
NSW UE ITAB News Service 128 – NCVER Apprentice employment outcome strong, NSW Fee-Free TAFE surges, Survey - Hydrogen initiative, Employer Survey - Future workforce training, Report Released – Parliamentary report on perceptions of VET, Leveraging AI in teaching and learning, ASQA April 2024 news, JSA - Online March job adverts held steady, Australian Training Awards nominations open, Smart & Skilled Update April 2024, PSO – Insights Update and TAG schedule of workshops, New professional engineers practice standard, Future made in Australia, Electrical company fined \$150,000, Electrical licensing disciplinary action, Sparkie fined \$10,000 live switchboard in classroom, Electrical Safety Incidents - Feb 2024, SafeWork NSW cracking down on unsafe rooftop solar installation and safety warning to prevent battery fires, Waratah super battery gets green light, Sole Trader turnover - worst in two years, Better solar panel recycling centres needed, Solar report - First Quarter 2024.

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

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 3. [SURVEY - ENERTRAIN AND NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HYDROGEN INITIATIVE](#)
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1. NCVER - APPRENTICE AND TRAINEE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES REMAIN STRONG



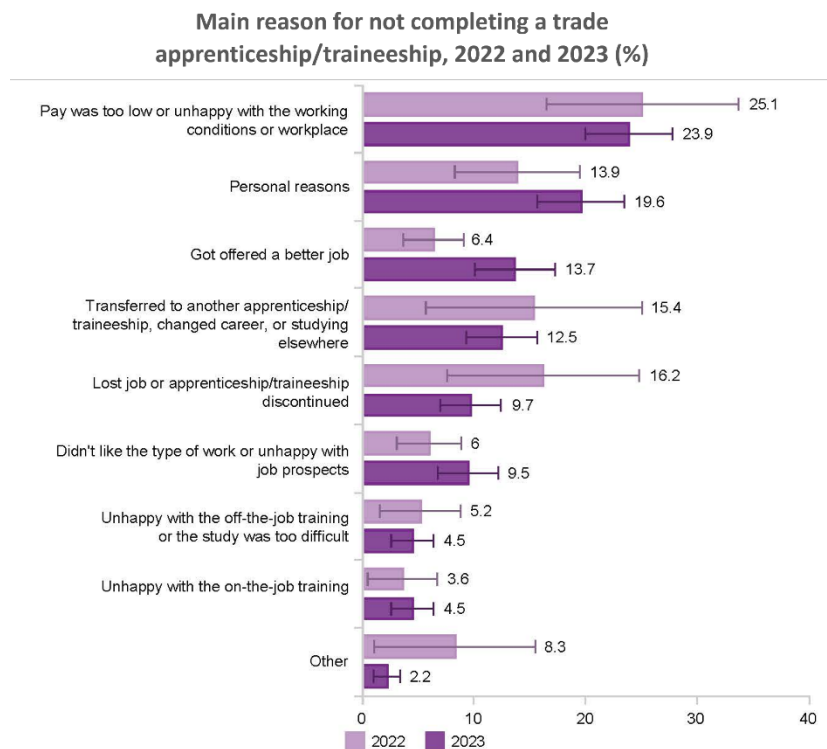
In 2023, a significant number of trade apprentices and trainees found employment upon completing their training, as revealed by a newly published NCVER report.

The Apprentice and Trainee Outcomes 2023 report indicates that 95.6% of those who finished their training in a trade occupation secured employment afterward, mirroring the figures from 2022.

The NCVER Report states, “Most trade completers (70.3%) stayed with the same employer they had during their apprenticeship or traineeship. For those who changed employers, 28.0% cited the main reason was they were offered a better job.

Trade completers reported high levels of satisfaction with skills learnt on the job (91.4%) and with off-the-job training overall (86.4%).

Of those who cancelled or withdrew from a trade apprenticeship or traineeship, 68.3% cited an employment-related reason as the contributing factor. Common reasons included ‘the pay was too low’ or they were ‘unhappy with the workplace or conditions’ and ‘they were offered a better job after training’.



Note: The figure presents summarised groupings of the main reasons.

Apprentices and trainees who completed training in a non-trade occupation also experienced a high level of employment after training (89.7%) and high levels of satisfaction with the skills learnt on-the-job (88.9%) and off-the-job training overall (88.3%).

Main reason trade completers and non-completers changed employers, 2022 and 2023 (%)

Reason	Trade completers		Trade non-completers	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Got offered a better job	29.3 (5.2)	28.0 (2.4)	24.0 (9.0)	19.1 (3.7)
The pay was too low	9.3 (1.7)	11.9 (1.7)	10.9 (5.9)	10.6 (2.7)
Broaden knowledge and skills	12.3 (5.6)	9.1 (1.4)	0.5 (0.4)	3.5 (1.4)
Poor working conditions	8.6 (1.7)	8.8 (1.4)	8.6 (3.7)	9.5 (2.3)
Moved	5.4 (1.3)	7.5 (1.4)	1.5 (0.8)	3.1 (1.5)
Employment not continued at the end of my training contract	5.4 (1.3)	6.4 (2.0)	0.5 (0.4)	1.4 (1.0)
I didn't get on with my boss or other people at work	5.0 (1.2)	4.5 (1.0)	13.8 (5.5)	12.2 (3.3)
For a change/to try a different career	5.6 (1.3)	4.5 (1.0)	6.5 (5.4)	8.0 (2.6)
I lost my job/was made redundant	3.0 (0.9)	3.9 (1.6)	9.0 (4.3)	8.7 (3.0)
Family reasons	2.1 (0.8)	2.9 (1.6)	2.1 (2.3)	3.6 (2.0)

Note: The table is based on trade completers and non-completers who were employed with a different employer after training. The margin of error is shown in brackets for each survey estimate in the table.

