



NSW UE ITAB News Service 138 – February 2025

Executive Officer Message

Happy Chinese New Year, welcome to the February news service of the NSW Utilities and Electrotechnology ITAB.

This month the ITAB is working for our industries by participating in Power Skills Organisation/ITAB roundtable discussions in Brisbane. HIESN and SIESN meetings, feedback to Training Services NSW on national competency projects for our training package and organising the ITAB conference.



Enjoy the read.

In this newsletter we have an:

[Powering the Future: Pathways to Renewable Skills](#)

[Smart and Skilled update](#)

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[2025 Occupation Shortage List \(OSL\) Stakeholder Survey- Now Open.](#)

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Powering the Future: Pathways to Renewable Skills

The Utilities and Electrotechnology ITAB will host a conference on the **31st of July and 1st August 2025** in the Hunter Valley Gardens in Pokolbin NSW. The conference will provide value insights and opportunities to meet the demand of skilled workers required for net zero by 2050. More details and conference registration information will be available soon. If your organisation is interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact me. We hope to see you there!

Smart and Skilled update:

Review of the NSW Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001

The NSW Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act, 2001 (A&T Act) plays a critical role in supporting the development of a skilled workforce by providing a robust regulatory framework for apprenticeships and traineeships. This review aims to address gaps and modernise the A&T Act to meet evolving industry and workforce demands. Key focus areas include:

Low Completion Rates: Addressing regional challenges and implementing targeted support to improve learner retention and success.

Regulatory Complexity: Simplifying the A&T Act to reduce administrative burdens and enhance compliance, particularly for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Emerging Workforce Needs: Incorporating flexibility to support growing industries such as tech and renewable energy through agile training models.

Gaps in Employer Support: Strengthening provisions to assist SMEs with supervision, compliance, and apprentice retention.

Key themes of the review include:

1. Introducing Standards
2. Regulatory Simplification
3. Promoting Employer Responsibility and Best Practice
4. Reducing Administrative Burden
5. Strengthening Supervision
6. Completion and Retention Strategies
7. Employer Prohibition and Enforcement
8. Prohibition of Employers
9. Duration and Flexibility of Prohibition Orders
10. Publication of Prohibited Employers
11. Employer Prohibition in Multiple Businesses
12. Enforcement Framework
13. Complaints Framework
14. Legal and Regulatory Compliance
15. Standards and Quality
16. Simplifying Regulations
17. Supporting Employers and Learners
18. Workforce Needs and Flexibility
19. Improving Retention and Completion
20. Employer Prohibition and Enforcement
21. Complaints and Enforcement Framework

As the independent body representing the NSW utilities and electrotechnology industry in training to support VET in NSW, the ITAB play a pivotal role in ensuring industry stakeholders' voices are reflected in the A&T Act review. The ITAB will be seeking feedback from industry and educational stakeholders regarding the questions and themes posed above. Watch out for survey!

Building a Regional Workforce: Tackling Shortages, Upskilling and Retention

The Greater Northern Skills Development Group Inc (GNSDGD) based in the Northwest of NSW are conducting a forum called Building a Regional Workforce: tackling shortages, upskilling and retention. This is a unique opportunity to meet on 19th March 2025 with the NSW Joint Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITAB) to share updates from within their respective industries and conduct roundtable discussions. Participants will have the opportunity to collaborate and share ideas with other stakeholders around workforce development, upskilling, employee retention and other relevant issues. You will also hear about the support available to help retain and upskill employees; network with other businesses in your industry and promote any job opportunities you have with key agencies.

For more information please visit:

Any enquiries please email Bede Maher (bede.maher@det.nsw.edu.au).

National News



Skills for Tomorrow

Skills for tomorrow: Shaping the future of the Australian apprenticeships report was released in late 2024. The report is a strategic review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System, it evaluates the effectiveness, efficiency, and alignment of the apprenticeship incentive system with Australia's economic priorities and social equity objectives. The review aims to ensure that the system encourages apprenticeship commencements and completions, ultimately addressing critical skill shortages across various sectors.

The review underscores the urgent need for reforms in Australia's apprenticeship system to ensure it meets future workforce needs. The proposed recommendations focus on better targeting of incentives, addressing financial and workplace barriers, improving training quality, and strengthening employer engagement. Implementing these changes will support economic growth, workforce development, and social equity.

Key Findings include:

1. Declining Apprenticeship Participation and Completion Rates
2. Mismatch with Economic Priorities
3. Need for Targeted Incentives
4. Cost-of-Living Pressures on Apprentices
5. Lack of Awareness and Perception Issues
6. Challenges for Priority Cohorts
7. Workplace Culture and Safety Concerns
8. Need for Data-Driven Reforms

Key Recommendations (34 in Total)

1. Reframing the Incentive System
2. Enhancing Apprentice Experience
3. Improving Employer Engagement
4. Strengthening Industry-Led Initiatives
5. Enhancing Governance and Evaluation

Reaching the Australian governments net zero target by 2050 will require a transformation of the workforce. One of the key industries highlighted as having the biggest skill shortages now and into the future is the utilities and electrotechnology industries, as such it is a key focus in the report. The ITAB will be providing Training Services feedback on the report on behalf of our industries. If you wish provide feedback on the report to the ITAB, please contact me.

For a copy of the report visit: <https://www.dewr.gov.au/australian-apprenticeships/strategic-review-australian-apprenticeship-incentive-system>

State and Territory ITAB's/ITC Roundtable with PSO.

The state and territory ITAB's/ITC who represent the utilities and electrotechnology industries in their respective states and territories held a meeting with Power Skills Organisation in late January in Brisbane. The aim of the meeting was to discuss 2025 strategic goals and effective way to work together. The meeting was productive with each Executive Officer presenting on their strategic goals and priorities for 2025. PSO also presented on their strategic goals and projects for 2025. The PSO is in the process of developing a formal proposal for each of the ITAB's/ITC's.



Photo: State and Territory ITAB/ITC representatives with PSO representatives at roundtable discussions

2025 Occupation Shortage List (OSL) Stakeholder Survey- Now Open

The 2025 Occupation Shortage List (OSL) Stakeholder Survey is now open for comment. The information that you provide will ABS an insight into the recruitment challenges and occupations that might be in shortage across the Australian labour market and will help make sure the 2025 OSL is based on comprehensive evidence. The information collected is also used to inform government strategies, policies (such as skilled migration) and future funding decisions. It is important that you participate in this survey. To access the survey please use this link [Occupation Shortage List - Stakeholder Survey](#)

2025 Energy Workforce and Skills Survey- Now Open

PSO have just launched their 2025 Energy Workforce and Skills Survey to help build insights and inform PSO's 2025 Energy Sector Workforce Plan. The survey provides a chance to identify the key challenges, barriers, risks and opportunities related to building the skilled energy workforce required for Australia to reach Net Zero. This will also help shape future activities, projects and strategies. These plans are important and help to shape future federal government strategies, policies and funding decisions.

If you are interested in participating in the survey, please click on the link [here](#)

INDUSTRY NEWS

Hunter and Sydney Industry Electrical Safety Networks

The Sydney Industry Safety Network meeting will be held in March 2025. To learn more about SIESN, contact: Robert.Lau@sydneywater.com.au. The Hunter Industry Electrical Safety Network (HISEN) next meeting will be held in March 2025. For more details contact Tim Bolam at tim.bolam@tomago.com.au



Happy Chinese New Year!!

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
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