and empowerment,
- contribute to the implementation of the Strategy, and;
- facilitate consultation with individuals and community organisations as required.

If you are a NSW resident who is deeply invested in improving outcomes for women and girls, learn more and apply by **midnight on Wednesday 12 July**: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/women-nsw/join-nsw-womens-advisory-council>

Women NSW has relaunched its LinkedIn channel! – Follow them on [LinkedIn](#)

## 9. TURNING PASSION INTO A CAREER



The NSW Educational Pathways has amassed a collection of video resources to promote and help students figure out what they can do now to start pursuing a career that reflects their passions.

The resources section of the EPP website contains many video resources like this which can be used in the classroom or shared with families for them to watch in their own time.

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

## 10. WOMEN CHOOSING A NON-TRADITIONAL CAREER



The Manufacturing, Agrifood and Electrotechnology (MAE) Career Pathfinders Project has developed a series of video resources of women sharing their experiences in taking on a non-traditional occupation of choice.

They share their stories in order to inspire and motivate other women to consider a career in a non-traditional occupation:



### [PODCASTS](#) – LISTEN TO THEIR STORIES

– Learn more about non-traditional careers chosen by these women:  
[CLICK HERE](#)



### [VIDEOS](#) – WATCH AND LISTEN TO THEIR STORIES

– Learn more about non-traditional careers chosen by these women:  
[CLICK HERE](#)

Visit the [MAE CAREER RESOURCE CENTRE](#) page on this website to learn more about each of the MAE industries. As well, learn more about and explore a range of career and occupational information that will help career aspirants gain knowledge of the many opportunities and careers that are available to them and which they can choose and pursue.

Download occupational career information such as Job Guides, Career Resources, Career Flow Charts and other supporting materials for each of the MAE industry sectors [HERE](#).

## 11. SHOWCASING WOMEN IN HVACR



Editor Sandra Rossi reports in the latest edition of Climate Control News (CCN), 5 June 2023 that CCN has launched the Women in HVACR programme to showcase talented women making an outstanding contribution to the climate control industry.

The article states, “The HVACR workforce has diversified in recent years and this will continue as more women recognise the abundance of opportunities that are available across this growing industry.

This initiative is not about competing for a top spot in our showcase or vying for an award it is a programme dedicated to sharing experiences and elevating women making a difference in the HVACR industry.

Every year, women from around Australia will be invited to nominate to be a part of CCN’s Women in HVACR showcase.

Entries will be welcome from young rising stars through to senior executives. It is about their experience and talent, not their age or title.

There are such a wide range of professions in HVACR from researchers to executives and technicians through to sales staff and small business owners.

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Everyone is encouraged to nominate and to share their story in HVACR.

Nominations open on **5 June, 2023** and close on **5 September, 2023**.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

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## 12. MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR TRAINING INITIATIVE LAUNCHED FOR REGIONAL NSW



Reporter, Stephen Barker in the latest Utility News (*e-news*) from around Australia of 8 June 2023, reports that a multimillion-dollar training initiative has been launched as part of EnergyConnect to boost skills in the power transmission sector across regional New South Wales.

The article states, “Legacy 100 is predicted to result in up to 100 candidates completing qualifications in Transmission Line Construction as part of the \$1.8 billion [EnergyConnect project](#) being built from Wagga Wagga to the South Australian border.

Transgrid Executive General Manager of Major Projects, Gordon Taylor, said, “Transgrid and its construction partner SecureEnergy are committed to investing in the nation’s energy workforce to address skills and jobs shortages in regional New South Wales and support Australia’s great transition to clean energy.

“The first of 1,500 towers are currently being installed on EnergyConnect in southwestern New South Wales, with stringing of 9,000km of conductor cabling to get underway shortly requiring hundreds of workers.

“There will be no transition without transmission and Legacy 100 will form the backbone of the future workforce in the transmission tower construction industry, with workers to use the skills gained on EnergyConnect to build other future transmission line projects.