...

Those who completed a trade apprenticeship or traineeship in the following occupations had the highest proportions employed after training in the same occupation as their apprenticeship or traineeship:

- Electrotechnology and Telecommunications Trades Workers (84.7%)
- Construction Trades Workers (84.1%)
- Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers (79.4%).”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

2. FEE-FREE TAFE SURGES IN NSW



Tafe Directors Australia (TDA) reports in its 15 April 2024 edition of its Newsletter, that there were more students enrolled in fee-free TAFE in NSW last year than was initially forecast for the entire country, according to the latest figures.

The article states, “The Minister for Skills and Training Brendan O’Connor said new figures show that 182,124 people in NSW enrolled in fee-free TAFE in 2023, easily surpassing the initial first-year target.

When rolled out in 2023, the target for fee-free TAFE across Australia was 180,000 students. Mr O’Connor said that, nationally, the numbers have effectively doubled.

Mr O’Connor said that in NSW, as at December, there had been 34,630 enrolments in the care sector, 9,651 in technology and digital, and 8,728 in construction.

He said that extra effort was going into improved data collection, “to make sure we are tracking, not only people enrolling but then completing and then getting a job in the sector that they've acquired the skill.”

An extra \$414 in Commonwealth funding is being provided over 2024-26 to fund the delivery of a further 300,000 fee-free places.”

The Minister went on to declare, “Priority groups were strongly represented with the enrolment of 62,925 job seekers, nearly 10,000 people with disability and more than 15,154 First Nations people.

118,620 enrolments were women and students from regional and remote areas numbered more than 70,000.

Almost 50,000 people in New South Wales who speak a language other than English at home also took advantage of Fee-Free TAFE.

Fee-Free TAFE provides big savings for students.

A student studying to become an early childhood educator or undertaking a Certificate III in School Based Education and Support need not find \$1,600 in course fees, similarly someone undertaking a Certificate IV in Accounting and Bookkeeping wouldn’t need to pay almost \$2,000 in course fees.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

3. SURVEY - ENERTRAIN AND NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HYDROGEN INITIATIVE



EnerTrain, leading provider of quality training in the energy industry, specifically gas, advises that the NSW Department of Education (Training Service NSW) is supporting EnerTrain in a project to develop cutting-edge training and assessment materials for the UEGSS00013 - Basic Hydrogen Safety Skill Set, from the UEG Gas Industry Training Package.

In undertaking the project EnerTrain is seeking industry feedback into the development of training and assessment materials for the Skill Set. This initiative will result in the UEGSS00013 Skill Set being made available to employers across Australia. It is anticipated the approach will be a blended delivery mode that will enable it to be delivered at employers’ worksites nationally. EnerTrain will also look to deliver this skill set at their training centre in Ferntree Gully VIC.

This exciting collaboration between Government and small business is all about equipping workers with crucial skills and knowledge for safe hydrogen handling and operations, aligning with the latest industry standards and practices. This is a crucial part of Australia’s clean energy transition and EnerTrain are proud to be leading the charge with this skills development initiative. Over the coming weeks, we will be visiting various Hydrogen hubs and meeting with employers of various industries who work with Hydrogen.

EnerTrain is keen to actively engage further with key industry stakeholders interested in contributing their insights on safe hydrogen handling practices in their workplaces, by inviting them to complete a survey as an initial step in this collaborative process.

Completing the survey will take approximately 10 mins and will ensure stakeholder needs are considered in the development phase of the training product.

Please complete the survey - [EnerTrain Survey](#)

EnerTrain provides assurance that all responses will be kept completely confidential and used solely for the purpose of contextualising and enhancing our training materials.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact them via email (jason@enertrain.com.au), or on 0406 200 524.

For more information visit: www.enertrain.com.au

4. EMPLOYER SURVEY - CLEAN ENERGY SECTOR, FUTURE WORKFORCE TRAINING



Training Services NSW is seeking feedback from employers on workforce needs, skills and training gaps related to the Clean Energy sector.

In this regard, Training Services NSW are gathering information from businesses connected with NSW's transition to Clean Energy in particular in relation to workforce needs, skills and training gaps, now and into the future.

The Clean Energy sector may include but is not limited to the following:

- Solar
- Wind
- Battery manufacture and/or storage
- Hydrogen production
- Other sustainable technologies

The survey aims to help inform how Training Services NSW can support the state's transition to net zero through:

- ✓ identifying gaps in the current Training Market
- ✓ advising on skills required for specific job roles
- ✓ new course design opportunities
- ✓ promotion of school to work awareness

Training Services NSW needs industry's help and guidance to ensure the NSW Training Market is fit-for-purpose in order to develop workers needed for Clean Energy projects.

