

ANNUAL REPORT **2021-2022**



National Apprenticeship
Employment Network

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ABOUT NAEN

The National Apprentice Employment Network (NAEN) is the peak national body representing the network of group training organisations (GTOs) that employ some 25,000 apprentices and trainees across Australia.

NAEN strives to facilitate a strong and diverse national network of member GTOs that are able to speak with a single, united voice dealing with governments stakeholders and policy makers.

NAEN plays a key part in the development of national policy affecting the VET sector. It is a member of the federal government's VET Stakeholder Committee which meets regularly and plays a central role in VET reform and policy development.

The Patron of NAEN is The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd).

NAEN BOARD

NAME	BOARD POSITION	ORGANISATION
David Nagy	Chair, SA Representative	Maxima Group
Sharon Smith	Deputy Chair, NSW/ACT Representative	HVTC
Iain McDougall	Member Representative	Hospitality Group Training WA Inc
Stuart Diepeveen	WA Representative	Electrical Group Training
Tom Emeleus	Member Representative	NECA Electrical Apprenticeships (NSW/QLD/ACT)
Megan Lilly	Member Representative	Australian Industry Group
Bridie Gildea	Member Representative (until Nov 21)	MEGT
Kathryn Stenson	Member Representative	GTNT Group
Paul Hillberg	QLD/NT Representative	Apprenticeships Queensland
Leanne Wallace	TAS Representative	Work and Training
Peter Andersen	Member Representative (from Nov 21)	TABMA

SUB-COMMITTEES

AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE

Stuart Diepeveen (Chair)

Iain McDougall

Sharon Smith

David Nagy

GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Stuart Diepeveen (Chair)

Sharon Smith

Tom Emeleus

David Nagy

BOARD BIOGRAPHIES

DAVID NAGY, CHAIR



David is Executive Manager - Recruitment Services, Maxima Group, and was appointed NAEN Chair in April 2019. He has represented South Australia on the NAEN Board since 2017, nominated by the Apprentice Employment Network (AEN) SA. David has also been an AEN SA Board Director since 2014 and AEN SA Chair since 2015. Starting with Maxima in 2003 as Marketing Coordinator, David has spent more than 18 years in the group training sector. He has a Bachelor of Commerce (Hons) from the University of Adelaide and is currently completing a Master of Business Administration. David has a passion for group training and for the transformative role of apprenticeships and traineeships for both individuals and host businesses.

SHARON SMITH, DEPUTY CHAIR



Sharon is the CEO of HVTC, a position she has held since 2012. She has an outstanding record of achievement over 20 years as a senior executive in the utilities, regional development and private sectors. This includes Chief Financial Officer and General Manager in various roles leading large operational and shared services teams across Finance, Human Resources, Business Strategy, Communications, Information Technology, Procurement and Business Development.

Sharon has significant experience working with Boards of Directors in developing and executing strategy including Hunter Water Corporation, Hunter Water Australia, Regional Land Management Corporation and as former Non-Executive Director of Hunter Development Corporation, Hunter Business Chamber and current Director of the Hunter Trade College and Coleambally Irrigation Cooperative Limited. On the NAEN Board of Directors, Sharon represents NSW and the ACT, nominated by AEN NSW & ACT.

IAIN MCDOUGALL



Iain is the General Manager of Hospitality Group Training WA Inc, joining this organisation in 1995 after 20 years' senior management experience with the Federal Government, mainly in training policy. He is the Nominated Member for Western Australia to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) - composed of industry leaders nominated by Commonwealth and state and territory ministers responsible for skills and training. Iain is former Chair of Group Training Australia, currently Deputy Chair of AEN WA, and a Member of the NAEN Board Audit Sub-Committee. Iain is also a Member of the Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Industry Reference Committee (IRC) and Board Member of FutureNow, the Creative and Leisure Industry Training Council. Iain is a Member Representative on the NAEN Board of Directors.

LEANNE WALLACE



Leanne is the CEO of Work & Training, the largest employer of trainees and apprentices and the largest private provider of training in Tasmania. Leanne began supporting business owners as Manager of the Circular Head Business Enterprise Centre in 1992. During her time there she discovered a passion for assisting businesses and promoting lifelong learning. Over the past 19 years Leanne has increased her expertise in all facets of Vocational Education and Training. She has held six positions at Work & Training which culminated in her appointment as CEO. Leanne is Chair of AEN TAS, Committee Member of the Local Jobs Program Taskforce North and Northwest Tasmania and Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Advisory Committee. As a Board Director of NAEN, Leanne represents the state of Tasmania, nominated by AEN TAS.

STUART DIEPEVEEN



Stuart is General Manager of Electrical Group Training (EGT), a not-for-profit group training organisation and the largest employer of electrical apprentices in Western Australia. Stuart began his career as an apprentice with EGT in the early-1990s, after which he became a Production Supervisor and Workplace Safety Coordinator at a local renewable energy company. In 2004 he moved into training and became an instructor at the College of Electrical Training before moving to EGT as a field officer in 2005. After being promoted to Operations Manager late in 2005, in 2007 Stuart took on the role of General Manager at EGT, the role he still holds today. Stuart represents WA on the NAEN Board of Directors, nominated by AEN WA.

TOM EMELEUS



Tom is General Manager NECA Training and Apprenticeships. He commenced his career as a cadet engineer with Sydney Electricity in 1993. He has a combined degree in electrical engineering and international studies (Indonesian) with first class honours and a Master of Engineering Management. He has held executive positions in the Electrotechnology and Electrical Supply Industries since 2003 and has recruited and trained over 3000 apprentices in that time. Tom is responsible for NECA's group training and training businesses in NSW, QLD and the ACT. Over fifteen years, Tom has held Board positions on Federal and State bodies responsible for vocational training and group training and has been an active proponent for Group Training and VET to government, the media, industry and the community. Tom is a Member Representative on the NAEN Board of Directors.