“The comprehensive program will help the Australian energy sector to grow its own riggers and doggers, boosting jobs and skills in regional New South Wales, and reducing reliance on overseas trained workers.”

SecureEnergy Project Director, Samuel Basanta Lopez, said 100 candidates from across the Riverina and other parts of regional New South Wales are now wanted to join the program and take their careers to new heights.

“This is the first time in this country an initiative like this has been launched and we are very proud to be developing the skills and capabilities required for the Australian energy sector,” Mr Basanta Lopez said.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

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## 13. STANDARDS AUSTRALIA - NEXTGEN APPLICATIONS OPEN



Standards Australia has opened applications for its 2023/2024 **NEXTgen program**. **NEXTgen** is a 10-month professional development program, targeted at up-and-coming professionals with fresh perspectives and experiences from across industry sectors.

Standards Australia looking for individuals with 5-7 years' experience in their field of work, that have an interest in learning more about standards and their benefits.

### The program offers:

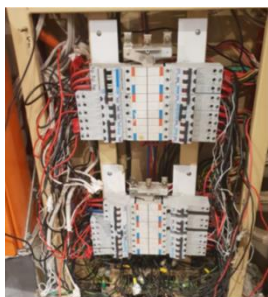
- Workshops to develop key communication, leadership and project management skills
- An in-depth look into the standards development process, and guidance on how to apply industry knowledge and become an effective technical committee member
- Building a network of contacts in related industries
- Gaining recognition as a future leader in the standards development process
- Enhancing your career prospects and employability

[Click here](#) to apply.

**Applications close on Friday, 7th of July.**

Full application criteria, program schedule and FAQs are [available online](#).

## 14. ELECTRICIAN RECEIVES FATAL ELECTRIC SHOCK



National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) eNews reports in its 17 June 2023 edition of a recent fatality of a 33-year-old electrician while working on a switchboard in NSW.

The article state, "The recent fatality of a 33-year-old electrician while working on a switchboard in NSW has sparked concerns within the electrical community. This unfortunate incident emphasises the importance of safety measures when handling electrical equipment and installations, such as ensuring that circuits and conductors are correctly isolated, and that equipment is switched off before work commences. In addition, it is crucial to adhere to the regulations set out in the WHS regulations to minimise the risk of injury or death on the job. ..."

A 33-year-old electrician died from an electric shock while working on a switchboard and coming into contact with a live conductor. This is the second fatality relating to contact with electricity within a month in NSW.

Work on energised (live) equipment is prohibited except under circumstances outlined in the WHS regulation. Before working on or near electrical equipment and installations, ensure that it is switched off and test every circuit and conductor to ensure it has been properly isolated. Lock or tag the circuit to prevent accidental re-energisation."

[DOWNLOAD A COPY OF THE SAFEWORK NSW REPORT](#)

## 15. ELECTRON - ELECTRICAL DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS



The NZ Electrical Workers Registration Board in its 120 issue of Electron (a monthly newsletter) alludes to a disciplinary investigation case conducted by the Board of a worker, where the

finding was that the Electrical Worker negligently created a risk of serious harm or significant property damage. The was ordered to undertake a course of training and is ordered to pay costs of \$250. The matter was heard on the basis of an agreed statement of facts in which the Electrical Worker accepted the charges laid against him.

“The findings related to the disconnection of an earth conductor from a socket outlet which remained connected to power and incorrectly using red sleeving over a green/yellow protective earth conductor. Both were serious non-compliance issues.”

“Earthing is fundamental to safety, and sleeving an earth conductor creates a risk that another electrical worker may unwittingly cut into the conductor where it is not sleeved, believing it to be an earth conductor. The Electrical Worker was ordered to complete and pass the Stage 3 Practical assessment to address the competency issues noted.”

[READ MORE CASES HERE](#)

## 16. SWA - NON-THRESHOLD GENOTOXIC CARCINOGENS (NTGCS) SURVEY



Safe Work Australia has advised that it is seeking to understand whether non-threshold genotoxic carcinogens (NTGCs) are present in Australian workplaces, in what quantities, and for what purpose.