The NSW UE ITAB encourages employers and related stakeholders with knowledge and expertise in the emerging Clean Energy sector to complete the survey using the link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DY6YHJ9>

Responses by COB 30 April 2024 please.

5. REPORT RELEASED - INQUIRY INTO THE PERCEPTIONS AND STATUS OF VET



The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education, and Training released the report of its inquiry into the perceptions and status of vocational education and training (VET). The Committee commenced its inquiry following a referral from the Minister for Skills and Training, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, on 30 November 2023. The

Committee received 100 submissions. The Committee held fifteen public hearings.

The report presents 34 recommendations produced by the Committee with the aspiration of tackling the negative perceptions surrounding the VET sector while also elevating its quality and accessibility. These encompass:

- Launching promotional campaigns across multiple platforms to advocate for VET and its career prospects to a broad spectrum of audiences.
- Formulating a national strategy for career education in secondary schools.
- Establishing a sturdy framework for the creation, execution, and funding of microcredentials.
- Enhancing the quality and accessibility of facilities and support systems accessible to both VET students and faculty.
- Mapping out a clear pathway towards a fully integrated tertiary education system.

The Committee's report draws insights from and aligns with the findings, suggestions, and actions undertaken in various inquiries and reform initiatives, such as the Employment White Paper, National Skills Agreement, and Australian Universities Accord. It's necessary to consider the Committee's findings and recommendations within the context of these ongoing developments.

FINDINGS:

- In 2022, there were 4.5 million students enrolled in nationally recognised vocational education and training (VET). This represents around 25 per cent of the population aged between 15 and 64 years, and a five per cent increase in student numbers compared to the previous year.
- The VET sector is central to ensuring access to secure work, enabling employers to obtain the skills they need to run and expand their businesses, and to building Australia's skilled workforce.
- For students in the sector, VET provides a viable pathway to employment, a fulfilling career, and economic security.
- Despite the growth in numbers of VET students over time and increasing recognition that VET is a key contributor to skills and workforce development, research suggests that negative perceptions of VET sector persist.
- The sector is often considered less valuable than higher education and is not a pathway of choice for secondary school students considering their post-school options.
- These perceptions are driven by a poor understanding of VET and the opportunities it offers, the attitudes and beliefs of key influencers such as parents and friends, and a society which values and prioritises higher education.

- As Australia faces a significant skills and labour shortage across many sectors of the economy, it is imperative that more students pursue VET to fill these emerging gaps.

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

The inquiry will focus on the Commonwealth Skills and Training portfolio and include consideration of:

- 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;
- 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;
- 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
- Commonwealth programs which could influence the above, and intersections with state and territory, industry, and philanthropic efforts, including any structural barriers to improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee developed 34 recommendations, too long to restate here, but worthy of a quick review. The National Careers Institute did not fare well in the findings and recommendations were made to overhaul it.

It is an interesting report full of platitudes and motherhood statements. Hopefully, some of the recommendations may see the light of day. But, given past history of these forms of Committee reports the tend to collect dust on shelves and the Committee members can pat themselves on the back for doing a great job and getting the relevant reward for participating in the committee workings and deliberations.

Notwithstanding, worthy of a review as it largely validates the perceptions of VET, which have been known for some time.

READ MORE OR DOWNLOAD a copy of the Report - [HERE](#)

6. CHATGPT - LEVERAGING AI TO SUPPORT PERSONALISED TEACHING AND LEARNING



An article from ProLiteracy in 2023, based in Syracuse, New York, concerning Artificial Intelligence in teaching and learning, has sparked discussions in education due to its conversational prowess and multifaceted uses, such as language translation and text generation.

Excerpts from the publication discuss ChatGPT, an AI-driven chatbot, and its impact on education. “ChatGPT [Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer], a chatbot powered by artificial intelligence (AI), is generating a pointed debate in education and beyond. ChatGPT was developed by OpenAI, an AI research and deployment company, and launched in late 2022.

The app is designed to sound conversational and generate written responses to typed prompts. The language model is based on a kind of machine learning that allows it to process information from a diverse range of texts, from online articles to spoken conversations. It can be used for a variety of natural language processing tasks, including language translation, text creation, and summarisation.

Several concerns have been raised related to individual data privacy and security. OpenAI offers no procedures for individuals to check whether ChatGPT stores their personal information or a way to delete it (Gal, 2023). Another limitation is the literacy level needed to access content which tends to generate text at a level equivalent to that of a highly educated speaker. It is important to note, however, that educators can request for information to be generated in plain language, at a specific grade level, or even for English learners.



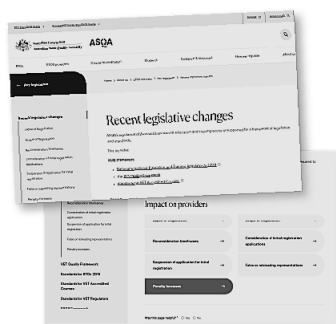
ChatGPT presents a unique opportunity for adult educators to explore AI as a mechanism for skill-building across multiple literacies. Research shows that information literacy, the skills and abilities to navigate and find information online that is accurate and verified (American Library Association, n.d.), is significantly associated with the ability to identify fake news (JonesJang et al., 2021).