MEGAN LILLY



Megan Lilly is the Head of Education & Training for The Australian Industry Group (Ai Group) and Executive Director of the Ai Group Centre for Education & Training. In this role Megan is responsible for the development of all education and training policy. She is a member of the Australian Industry Skills Committee, Deputy Chair – Worldskills Australia, the Australian Council for Educational Research, the Australia Pacific Training Coalition, Australian Industry Group Training Services, and has also been part of the AQF Review Panel. She has been a member of the Australia India Education Council, including Chairing the Skills Working Group, Australian Qualifications Framework Council, Queensland Ministerial Commission, Victorian Skills Commission and was a member of the National Skills Standards Council, and the National Quality Council. Megan is a Member Representative on the NAEN Board of Directors.

PAUL HILLBERG



Joining Apprenticeships Qld in June 2016, Paul Hillberg brings over two decades of experience leading and working with Apprentices and Trainees in both blue and white collar environments. Paul has a vast range of management experience working within the public and private sector in both small and large businesses. While Paul was the General Manager of an Enterprise Registered Training Organisation (RTO) he represented QLD on the National Industry Advisory Council responsible for training package development and maintenance across Australia. Paul represents QLD & NT on the NAEN Board of Directors, nominated by AEN QLD / NT.

BRIDIE GILDEA



Bridie has over 25 years of experience in the Vocational Education and Training sector, in which seven and a half of those have been with MEGT. Bridie has extensive knowledge of the Australian Network Provider (ANP) and Group Training industries. After working within GTO focused environments in North Eastern Victoria for eleven and a half years, Bridie relocated to Melbourne and commenced her journey with MEGT as the ANP State Manager in March 2013. During her time in this role, Bridie's leadership, her knowledge of the vocational education and training sector, and expertise in relation to business acumen and ability to influence change and business modelling were quickly identified, and as a result, she transitioned to the General Manager, ANP in December 2013. Bridie continued in this role until June 2019, when she was appointed as Chief Executive Officer (Acting) (CEO) and CEO in January 2020. Bridie was a Member Representative on the NAEN Board of Directors for a full two years' term until November 2021.

KATHRYN STENSON



Kathryn is CEO of GTNT Group, a multi-faceted not-for-profit that began operation in 1989 as a GTO in Darwin. GTNT Group has since expanded to include four office locations, operating an RTO, a local café and an international charitable project. Kathryn joined GTNT Group as CEO in 2012, bringing 20 years of experience in employment industries with a strong background in governance, strategic planning, management, and business development. In addition to being a Member Representative on the NAEN Board Directors, Kathryn also holds Board positions with the National Australian Apprenticeships Association (NAAA), AEN QLD / NT, the Australian Skills Institute and the Chamber of Commerce Northern Territory.

PETER ANDERSEN



Joining Vocational Education and Training in 2000, Peter has held positions as CEO and General Manager of various GTOs and RTOs as well as operating his own company providing recruitment and consultancy services to the industry. In preceding years, Peter was involved in the broadcast industry managing various television, pay TV and radio organisations. Peter was appointed General Manager of TABMA Workforce & Career Development in November 2020, overseeing a national GTO and recruitment service dedicated to TABMA members and other companies in the timber and building materials sector.



STAFF

DIANNE DAYHEW

Chief Executive Officer

KRISTEN SYDNEY

Executive Support and Project Officer

ANGIIE TURAY

Projects Manager

KERRIE BEST

Indigenous Projects Coordinator

CONTRACTED SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

BOB BOWDEN

Communications Advisor

KEN LANCERO

Company Accountant



OUR MISSION

- ✦ To advance group training as a high quality, work-based approach to learning and training which is supported by professionally managed mentoring, and is regulated by national standards;
- ✦ To champion the successes of Group Training Organisations (GTOs), including their role in addressing youth unemployment, creating and supporting equitable and inclusive career pathways, and facilitating successful new career transitions for displaced workers;
- ✦ To be the first point of contact for the Australian Government as the voice for the national GTO network, informing evidence-based policy on work-based learning;
- ✦ To promote the benefits of group training to existing and future stakeholders, including through directing government investment to facilitate improved employment and skills outcomes; and,
- ✦ To support NAEN members through a cohesive, thriving and connected network, providing value- added information and relevant and timely business opportunities.



CHAIR'S REPORT

The past year has been one of significant change that has been felt across the breadth of the apprenticeship sector.

From COVID health impacts, to changes at the highest levels of government, the work of GTOs across Australia has felt the full force of these large structural and policy shifts.

At the outset of the year, GTOs, like businesses everywhere, had to face the continued uncertainty arising from the stop-start restrictions imposed as part of the COVID response.

This was a most difficult time for the work of GTOs in retaining as many apprentices and trainees as possible, while managing their employment and training outcomes. It is a great credit to the entire group training network that this was achieved with as little disruption as possible.

We must acknowledge the significant support from governments, most notably the apprentice wage incentives from the Commonwealth, that enabled jobs to be saved and the skills pipeline to be rebuilt.

The financial year also saw a change of federal government and a shift in policy direction that includes the new agency, Jobs and Skills Australia, which will oversee workforce and skills development. We look forward to working with new Ministers and officials as the government's policy agenda takes shape.

I have been very encouraged by the positive member feedback about the work of the national body over this period. NAEN has worked extensively with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that members are kept fully informed about key policy changes that affect the sector. This is more important than ever in times of dynamic change.

It has been heartening to see the growth in NAEN membership as more GTOs have realised the significant benefits to their own businesses, as well as the strength that a truly national network brings to the group training sector. The ability to speak with a single united voice is vitally important.



This same national focus was reflected in the successful national conference that NAEN held in Hobart in March, in spite of the COVID disruptions that saw it postponed once, and remained a threat right up until the start. It was an extraordinarily successful gathering with informative and entertaining speakers from across the spectrum of group training interests.

For me, one of the highlights of the conference was the awarding of Life Membership to two distinguished group training figures – Kay Sharp, a founding member of HVTC in New South Wales, and Reg Hart, the Chair of Apprenticeships Queensland. Both Kay and Reg have devoted much of their professional lives to helping apprentices and trainees. They join a distinguished group of our most treasured men and women.