NTGCs are carcinogens that can cause cancer by interfering with normal body processes and altering DNA. No safe exposure level or dose can be established for NTGCs based on current scientific knowledge. Any exposure poses a risk of cancer.

The review of the Workplace exposure standards for airborne contaminants identified 33 chemicals as NTGCs with evidence of use in Australian workplaces.

Further information is sought from stakeholders to inform decisions around how NTGCs should be regulated to protect workers from exposure to these carcinogens.

Safe Work Australia would like to hear from stakeholders to learn:

- which NTGCs are used in Australian workplaces
- the quantity of each NTGC in the workplace
- how they are currently used, including the industries and processes, and
- the control measures currently in place to minimise the risks to workers from exposure to NTGCs.

We are also seeking stakeholder feedback on the current regulatory requirements in place under the model WHS laws to protect workers from exposure to carcinogens in Australian workplaces.



Safe Work Australia will use the consultation responses to inform further consideration of options under the model WHS laws to better protect workers from exposure to NTGCs.

To share your views, complete the survey on Safe Work Australia's online consultation platform **Engage by 11:59 pm (AEST) Friday 8 September 2023.**

[READ MORE HERE](#)

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## 17. SAFEWORK NSW - ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN CONSTRUCTION COMPLIANCE PROGRAM



SafeWork NSW advised in its latest Construction Information, that SafeWork inspectors have been targeting electrical safety on construction sites since February, and so far have visited more than 260 construction sites to talk with principal contractors, site supervisors and workers about how to work safely with and around electricity.

As part of these visits, inspectors have issued 312 improvement notices, 56 prohibition notices and 15 fines totalling \$42,192.

The areas of concern relating to high non-compliance observed by Inspectors were around electrical installation, inspection, testing, overhead and underground electrical lines. Inspectors have also issued a significant number of falls and scaffolding notices for infringements found on construction site visits.

For more information on how to work safely with and around electricity, see the SafeWork webpage - [ELECTRICAL SAFETY WEB PAGE](#).

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## 18. VIC AGENCIES ISSUE SOLAR WARNING



Electrical Comms Data reports in its 23 May 2023 edition that [Energy Safe Victoria and Solar Victoria](#) are alerting Victorians to the importance of getting their solar photovoltaic (PV) systems serviced every two years.

The article states, "There are currently more than 655,000 solar PV systems installed across Victoria with 53,000 installed in 2022.

Last year, the two agencies launched the 'Show Your Solar Some Love' campaign, highlighting the risk of solar PV system fire and/or failure when not serviced regularly by a licensed A-Grade electrician.

Hot and cold temperatures, wind, rain and other extreme weather events can cause damage and wear to solar PV installations. Servicing mitigates this risk, ensuring they are working safely and efficiently.

In 2022, Energy Safe investigated 44 solar PV system fires, the majority of which occurred in systems that had not been serviced within the previous two years.

Energy Safe audits have found a major cause of solar PV system fires was moisture impacting DC isolators — a switch that stops electricity flowing through the system in emergency situations.

Fewer than half of Victorians are aware of the importance of servicing their solar PV systems, according to Victorian Government research.



Servicing involves electrical testing of the components that make up a solar panel system, as well as a thorough visual inspection to ensure the integrity of equipment and cabling.

It also includes the clearing of debris or leaf litter under the solar panels and around the inverter.

The agencies cautioned against using the services of so-called cottage industries — unlicensed workers offering solar cleaning or maintenance.

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## 19. VICTORIA COMES UNDER PRESSURE TO BAN NEW HOME GAS CONNECTIONS



Rachel Williamson, a science and business journalist, in *Renew Economy*, 14 June 2023 that Pressure is building on Victoria to ramp up its action on phasing out gas use. This is after the energy minister expressed concern last week about companies [trying to induce consumers to switch from electric appliances to gas](#).