While banning AI technology for a time might mitigate the risks of spreading misinformation, an arguably more dire risk is the missed opportunity to introduce AI tools in an educational environment and facilitate critical conversations around their use and credibility.

Rather than block access to AI technology, which may generate false and biased information, educators should use it to support adult learners in developing the literacy skills and digital resilience needed to find, interpret, and make meaning (World Education, 2022).”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

7. ASQA IQ – APRIL 2024 NEWS IS OUT NOW



The latest April 2024 edition of ASQA IQ – Integrity and Quality is out now. In this edition ASQA focuses on:

- key considerations when purchasing training and assessment resources.
 - employing skilled trainers.
 - conducting effective industry engagement.
 - reviewing evidence of competency as part of the recognition of prior learning process.
- developing training and assessment strategies for different student cohorts.

ASQA also provides information on the bill to amend the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act, and the 2024 ASQA Provider and Course Owner Survey.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

8. JSA REPORTS ONLINE JOB ADVERTISEMENTS HELD STEADY LAST MONTH



Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) reports in its Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) for March 2024 that the period of record growth in advertisements following the COVID-19 pandemic is ending. Vacancy numbers decreased in eight of the past twelve months. Despite this, vacancy numbers remain strong, with around 50% more advertisements in the labour market compared to 2019.

The March seasonally adjusted terms, online job advertisements increased by 0.2% or 400, to 249,000 showing vacancy numbers were up marginally in most states and territories and skill level groups.

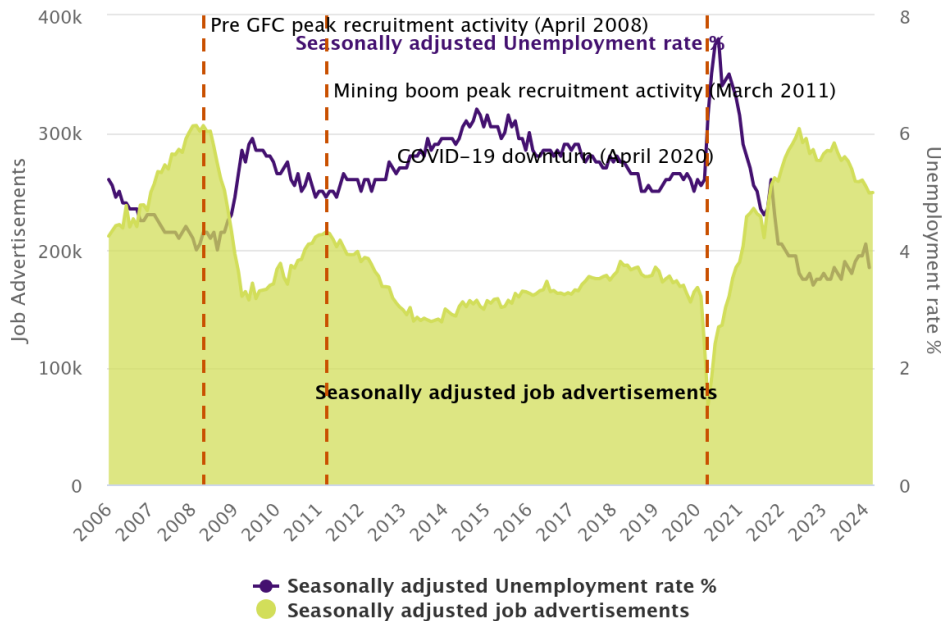
The report states, “Among the major occupation groups, increases were recorded for Community and Personal Service Workers, Machinery Operators and Drivers, Clerical and Administrative Workers and Sales Workers.

Job advertisements decreased the most in capital cities over the year, down by 9.9%, compared to an 8.0% decrease in regional Australia.

The monthly Vacancy Report includes spotlights on key facets of the Australian labour market. These bring together the wider breadth of data produced by Jobs and Skills Australia and our external stakeholders to provide an overarching summary of a particular labour market segment.

This month’s report is **Cleaning House: Does declining demand for Domestic Cleaners have the potential to exacerbate disadvantage for some workers?**

Headline and detailed results for occupations, skill level groups and regions are also available in the Vacancy Report.



Download the [Vacancy Report - March 2024](#) - Jobs and Skills Australia - [HERE](#)

9. AUSTRALIAN TRAINING AWARDS NOMINATIONS OPEN



A reminder that nominations are now open for the 2024 Australian Training Awards. The Awards recognise outstanding achievement in the vocational education and training (VET) sector.

Winners from each state and territory training awards compete for a national award in eleven categories.

The 2024 Awards will honour 16 recipients.

And nominations are now open in five direct entry categories:

- [Outstanding Achievement in the VET and Skills Sector Award](#)
- [Australian Apprenticeships Employer Award](#)
- [Innovation in VET Award](#)
- [School Pathways to VET Award](#)
- [Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice Award](#)

The Australian Training Awards are the peak national awards for VET, showcasing best practice and promoting the benefits of this essential sector.

Nominations for the 2024 Australian Training Awards **close on Friday 31 May**.