Kay and Reg epitomise the dedication and enthusiasm that is the hallmark of group training. This work is conducted by hundreds of GTO employees each and every day in the pursuit of opportunities for their apprentices and trainees. It's work that is well and truly understood in the group training sector. One of our tasks is to ensure that it is also well known to those in industry and government.

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of our Patron, the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley. It is a great honour for us all to have the work of group training associated with and supported by this high office.

I also wish to acknowledge and thank Chief Executive Officer Dianne Dayhew and her team for the fine work over the past year that has seen NAEN grow and achieve a more sustainable footing, while playing a central role in national policy development and discussion.

Finally, I thank my fellow Board Directors who give the time and expertise to make this an effective national body.

David Nagy
Chair





CEO'S REPORT

The past financial year has been an extremely busy one for the apprenticeship sector.

While the worst of the COVID lockdowns appeared to have eased, there remained considerable uncertainty for apprentice employers, including those in the group training sector.

NAEN members endured a sustained period of upheaval across the states and territories as various restrictions impacted their apprentices and trainees. It is to the enormous credit of member GTOs that they were able to show great agility and provide a safety net for their employees.

There was a large role for government in these circumstances, and I'm pleased to say that this need was met. NAEN members benefitted from advocacy work that demonstrated to government the ongoing need for financial support beyond the immediate COVID emergency.

It was pleasing to have the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements (BAC) wage subsidy extended and to have the Completing Apprenticeship Commencements (CAC) introduced. These measures had a lasting benefit.

As part of the implementation and extension of these wage subsidies, NAEN engaged extensively with members and the Commonwealth Department on a range of administrative and policy issues, with the aim of making the process as efficient and effective as possible.

Once again, it was information, data and insights provided by the group training network that enabled NAEN to serve its function in informing government of the optimum policy responses.

NAEN also undertook wide ranging consultations on these and other critical issues for group training with Ministers, MPs, departmental officials, and as a member of the Commonwealth VET Stakeholder Committee. These consultations also contributed to advancing the interests of group training as part of the government's broader VET reform agenda.

NAEN provided input to the Federal Budget and into policy discussions ahead of the federal election in May 2022. These conversations allowed the organisation to advance the key value propositions for group training, namely its focus on mentoring, support and rotation of apprentices and trainees, and the higher completion rates it achieves compared with direct employment.

The election of the Albanese Labor government saw an immediate focus on skills and training, with the calling of a Jobs and Skills Summit, followed by the creation of the new agency, Jobs and Skills Australia.

One of the highlights of the past year was the return of the landmark apprentice and trainee professional development program, Today's Skills: Tomorrow's Leaders (TSTL).

The program ran from 2004 until 2016, but was resumed in 2022 with the support of the National Careers Institute. A 22-strong group of current and former apprentices and trainees spent a full week in Canberra undertaking intensive leadership training and preparing for future roles. I'm sure we will be hearing much more about them in years to come.

Another high point of the year was the 2022 National Conference, 'Adaptation and Opportunity' which attracted an extraordinary range of expert speakers, presenters and commentators. It was NAEN's (and much of the network's) first return to face-to-face engagement. There was strong attendance by delegates and great support from sponsors and exhibitors, making it an outstanding success at such a challenging time.

Membership of the national body is vital if the organisation is to carry out its work successfully. The past year has seen further strong growth in the member base – broadening the range of industry sectors and geographic areas covered. This strong and growing membership will help us all do our work more effectively.

I would like to acknowledge the work and contribution of the state and territory Apprentice Employment Networks who have remarkable on-the-ground engagement with members and who support our national efforts where they can.

I also acknowledge the NAEN staff and contractors who support NAEN and its members and play a critical role in our collective success.

My appreciation goes to the NAEN Chair and Board of Directors for their unswerving support and the deep knowledge that they bring to the organisation.

To the vast army of GTO managers, supervisors, field officers and administrative staff, your efforts are what keeps this remarkable network at the forefront of apprentice and trainee development.

We look forward to continuing our efforts over the coming year to ensure that group training remains a vibrant and powerful force in producing new generations of skilled Australians.

Dianne Dayhew

Chief Executive Officer

ADVOCACY

NAEN undertook extensive liaison with Federal Ministers, MP and staff, as well as with Federal Departments as part of its ongoing advocacy work on behalf of members.

One of the key messages was the role played by GTOs during the pandemic, serving as a safety net, and the value of GTO mentoring and support that sustained thousands of positions.

A critical focus was on the of the \$3.9 billion Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements (BAC) wage subsidy. The BAC program commenced in October 2020 and was scheduled to run until March 2022. It provided a 50 per cent wage subsidy for the full 12 months of an apprenticeship.

In September 2021, the government announced that the BAC program would be supplemented with a new \$716 million Completing Apprenticeship Commencements (CAC) program that would provide support in the second and third year of an eligible apprenticeship.

In March 2022, the federal government announced that BAC would be extended until the end of June 2022. The BAC program saw a significant increase in the number of apprentices and trainees, thereby increasing the pipeline of skills.

The federal election in May 2021 saw a change of government and, with it, new Ministers and staff, as well as the establishment of a separate Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, and Department of Education.

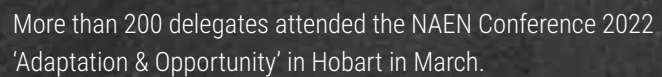
NAEN provided input into key areas of skills and employment policy, including submissions to the 2022-23 Federal Budget and to the Indigenous Skills, Engagement and Employment Program (ISEP) Discussion Paper.