The article states, “The Victorian Greens want a ban on gas companies using “predatory behaviour and bribes” to push Victorians into switching to gas, but the political will to introduce an [ACT-like ban on gas connections to new buildings](#) is lacking, say experts.

The state with the largest number of gas connections in the country needs more comprehensive action to start a gas transition, says Victoria Energy Policy Centre head Bruce Mountain.

“Victoria’s got a big gas problem, bigger than the other states, because gas is a big part of our space and water heating. It’s going to require a concerted effort by the government to get people to switch out of gas into electricity,” he told *RenewEconomy*.

“There are fairly large capital outlays that need to be made, and unless the government orchestrates a transition it’s going to happen very slowly. It’s going to require policy action.”

Banning [gas connections to new homes](#) could easily be achieved, but requires a government willing to get tough on the issue, Mountain says.

The recent state budget ended the Home Heating and Cooling Upgrades program that helped renters and low-income households to switch from gas to efficient electric heaters, but retains programs to incentivise electric water heaters and efficient gas and electric heating.

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## 20. KEEPING THE SOLAR TRAFFIC SAFE



EnergyInsider a joint publication of Energy Networks Australia (ENA) and Australian Energy Council (AEC) reports in its 15 June 2023 of the need to consider safeguarding solar traffic.

The article states, “Until recently, the management of solar PV exports into the grid was a bit like allowing drivers on the road without teaching them the road rules. This can work for a while, but once traffic gets busy, following rules becomes critical to avoid snarls and crashes. This keeps traffic - in this case

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electrons - moving and people safe. It's time that we got a rulebook for solar PV in Australia – and one distribution network is leading the charge.

If we imagine the grid as a road network and the electricity that travels through it as tiny cars on a highway, it can start to make a bit of sense to people who are unfamiliar with the complexities of electrical engineering.

A lack of rules isn't a huge problem when there aren't that many cars on the road, but once traffic grows, the need for signals, marked lanes and road rules becomes critical to safety.

As electricity networks, we're finding that many of our "roads" (poles and wires) are getting congested as customers increasingly become power generators through their solar PV. To manage this, we either need to build a lot more poles and wires (which is expensive for customers and not efficient), or we must regulate and manage the "traffic".

I've previously talked about some of these ways ([through the use of technical standards for solar inverters](#)), but once we use words like "volt/var settings" or "anti-island" people's eye start to glaze over. This also happens to people who work in the industry, which can make the issue easy to dismiss as someone else's problem to solve.

What we really need is to start talking about how we build a broader social understanding, [a who does what, if you will](#).

## COMPLIANCE

Up until now compliance has mostly been applied to make sure our customers and the people who work in energy are safe.

This is why you see many of the technical standards and most of the technical regulatory bodies that exist look at things through a lens of safety. Is it safe? Yes or no.

However, as the transition picks up pace, the industry must face the fact that the management of our energy system isn't just the problem for utilities and market bodies. It involves everyone in a system increasingly dominated by distributed energy resources through our connection to the shared network. We all need to contribute a little bit to make the whole things work. As they say, many hands make light work.

Back in 2020 I wrote an article [about "back-stop"](#), the process by which solar export is curtailed to help keep the lights on. Yes, it was unpopular to some at the time it was introduced, but it has more than proven its worth, helping [keep the SA grid stable through multiple storm events](#). I think time has told us that the early fears around its use are unfounded.

## THERE IS A WAY

But what if we could have our cake and eat it too? What if we could make it easy for people to do the right thing (whatever that means for each of us) and enjoy the benefits? Once again, our friends in South Australia might have some notes we can copy.

In collaboration with the SA Department of Energy and Mining (DEM), SA Power Networks (SAPN) has addressed the challenge of [compliance head-on in a way that clarifies roles, makes it simple for installers and maximises the benefits to customers](#). It sounds almost too good to be true, but this is the culmination of almost a decade of effort to make sure SA continues to enjoy safe, efficient, renewable and reliable power now and into the future.

## [READ MORE HERE](#)

For more, contact [Dor Son Tan](#), Energy Networks Australia

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