Nominations to the 2024 direct entry categories for the Australian Training Awards are now open.

[APPLY NOW](#)

10. SMART & SKILLED UPDATE – NO 228 APR 2024



Training Services NSW has published the latest Smart and Skilled Update, No. 228 for **APRIL 2024** ([DOWNLOAD A COPY HERE](#)).

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 latest Smart and Skilled Update covers the following:

1. NSW VET Review Interim Report released

The [NSW VET Review Interim Report](#) is now available. The NSW Government asked the independent panel to focus the interim report on TAFE NSW. The report recognises that Smart and Skilled providers remain an integral part of the delivery of diverse training that supports reskilling of the workforce across the state and helps address skills shortages.

The panel has outlined seven recommendations including crafting a TAFE Charter and revising the TAFE operating model.

The department is managing Financial Caps carefully, in consideration of the changing budget environment.

Find out how to access funding for vocational education and training that gives people workplace skills in high demand industries. Learn about Smart and Skilled and other government programs in NSW. 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. POWERING SKILLS ORGANISATION – INSIGHTS UPDATE



Powering Skills Organisation (PSO) will be holding its next Insights Update on **Friday, 3 May 2024**.

If you have not registered yet, this is a reminder to register for the virtual upcoming event on **Friday, May 3rd, 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM (AEDT)**.

Join PSO for an engaging session by registering via the link below.

During the Insights Update, PSO staff will be sharing all of the latest developments at Powering Skills Organisation. From recent initiatives to ongoing plans and the tangible outcomes PSO has achieved, they'll be providing a comprehensive overview.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to stay informed about the organisation's endeavours and actively engage in discussions about the industry and PSO's future.

This session will be both informative and collaborative, and PSO will highly value your participation. Please follow the link below to register your attendance at this event.

PSO appreciates your ongoing support and collaboration, and they look forward to seeing you at the meeting to learn more the developments within Powering Skills Organisation.

REGISTER NOW

For more information visit their website at: <https://poweringskills.com.au/>.

11.1. REGISTER TO PARTICIPATE IN UE TRAINING PACKAGE TAG WORKSHOPS




PSOs Technical Advisory Skills Group (TAG) next session of technical Workshops are scheduled for May 2024. The workshops focus on resolving key issues and questions regarding Australia's energy sector (UE - UEE, UET, UEP and UEG) Training Packages.


These workshops aim to foster collaboration and generate actionable insights that will help shape our training package for energy professionals. Your input will be instrumental in ensuring that the training materials are comprehensive and relevant to current industry needs.

Stakeholder expertise and insights is available to members of the TAGs. They are an invaluable mechanism for input and active participation is welcomed.

If you haven't already, please register your attendance by clicking on the specific TAG Training Package Workshop that you would like to attend.




UET Transmission
Distribution and Rail Sector
Training Package Workshop

Monday 20th May 2024
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (AEST) 



UEP Electricity Supply
Industry - Generation Sector
Training Package Workshop

Monday 20th May 2024
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (AEST) 



UEE Electrotechnology -
Heating ventilation, Air
conditioning, Refrigeration
Training Package Workshop

Tuesday 21st May 2024
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (AEST) 




UEE Electrotechnology -
Extra Low Voltage Training
Package Workshop

Wednesday 22nd May 2024
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (AEST) 



UEE Electrotechnology -
General Electrical and
Contracting Training
Package Workshop

Thursday 23rd May 2024
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (AEST) 



UEG Gas Industry
Training Package Workshop

Thursday 23rd May 2024
3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (AEST) 

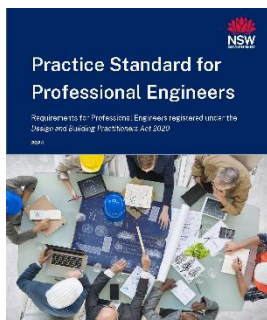


UEE Electrotechnology -
Specialist Electrical Training
Package Workshop

Friday 24th May 2024
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (AEST) 

For more information visit:
[https://poweringskills.com.au/technical-
advisory-groups/](https://poweringskills.com.au/technical-advisory-groups/)

12. GET READY - NEW PRACTICE STANDARD FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS



The NSW Building Commission has released a new practice standard for Professional Engineers (practice standard).

The Commission states in its April 2024 circular that, “The Practice Standard for Professional Engineers applies to all NSW registered professional engineers. It sets clear behavioural and work standards for engineers carrying out professional engineering work under the Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020.

The following applies:

- From 1 September 2024, compliance with the new practice standard will become a mandatory condition of professional engineer registration. Failure to comply with the practice standard from this time will attract enforcement action and penalties, including possible cancellation of registration.
- In the lead up to the practice standard becoming a mandatory condition of registration, Building Commission NSW inspectors will use the new practice standard during audits of professional engineering work to support industry and engineering practitioners to understand their new obligations.

Engineers are encouraged to make appropriate adjustments to work practices to ensure they can confidently meet the obligations under the practice standard by 1 September 2024.”