After being rescheduled from August 2021 due to COVID restrictions, the event drew a strong array of stakeholders, speakers, exhibitors and sponsors.



wards Asia by immigrants & students

Country	2015	Change 2015 to 20
China	1,200,000	+1%
India	1,100,000	+100%
USA	800,000	+100%
UK	400,000	+100%
France	300,000	+100%
Germany	200,000	+100%
Italy	100,000	+100%
Spain	100,000	+100%
Japan	100,000	+100%
South Korea	100,000	+100%
Sweden	100,000	+100%
Norway	100,000	+100%
Denmark	100,000	+100%
Finland	100,000	+100%
Ireland	100,000	+100%
Portugal	100,000	+100%
Greece	100,000	+100%
Poland	100,000	+100%
Czech Republic	100,000	+100%
Slovakia	100,000	+100%
Hungary	100,000	+100%
Romania	100,000	+100%
Bulgaria	100,000	+100%
Croatia	100,000	+100%
Slovenia	100,000	+100%
Lithuania	100,000	+100%
Latvia	100,000	+100%
Estonia	100,000	+100%
Belgium	100,000	+100%
Netherlands	100,000	+100%
Austria	100,000	+100%
Switzerland	100,000	+100%
Sweden	100,000	+100%
Norway	100,000	+100%
Denmark	100,000	+100%
Finland	100,000	+100%
Ireland	100,000	+100%
Portugal	100,000	+100%
Greece	100,000	+100%
Poland	100,000	+100%
Czech Republic	100,000	+100%
Slovakia	100,000	+100%
Hungary	100,000	+100%
Romania	100,000	+100%
Bulgaria	100,000	+100%
Croatia	100,000	+100%
Slovenia	100,000	+100%
Lithuania	100,000	+100%
Latvia	100,000	+100%
Estonia	100,000	+100%
Belgium	100,000	+100%
Netherlands	100,000	+100%
Austria	100,000	+100%
Switzerland	100,000	+100%
Sweden	100,000	+100%
Norway	100,000	+100%
Denmark	100,000	+100%
Finland	100,000	+100%
Ireland	100,000	+100%
Portugal	100,000	+100%
Greece	100,000	+100%
Poland	100,000	+100%
Czech Republic	100,000	+100%
Slovakia	100,000	+100%
Hungary	100,000	+100%
Romania	100,000	+100%
Bulgaria	100,000	+100%
Croatia	100,000	+100%
Slovenia	100,000	+100%
Lithuania	100,000	+100%
Latvia	100,000	+100%
Estonia	100,000	+100%
Belgium	100,000	+100%
Netherlands	100,000	+100%
Austria	100,000	+100%
Switzerland	100,000	+100%
Sweden	100,000	+100%
Norway	100,000	+100%
Denmark	100,000	+100%
Finland	100,000	+100%
Ireland	100,000	+100%
Portugal	100,000	+100%
Greece	100,000	+100%
Poland	100,000	+100%
Czech Republic	100,000	+100%
Slovakia	100,000	+100%
Hungary	100,000	+100%
Romania	100,000	+100%
Bulgaria	100,000	+100%
Croatia	100,000	+100%
Slovenia	100,000	+100%
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Austria	100,000	+100%
Switzerland	100,000	+100%
Sweden	100,000	+100%
Norway	100,000	+100%
Denmark	100,000	+100%
Finland	100,000	+100%
Ireland	100,000	+100%
Portugal	100,000	+100%
Greece	100,000	+100%
Poland	100,000	+100%
Czech Republic	100,000	+100%
Slovakia	100,000	+100%
Hungary	100,000	+100%
Romania	100,000	+100%
Bulgaria	100,000	+100%
Croatia	100,000	+100%
Slovenia	100,000	+100%
Lithuania	100,000	+100%
Latvia	100,000	+100%
Estonia	100,000	+100%
Belgium	100,000	+100%
Netherlands	100,000	+100%
Austria	100,000	+100%
Switzerland	100,000	+100%
Sweden	100,000	+100%
Norway	100,000	+100%
Denmark	100,000	+100%</



The day preceding the conference saw the traditional member luncheon with guest speakers.

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The event took place at a time of considerable uncertainty, given the unpredictable nature of state and Commonwealth responses to the COVID crisis.

Nevertheless, the conference proved a success among delegates, and also returned a financial surplus, thanks in no small part to the support of sponsors, exhibitors, speakers and the event organiser.

TODAY'S SKILLS: TOMORROW'S LEADERS PROGRAM



NAEN recommenced the landmark Today's Skills: Tomorrow's Leaders (TSTL) professional development program for apprentices and trainees in 2022, with the support of the National Careers Institute.

A total of 22 current and completed apprentices and trainees participated in the week-long residential program in Canberra in May 2022.

The group comprised 19 apprentices and trainees selected from the member GTO network and three who were represented at the 2021 Australian Training Awards.

The TSTL program ran from 2004 to 2017 and saw about 250 high calibre apprentices and trainees graduate. TSTL aims to help participants focus on their strengths, interests and capabilities in order to develop their career direction and leadership potential.

IDEAS, INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

NAEN continued to host the 'Ideas, Information and Inspiration' series of webinars for GTOs on topics of vital interest to group training and the apprenticeship sector.

The webinar series featured:

- The Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business, the Hon Stuart Robert MP, who launched the GTO Governance Handbook, followed by a workshop hosted by Directors Australia.
- National Skills Commissioner Adam Boyton in conversation with Claire Field.
- 'The Economic Update – What it means for Apprenticeships, Jobs and the Future'.



National Apprentice
Employment Network

Ideas, Information and Inspiration

LIVE WEBINAR SERIES

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE THE EOFY – Friday 17 June 2022, 12.00pm AEST

Business advice and accounting firm ESV will cover:

- Changes to for-profit and not-for-profit financial reporting
- Facts on lease accounting
- Year-end taxation tips
- Top tips for preventing fraud
- How to deal with overpaid

Attendees will also have the opportunity to ask questions of our expert speakers.

One free ticket per member organisation (Please use your NAEN Member ID for your ticket) **\$55 per additional attendee or non-member**

James Raiti



Travas Burns



Tim Valtwies



- 'What we learned and what we need to do to prepare for 2022', with a special message from NAEN Patron, the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), and a presentation from Bruce Sullivan, Today's Skills; Tomorrow's Leaders facilitator.
- 'Turbocharging Skills – Industries to Watch' featuring Jodi Schmidt from the Human Services Skills Organisation, Dr Gavin Lind from the Mining Skills Organisation Pilot, and Patrick Kidd from the Digital Skills Organisation.
- 'How to Attract Teenagers to Apprenticeships through your Marketing Efforts' with presenter Lee Morgan.
- 'Things you need to know before the EOFY', with senior executives from ESV Business advice and accounting.
- 'Attracting new Apprentices in a Candidate-led Market', hosted by ReadyTech.
- 'Release of Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System (AAIS) Guidelines' with a briefing from the Apprenticeship Program and Services Branch of the Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

MEMBER ALERTS AND NEWSLETTERS

NAEN issued member alerts covering a range of issues including updated apprenticeship incentives guidelines and the skills priority list, details of the Federal Budget, news of the extension of the Boosting Apprenticeships Commencements (BAC) program and introduction of the Completing Apprenticeship Commencements (CAC) programs, opening of National Careers Institute grant applications, and details regarding speakers, ticketing and program updates associated with the NAEN 2022 National Conference.

NAEN Newsletters were regularly distributed to both members and VET stakeholders with news and updates from group training and the broader skills and training sector.

MEDIA RELATIONS

How do we get people to see their apprenticeships through?

ABC Radio Melbourne



Apprenticeship scheme a winner, but more help needed

By David Sparkes for The World Today



Australia is facing a tradie shortage. Why do nearly half of all apprentices drop out?

By David Sparkes
Posted Mon 24 Aug 2021 at 12:45pm, updated Tue 25 Aug 2021 at 9:55am



National Apprentice Employment Network chief executive Dianne Dayhew hoped the budget would extend the wage subsidies beyond their current September expiry but did not expect mass apprentice cancellations if it did not – especially among employers supported by GTOs.

NAEN provided regular information, responses and feedback to media and was often a first point of call for journalists seeking information on a range of issues impacting apprenticeships.

CEO Dianne Dayhew featured in print and broadcast media, discussing a range of issues including the impact of government incentive payments, the outlook for the apprenticeship sector, opportunities for school leavers, and the issue of skills shortages as Australia's labour market progressively tightened over the course of the year.

OUR PROGRAMS

NSW ITAB PROGRAM

NAEN continued to operate the NSW Building, Construction, Resources and Infrastructure Training Advisory Body (BCRITAB) on behalf of Training Services NSW (TSNSW) in the NSW Department of Education.

The BCRITAB provides advice on the training and skills needs of its industry sectors. It is one of ten Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) operating in NSW.

BCRITAB has worked with the Department, its Skills Service Organisations (SSOs), industry and stakeholders on a range of Training Package developments, including:

- The Case for Endorsement (CfE) Civil Infrastructure Asset Management
- CfE Prepare to work safely in the construction industry
- CfE Prepare to work safely with products and materials containing crystalline silica
- CfE Construction Waterproofing Design & Survey
- Case for Change (CfC) Plumbing Training Package to include Hydrogen
- CfC Pre-cast Concrete Installation, and
- CfE Autonomous Operations

At the end of June, a Funding Deed was signed between NAEN and TSNSW for an extension of the agreement for the 12 months to 30 June 2023.

NAEN INDIGENOUS PROGRAMS

NAEN continued its important work with the National Australians Indigenous Agency (NIAA) to support Indigenous school-based trainees, apprentices, and jobseekers through the national group training network.

Under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) the NAEN network continued to deliver great outcomes. As part of IAS, NAEN's Jobs, Land and Economy (JLEP) Indigenous Tailored Assistance Project has provided employment and training for Indigenous candidates through apprenticeships, School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs) at Certificate levels II, III, and IV, as well as through direct employment placements. This has provided employment opportunities across the country in a range of industries such as construction and allied health.

Collectively with the support of 37 GTOs, NAEN maximised the total allocated number of places under the contract by commencing 450 Indigenous candidates before the recruitment end date of December 2021. The program is due to end December 2022 with excellent outcomes.

The Australian Government announced in the 2021–22 Budget a commitment to develop the Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP), to replace the Vocational Training and Employment Centres (VTEC), Tailored Assistance Employment Grants (TAEG) and Employment Parity Initiative (EPI) from 1 July 2022.

NAEN was awarded a transitional TAEG grant opportunity to place 60 candidates into full-time apprenticeships and traineeships. In partnership with 10 GTOs across Australia, recruitment began on 1 January 2022 with all allocated places utilised by June 2022. A high percentage of participants are expected to reach their 26-week milestone period successfully.

Under Stage One of ISEP, NAEN submitted an application to lead a consortium with 100% Indigenous owned managing provider, AAK-ITHER, to provide community workforce development, engagement and culturally safe and secure employment.

NAEN remains committed to build the capacity of Indigenous Australians nationally, in partnership with the GTO network, to generate sustainable ongoing employment opportunities.



STATE AND TERRITORY REPORTS



NEW SOUTH WALES & AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

BY JASON SULTANA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As we head into an environment post-COVID-19 restrictions, our NSW & ACT GTOs saw a significant increase in the number of apprentices and trainees employed. The new world post-COVID-19 sees us with new challenges in a difficult labour market. Our members face many open vacancies to provide young people with opportunities to gain qualifications. Like all industries, we compete with current candidate shortages, increasing wage growth and inflation.

In 2022 we launched our report "*The GTO Advantage*", which looked at the GTOs' role in advancing a skilled workforce across Australian industries. The evidence-backed report highlights the value GTOs deliver to businesses, apprentices, trainees and the government. The findings fully demonstrate what we have always known... that the best way to taken on an apprentice or trainee is through a registered GTO.

Our strong relationships with the NSW and ACT Governments have ensured we continued our open line of communication to assist in a changing policy environment. One thing the pandemic highlighted was that Group Training provides a safety net for apprentices and trainees and flexibility for host businesses.

Thank you to our members, our Executive Team and NAEN for their support and guidance during the last 12 months. And thank you to our NSW & ACT representatives on the NAEN Board, Sharon Smith, Tom Emeleus and Peter Andersen for their work at the national level.