Compliance with this Practice Standard is a condition of registration for all Professional Engineers registered under the DBP Act, which includes:

- Civil engineering
- Electrical engineering
- Fire safety engineering
- Geotechnical engineering
- Mechanical engineering
- Structural engineering

[READ MORE HERE – DOWNLOAD A COPY OF THE PRACTICE STANDARD](#)

13. A FUTURE MADE IN AUSTRALIA



Editor, Sandra Rossi reports in the 12 April 2024 edition of Climate Control News (CCN) of the Prime Minister Anthony Albanese’s unveiling of a vision for a future Made in Australia.

The vision includes investing in advanced manufacturing and renewables as well as upskilling the nation’s workforce to seize the opportunities of the next decade.

The article states, “At the centre of this ambitious plan is a \$15 billion National Construction Fund to broaden and diversify the Australian economy.

The fund's focus is on transforming Australia into a clean energy superpower with \$1 billion dedicated to advanced manufacturing.

This investment will create new capabilities and opportunities to innovate in transport, defence, resources, food processing, renewables and low emission technologies manufacturing.

It also includes an Australian Skills Guarantee to give apprentices, trainees and cadets a foot in the door when it comes to working on major Commonwealth projects.

This means one in 10 jobs on federally funded projects will go to apprentices and trainees.

Albanese said the plan will be supported by the introduction of the Future Made in Australia Act which will be introduced to parliament in coming months.

The legislation will provide a coordinated response to build a more competitive renewable energy industry, create new job opportunities, and ultimately set Australia up for future economic success.

Albanese said the first four years of this decade have tested the resilience of the national economy.

This includes floods, bushfires, a global pandemic and the most significant international energy crisis in 50 years which has led to profound economic consequences on supply chains, energy prices, inflation and interest rates."

[READ MORE HERE](#)

14. COMPANY FINED \$150,000 FOR FAILING TO ADHERE TO ELECTRICAL SAFETY REGULATIONS



Queensland's Electrical Safety Office reports in its 28 March 2024 eSafe Electrical new service of a significant sentence handed down by the Cleveland Magistrates Court, following an incident where a worker was electrocuted due to a company's failure to adhere to safety duties.

The article states, "The defendant, a company specialising in air-conditioner installations, was found guilty of failing to comply with an electrical safety duty, exposing individuals to the risk of death or serious injury. This violation was connected to an incident at a veterinary clinic in Capalaba where the company was contracted to replace an air-conditioning unit.

In September 2020, a long-standing employee who had worked for the company for 15 years lost his life while installing an air-conditioner. The worker's electrical licence had expired, and the job required installation work including relocating isolators on the air-conditioners.

The magistrate presiding over the sentencing, emphasised the defendant's failure to manage electrical risks and the profound impact on the deceased worker's family. The court acknowledged the steps undertaken by the defendant post-incident to improve safety procedures, including the engagement of a third-party consultant for a comprehensive safety review.

The defendant was fined \$150,000, with additional costs of \$1,500 and a filing fee of \$101.40. No conviction was recorded."

[READ MORE HERE](#)

15. ELECTRICAL LICENSING DISCIPLINARY ACTION



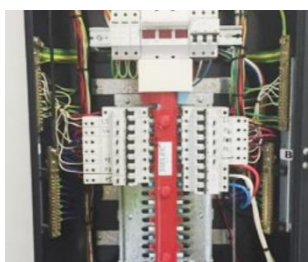
Queensland's Electrical Safety Office also reported in its 28 March 2024 eSafe Electrical new service of the disciplinary actions taken by the Electrical Licensing Committee against eight licence holders.

The following are passageways of several of the incidents:

- An electrical worker performing and supervising electrical work including the connection of a sub-main conductor between the main switch board (MSB) and the shed sub-board at a domestic property. ... This failure resulted in a person receiving electric shocks when contact was made with the conductive parts of the shed while simultaneously being in contact with the ground.
- An electrical worker was performing RCD testing of a newly installed energised emergency light fitting at a commercial location. ... This action resulted in a third-year electrical apprentice receiving an electric shock when contact was made with the energised parts of a light fitting undergoing testing.
- An electrical worker was engaged to install a large commercial PV solar system. ... As a result of this failure the electrical worker received an electric shock when simultaneous contact was made with an energised exposed part and the installation earth bar.
- An electrical worker was carrying out work at a domestic property involving the supply and installation of new consumer's mains, a main switchboard, and a 6.6 KW PV solar system. ... As a result of this failure, an electrical apprentice received an electric shock when contact was made with the exposed energised service line active conductor and the metallic riser bracket.
- An electrical contractor was engaged to perform electrical work including the supply and installation of new consumer's mains, main switchboard, and a 6.6 KW PV solar system at a domestic property. ... As a result of this failure, an electrical apprentice received an electric shock when contact was made with the exposed energised service line active conductor and the metallic riser bracket.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

16. SPARKIE FINED \$10,000 FOR LIVE SWITCHBOARD IN SUNSHINE COAST CLASSROOM



Queensland's Electrical Safety Office had a serious report in its 26 February 2024 eSafe Electrical new service of an electrician being fined \$10,000 after leaving a live switchboard exposed in a classroom placing students who were present at significant risk.

The article states, "At the time of the offence, the defendant was working as an electrical contractor hired to install air conditioning units at a Sunshine Coast school.

The contractor had been instructed to cease work in one of the temporary classrooms, but he ignored the instruction and started live testing on the switchboard inside.