QUEENSLAND & NORTHERN TERRITORY

BY CRAIG WESTWOOD, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Both Queensland & Northern Territory continue to perform economically with both jurisdictions achieving over 7% growth and unemployment rates well into 3%. With a pipeline of major infrastructure and industry renewal projects; and an Olympic Games “just around the corner”, Queensland alone will require an extra 280,000 skilled workers before 2025.

Queensland has naturally become a target for existing interstate GTOs and new market entrants to target opportunities to support their clients or expand into new markets. As a part of our Queensland Government agreement; AENQNT supports prospective and even non-Member GTOs to connect with information and guidance on registration. As such, AENQNT Membership has grown from 24 Members in FY21 to 30 in FY23 with an additional three Memberships in discussion.

We are pleased to have now completed a full calendar of events and professional development for 2021 /22; aligning the needs of Members and government to provide opportunities to share knowledge and information across the network. Our monthly “Lunch & Learn” events have provided access to topical online content with more traditional events such as our Fieldy Forum, Mid-Year Member Gathering, and Leaders Luncheon all drawing high attendance from Members eager to again collaborate. Our “first attempt” at a signature event – the Queensland Skills Breakfast, drew a paid audience of just over 100 employer, GTO, RTO, and industry representatives all keen to discuss skills challenges.

Our 2022 GTO survey produced a comprehensive and deeply insightful view into contemporary GTO operations and practice. It showed that an increasing percentage of GTOs were operating as a part of multi-channel organisations; offering industry and their communities with a broad range of employment and training solutions. Increasingly, Queensland and Northern Territory GTOs are headquartered in NSW or Victoria, making local access to information and advice from AENQNT all the more important.

The GTO Pre-Apprenticeship Program has opened for Round Three applications which will see GTOs offer paid opportunities out to 2024. Still with a focus on automotive, hospitality, engineering, or construction training; round three is targeted at supporting diverse, disengaged, and disadvantages cohorts to secure apprenticeship opportunities.

The AENQNT Board has renewed its commitment to the Northern Territory, lifting our profile by conducting two Board meetings in Darwin across 2021-22. We hope the adoption of a broader skills community outlook will provide opportunity to increase local activities and projects into 2023.

Like all in the skills community, 2022 has seen demand for our knowledge and services that has seemingly been overrun with opportunity!



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BY IRENE WALKER, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

This financial year we continued to strengthen our membership base, welcoming another 5 GTOs, taking our total to 23 members.

Western Australia commenced the new financial year with the strongest economy in the nation, our best result in eight years, with billions of dollars' worth of capital projects in the approvals pipeline and a low unemployment rate, amid a global pandemic. The results are underpinned by our success in crushing COVID-19, keeping WA's economy open, supported by strong household and business confidence.

This strong economic position put significant pressure on the availability of skilled workers in WA. This led our state government to embark on a series of skills summits and communication forums. They resulted in several initiatives to attract and retain skilled workers and assisted our members to compete for State contracts worth more than \$30 billion per year. This in turn boosted regional economies, created jobs and continued our State's strong economic growth.

After being cancelled due to COVID last year, the National Skills Week - incorporating the WA Career and Skills Expo was finally held in Perth 23-29 August. At the event, AEN WA and our member GTOs, EGT and MPA Skills, promoted apprenticeships and our network benefits, via live interviews.

At the WorldSkills National Championships, WA brought home more medals than any other state. WA entrants won 54 medals in total, our best record ever. Congratulations to our AEN WA Members, Electrical Group Training and MPA Skills whose employees won gold (electrical skills) and bronze (plumbing skills) medals respectively, against fierce competition.

Our Annual Awards of Excellence event has gone from strength to strength with 185 people attending our 2021 event. As always, the finalists didn't disappoint, showcasing their educational excellence, supported by their group training and host employers.

Since WA opened its borders in March 2022, business has improved for all sectors. We ended the financial year with the highest number of apprentices and trainees employed by our GTO members. All we want now, is more apprentices and trainees to meet business demand and address our skill shortages.

Thank you to the Management Committee and our members for their ongoing support and dedication to the WA Network.



VICTORIA

BY GARY WORKMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2021-22 has continued to be challenging with governments and host employers working through the COVID-19 pandemic and various lockdowns.

I would like to congratulate the network during this testing period, as each GTO has managed a wide range of issues and new government initiatives to keep their businesses in a strong position.

It was pleasing to see both state and federal governments prioritising youth employment especially through apprenticeship programs. The Commonwealth's Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements program and the State government's Victorian Apprenticeship Recovery and Retrenched Apprentices and Trainees along with other programs have allowed our network to rebuild their support and increase commencements during 2021.

AEN VIC has worked hard with the Victorian Government to provide strong support for our members to engage with several new programs to improve apprenticeship participation that will lead to meaningful long-term employment.

Announcements over the past 12 months include the establishment of Apprenticeships Victoria, the Office of TAFE Coordination and Delivery and the Victorian Skills Authority within the Department of Education.

Overall, 2021-22 has been a strong year for the Association with significant government project funding to support new apprenticeship/ traineeship opportunities. AEN VIC will continue to work on a range of projects including:

- Victorian Retrenched Apprentices and Trainees program through Apprenticeships Victoria
- Victorian Apprenticeship Recovery and Bush Fire Recovery Program through Jobs Victoria
- GTO Big Build apprenticeships program for major projects through Apprenticeships Victoria including GTO apprentice ambassadors
- Construction skills pathway program (support more women to commence an apprenticeship in the construction sector)
- Multi industry women pre-apprenticeship programs
- Traineeships in Horticulture pilot program
- New Hospitality support program
- Ongoing work with the Commonwealths Local Jobs Program – Inner Melbourne Region – Employment facilitator role

AEN VIC also moved into new offices in December 2021. This has been a significant achievement for the association, as we now have a permanent home for the network.



TASMANIA

BY LEANNE WALLACE

Tasmania has experienced major challenges in dealing with the pandemic and skills shortages in recent years but despite this the state's economy has been one of the strongest performing in the country. Unfortunately, not all Tasmanians have had the opportunity to engage in Tasmania's economic recovery - women, people with a disability, migrants, Indigenous Tasmanians, young people, regional and older Tasmanians all face a range of unique barriers to economic participation. Apprentice Employment Network members continue to provide opportunities for people to overcome these barriers through life changing apprenticeships and traineeships.

Wage subsidies provided by the Federal Government were a significant financial incentive for employers to take on new apprentices and trainees to help to build a pipeline of skilled workers to support economic recovery in Australia during the pandemic. The impact of these programs has been significant. The number of apprentices and trainees commencing employment, Australia wide, and employed by Apprentice Employment Network members has reached its highest level in more than a decade.

Tasmanian small to medium businesses continued to be able to apply for Tasmanian Department of State Growth funding through AEN members which is then passed on to host businesses. The funding programs during the 2021-22 FYR included the Apprentice and Trainee Grant for Small Business and Mentoring for Success. Host businesses have been well supported in the past year by GTOs. In addition to our usual services, the required administration by GTOs to support government funded programs has been considerable.

Through the 'Mentoring for Success' grant program, the Tasmanian Department of State Growth provided funding to AEN Tas to raise the profile and promote the value of GTOs to small-to-medium enterprises. A marketing campaign was developed, including social media video and tiles, radio and print, and utilised the slogan "With a GTO Your Good to Go". The campaign has been re-funded and will recommence in November 2022.

The NAEN biannual national conference held in Hobart in March 2022 was very successful and a great showcase for our state and AEN Tas. Videos of host business representatives created for the "With a GTO your Good to Go" marketing campaign were shown on large screens at the conference. Our partnership with Skills Tasmania, that enabled these to be created, was also acknowledged. The videos have been provided to NAEN to be used to promote group training.

It's been a great pleasure working with AEN Tas members and as a Director on the NAEN Board in the past year.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

BY TROY AITKEN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The 2021/22 financial period has been another challenging time for Group Training, the VET Sector and the Government in South Australia with a lot happening over the past 12 months, including learning to live with COVID-19, and changes to Government at both a State and Federal level.

The last three years have been challenging however we have now learnt to live with COVID-19 and life has resumed to a new type of normal. Whilst COVID-19 has affected South Australians this year, we have still been fortunate that life with COVID-19 has not been as restrictive in the long term as we initially expected.



We are very fortunate in South Australia to have a supportive State Government that provides funding initiatives that support apprentices and trainees during their training. These initiatives support the Commonwealth initiatives provided nationally. Both Commonwealth and State Governments funding ended on 30 June 2022 with new funding announced for the following financial year. The Boosting Apprenticeship Commencement (BAC) Funding was extended until 30 June 2022 and continued to support the increased growth in our sector. The new Commonwealth Government introduced the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System (AAIS) Funding to aid in the retention of apprentices post-BAC Funding and has been a welcome addition for the new financial year.

AEN SA has been busy advocating for Group Training to ensure there is continued support in the sector and in the lead up to the State Election held in March 2022, AEN SA made a submission to both sides of Government. The recommendations made within this document were to guide future funding policy in the critical area of supporting employment and skills development for our state.

The three main recommendations were:

1. Implement a package of host employer support measures

- a. Permanent re-introduction of GTO Boost Funding of \$5,200 per trainee and apprentice over 12 months (\$100 per week) and;
- b. A new initiative, GTO Boost Plus Funding, for equity groups including women in non-traditional trades, Indigenous Australians, people with disability, regional & school-based trainees and apprentices of \$7,800 over 12 months (\$150 per week).

GTOs to pass on these support measures in full to host employers as reduced charge-out rates.

2. Maintain the South Australian Group Training Program (SAGTP)

- a. Funding be restored to the 2020/21 quantum and funding level splits per trainee or apprentice and;
- b. Direct funding to AEN SA be reinstated to the previous quantum and;
- c. Funding to remain in place until 30 June 2026

3. Maintain Regulation support measures

- a. Permanent Payroll Tax Assistance Program for GTOs and;
- b. Permanent Return to Work SA premium exemptions for trainees and apprentices employed by GTOs

As a result of the AEN SA submission to Government, and subsequent engagement with DIS & Department for Education, SAGTP Funding contracts were renewed for GTOs & the Association for a 3-year period. This also included a 12-month reinstatement of GTO Boost Funding for specific cohorts such as, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; a person living with a disability; Adult Apprentice or Trainee (aged 21 years or above upon commencement); School-based Apprentice or Trainee; All Female learners.

Whilst we did not receive all our recommendations, we were thrilled with the funding announcements for South Australian Group Training Organisations.