He left the live switchboard with the escutcheon panel removed and live terminals exposed and unattended for a short period of time.

QBuild officers who were at the school at the same time saw the switchboard open and reported the offence to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.

The defendant pleaded guilty to offences under the Electrical Safety Act including failing to conduct his business in a way that was electrically safe and exposing individuals to risk of death or injury.

The presiding magistrate noted this was a serious offence as school children who are “naturally inquisitive” and “unpredictable beings” could easily have been exposed to risk.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

17. ELECTRICAL SAFETY INCIDENTS - FEB 2024 – SHARING THE KNOWLEDGE



The NSW UE ITAB is fortunate again this month to be provided with the latest electrical incident reports from BlueScope Steel. As stated in previous News Services, the NSW UE ITAB has received permission from BlueScope Steel to share the information.

The aim is to help RTOs and industry practitioners have available, real case studies of electrical incidents that have occurred in workplaces and which they can showcase and use in their programs or safety moments to highlight findings and experience, and discuss possible issues, responses or solutions.

The NSW UE ITAB again, sincerely thanks BlueScope Steel for their permission, and advises RTOs and industry practitioners to ensure they recognise and acknowledge attribution to BlueScope for sharing this information and treat the information for educational purposes only.

As we receive the incident reports, we will continue to share them accordingly.

For this News Service we have a Blue Scope Steel reports covering the month of **February 2024**:

- **Download the February 2024 report - [FEBRUARY 2024 REPORT HERE](#)**

For more information and BlueScope contact details please refer to the undersigned for more information. Again, a sincere thanks to BlueScope.

18. SAFEWORK NSW CRACKING DOWN ON UNSAFE ROOFTOP SOLAR INSTALLATION



SafeWork NSW announced in its March edition of SafeWork Wrap Up a crackdown on unsafe rooftop solar installation.

The article states, “Over the next six months, SafeWork NSW inspectors will be visiting worksites, checking the safety of rooftop solar installations.

Inspectors will be focusing on unsafe work practices and issuing on-the-spot fines for employers who put workers’ lives at risk.

In a similar operation in 2022, inspectors noted high levels of non-compliance, with 54 per cent of sites not having adequate fall prevention systems in place. With falls being the number one

cause of traumatic injury on construction sites, the industry must make it a priority to improve safety and provide adequate systems to protect workers.

A key misconception in the industry is that it is acceptable to use lower order controls such as a fall arrest system or harnesses. However, these should only be used as a last resort.

...

Solar safety resources

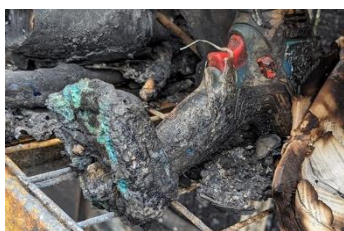
Solar retailers and sub-contracted solar installers have shared and specific work health and safety obligations that cannot be transferred.

To help them understand their work health and safety obligations, we have created the [Solar retailer safety toolkit](#), including the:

- [Fall protection assessment template](#)
- [Know your solar installers template.](#)

[READ MORE HERE](#)

19. SAFEWORK NSW SAFETY WARNING - PREVENT BATTERY FIRES WHEN USING OR CHARGING



SafeWork NSW announced in its March edition of SafeWork Wrap Up also included an article related to the prevention of fires from charging or using lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries.

The article states, “If you charge or use lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries in your workplace or at home, make sure you know about the dangers and how to avoid them.

The use of Li-ion is becoming increasingly common in the workplace, with a wide range of uses including e-bikes, electric vehicles, smartphones, laptops, portable power packs and power tools.

There are many benefits to using Li-ion batteries, but there are situations that can lead to Li-ion batteries catching fire. These include:

- overcharging or use of non-compliant charging equipment
- overheating or exposure to heat or extreme temperatures
- physical damage (e.g., dropping, crushing, piercing, and/or vibrations)
- short-circuiting, battery cell malfunctions or system faults
- defects or contamination introduced during manufacture.

When Li-ion batteries fail they can undergo thermal runaway which can lead to an intense, self-sustaining fire that can be difficult to extinguish.”

Inspect your equipment and charger regularly and charge your equipment safely.

[Review your risk assessments](#) and consider Li-ion batteries used within your workplace.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

20. WARATAH SUPER BATTERY GETS TECHNICAL GREEN LIGHT FROM MARKET OPERATOR



EnergyCo's 18th April 2024 newsletter Powering NSW reports that the Waratah Super Battery has cleared another important milestone as it moves steadily towards completion.

The article states, "The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) has granted Generator Performance Standard (GPS) approval for the project, which is critical for the State's energy security.

This marks the first such approval for such a large battery energy storage project, paving the way for other 'super batteries' in Australia's National Electricity Market.

The Waratah Super Battery project is on track to be fully operational by August 2025.



Watch the video

GPS approval represents a pivotal and complex milestone for any generation project in Australia.

It sets the performance standards that generators and storage projects must meet to ensure stability and reliability of the electrical grid.

Compliance with these standards helps prevent disruptions and ensures smooth integration into existing energy infrastructure.