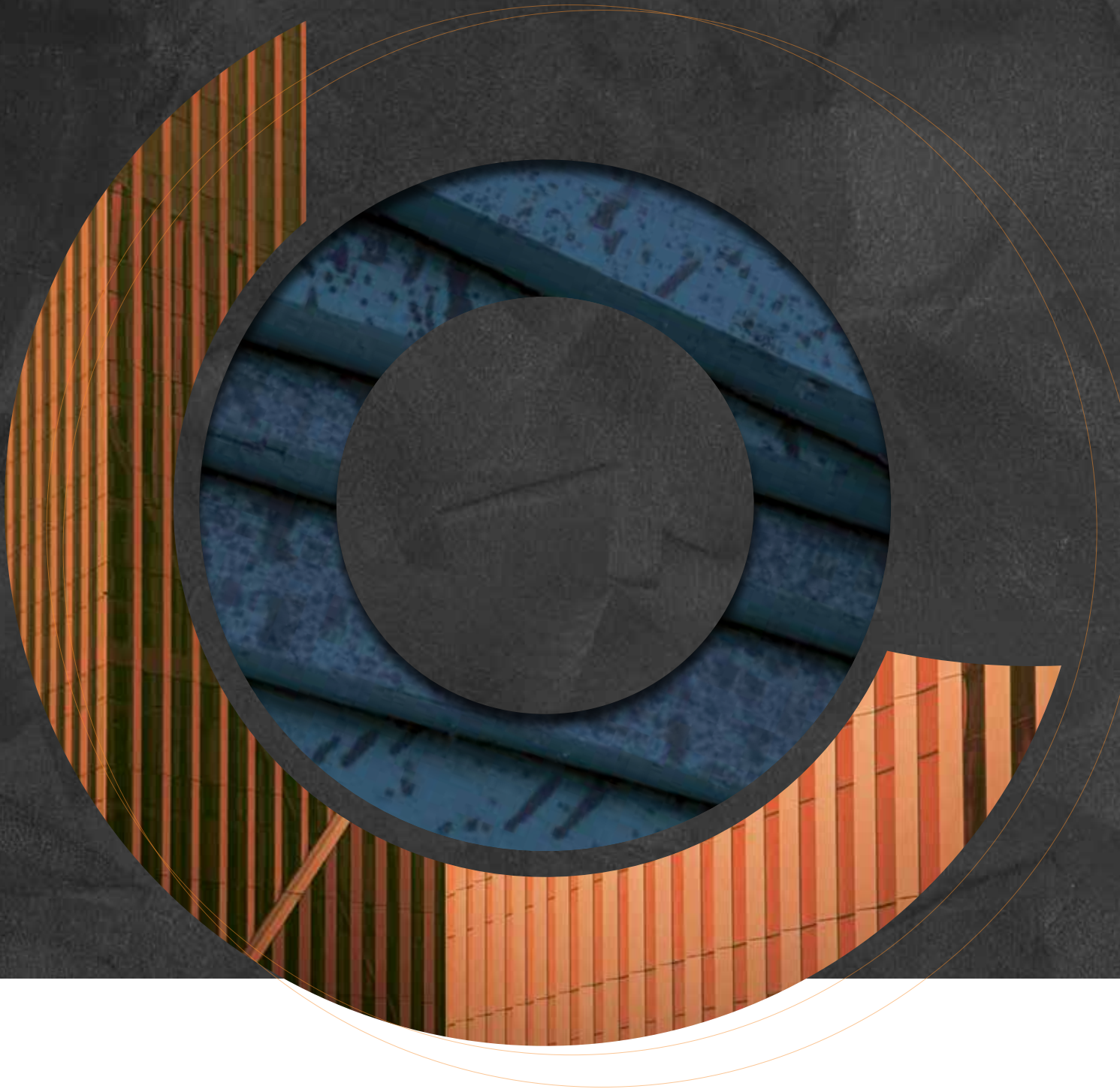
I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our members, who have worked tirelessly this year to assist South Australian businesses, and to create career opportunities for South Australians, particularly young South Australians.

The success of Group Training in South Australia can be attributed to the strong relationships and support received from, the State Government; the Department for Innovation and Skills; the AEN National Network; and most importantly our Board and Member Group Training Organisations, who work tirelessly to promote apprenticeships, traineeships, and the virtues of the Group Training model.

OUR MEMBERS

1300apprentice	www.1300apprentice.com.au
AGA	www.aga.com.au
Ai Group Apprentice & Trainee Centre	www.aigroup.com.au
Apprenticeship Careers Australia	www.apprenticeshipcareers.com.au
Apprenticeships Are Us Limited	www.apprus.com.au
Apprenticeships Queensland	www.appqld.com.au
ATEC Group Training	www.atec.asn.au
Australian Training Company (ATC)	www.austrg.com.au
Australian Training Works	www.atw.org.au
Career Employment Group Inc	www.ceg.net.au
Central Coast Group Training	www.ccgat.com.au
Community Solutions Group Ltd	www.communitysolutions.org.au
DGT Employment & Training	www.dgt.org.au
Directions Workforce Solutions	www.directionswa.com.au
East Coast Apprenticeships	www.ecapprenticeships.com.au
Electrical Group Training	www.egt.net.au
Electro Group (NSW)	www.egt.com.au
G-Force Employment + Recruitment	www.gforce.org.au
Golden West Apprenticeships Ltd	www.goldenwest.org.au
Group Training Employment (GTE)	www.gte.org.au
GTES (Complete Apprenticeship Management)	www.gtes.com.au
GTNT Group	www.gtntgroup.com.au
Hessel Group Training Organisation	www.hesselgroup.com.au
Hospitality Group Training (WA)	www.hgtwa.com.au
Housing Industry Association	www.hia.com.au
Hunternet Group Training Limited	www.hunternet.com.au
HVTC Pty Ltd	www.hvtc.com.au

IAHA Group Training	www.iaha.com.au
Kestrel Recruitment	www.kestrelrecruitment.com.au
Kimberley Group Training Inc	www.kgt.org.au
Master Builders (ACT)	www.mba.org.au
Master Builders Apprentices (SA)	www.mbasa.com.au/apprentices
Master Builders Apprenticeship Service (NSW)	www.mbanw.asn.au
Maxima Group Training	www.maxima.com.au
MEGT	www.megt.com.au
METL	www.metl.com.au
MIGAS	www.migas.com.au
Murray Mallee Training Co Ltd	www.mmtc.com.au
Murraylands Training & Employment	www.mtesa.com.au
MyGateway	www.mygateway.org.au
NECA Electrical Apprenticeships	www.necatrainng.com.au
NextGen Jobs	www.nextgenjobs.org.au
Novaskill	www.novaskill.com.au
OSMAC Group Training Pty Ltd	www.ogt.com.au
PEER	www.peer.com.au
Prestige Staffing Solutions	www.prestigestaffingsolutions.org.au
Programmed Skilled Workforce Ltd	www.programmed.com.au
Skill360	www.skill360.com.au
Skillset Ltd	www.skillset.com.au
Smart Employment Solutions Ltd	www.sesat.com.au
Squad	www.squad.org.au
Statewide	www.sgt.asn.au
Sunraysia & Murray Group Training (SMGT)	www.smgmt.com.au
TABMA Apprentices and Trainees	www.tabma.com.au
TAPS – Trainee & Apprentice Placement Service	www.gtsw.com.au
TasBGAS	www.tasbgas.com.au
The Apprentice and Traineeship Company	www.gtsw.com.au
Victorian Group Training	www.vgtc.org.au
Work & Training Ltd	www.workandtraining.com.au
WPC Group Limited	www.wpcgroup.org.au



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