The successful GPS approval for the Waratah Super Battery eliminates one of the most substantial technical barriers for the project, allowing it to participate in the growing energy storage market in Australia.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

21. SOLE TRADER TURNOVER AT ITS WORST IN TWO YEARS



Sam Williams reports in the 12 April 2024 edition of Electrical Connection that sole trader turnover has been found at its worst in two years following the latest report by Henry Sole Trader Pulse.

The article states, "The nationwide survey of self-employed people in Australia, which included consultants, freelancers, contract tradies and healthcare workers, reported revenue decline has outweighed

growth (37%) for the first time since the pandemic. This bucks a two-year trend where sole traders have consistently seen their turnover improve, rather than worsen.

With 50,000 new sole traders expected to enter the sector this year, this group is an essential subsection of our workforce that signals the broader health of the economy. Our data shows us they're doing it tough and feeling the lasting impact of inflation and back-to-back interest rate rises," Henry Australia managing director Karan Anand says.

"The good news is that as economic pressures promise to ease, overall sole trader optimism, whilst modest, is on the rise, with 35% feeling positive about the health of the economy in six months, a jump from 23% in October 2023, and the highest since March 2022."

[READ MORE HERE](#)

22. PV WASTE REPORT- BIGGER AND BETTER SOLAR PANEL RECYCLING CENTRES NEEDED



Electrical Connection reports in a 9 April 2024 article of a new report on solar panel recycling has recommended a raft of measures including the establishment of large waste facilities in five big Australian cities by 2027.

The article states, "The [Scoping study: Solar Panel End-of-Life Management in Australia report](#) from the [Australian Centre of Advanced Photovoltaics](#) (ACAP) which is led by UNSW Sydney, highlights projected cumulative volume of decommissioned panels to reach one million tonnes by 2035.

On an annual basis, that could be as much as 100,000 tonnes of photovoltaic (PV) waste being generated every year by the end of the decade.

The study, commissioned by Neoen Australia, the country's largest renewable energy company, reveals the problem is more pressing than previously thought and contradicts earlier findings that significant volumes of waste would not appear until at least after 2030.

Initially, the majority of waste solar panels are expected to be concentrated in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide – before PV waste starts growing faster in regional and remote areas from 2030 onwards.

The first wave of increased waste is expected to come from decommissioned rooftop solar panels and the report says near-term action is needed to boost the levels of recycling and prevent this waste going into landfill.

Resource recovery

The authors have called for sites in the five major cities to deal with 5,000 to 10,000 tonnes of waste panels per year, with that volume needing to double at each facility in the next six years.

Those metropolitan facilities are predicted to be able to manage over 70% of Australia's solar panel waste, with additional smaller sites in Dubbo/Wellington, Townsville, Newcastle, Murrumbidgee, Central Highlands and Busselton providing a comprehensive nation-wide service."

[READ MORE HERE](#)

23. SOLAR REPORT - FIRST QUARTER 2024



The joint Australian Energy Council and Energy Networks Australia newsletter EnergyInsider of 18 April 2024 reports that by the end of the first quarter this year, solar PV installations had been fitted to more than 3.7 million Australian rooftops with a capacity of 22.58GW, according to the Clean Energy Regulator.

The news article takes a look at the latest installation statistics, and also, other developments with rooftop solar, and the impact utility-scale solar is having on price setting in the National Electricity Market.

The report states in relation to rooftop solar, “The latest data from the Clean Energy Regulator (CER) – updated as of the 29 February 2024 – shows the cumulative total of registered rooftop solar installations in Australia has reached 3,742,601 with a capacity of 22.58 GW. The CER registered a total of 50,975 new installations in the first quarter 2024, which combined, added 508 MW to Australia’s solar Photo Voltaic (PV) fleet.

New South Wales and Queensland continue to lead the way in rooftop solar capacity and installations. New South Wales, with a capacity of 6.232 GW, holds the top spot, closely followed by Queensland with 6.082 GW. In terms of installations, Queensland leads the nation with a total of 1,015,589, while New South Wales follows closely with 963,524 units.” ...

New rooftop solar capacity (bar) and SGUs (line) installed since last report (Jan-24).



Source: Analysis from the AEC with data from CER

In relation to battery installations with rooftop solar, “New South Wales and Victoria continue to top the number of solar installations with batteries. NSW has a new fleet of 1,123 batteries, while Victoria added 1,096 units. Fifty per cent of the total new batteries added in Australia since the last report has come from both Victoria and NSW. They are followed by South Australia, which installed 776 new batteries (18.38 per cent).”

[READ MORE HERE](#)

For more, contact [Aaron Martinez](#), Australian Energy Council

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

For the latest and past News Services visit: www.uensw.com.au/news/

Kind regards
Tony Palladino
Executive Officer
NSW U&E ITAB

Mob: +61 43739 6363

Tel: +61 2 9736 2111

Email: tony@uensw.com.au

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Postal Add: PO Box 335, Concord, NSW 2137

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WEBSITE: Electrical Safety Project: www.esproject.com.au - provides information about improving electrical Safe Work Practice and exemplar Safe Work Procedures (SWPs) for use in training, or adaptation by micro-businesses and self-employed in the utilities and electrotechnology industries.