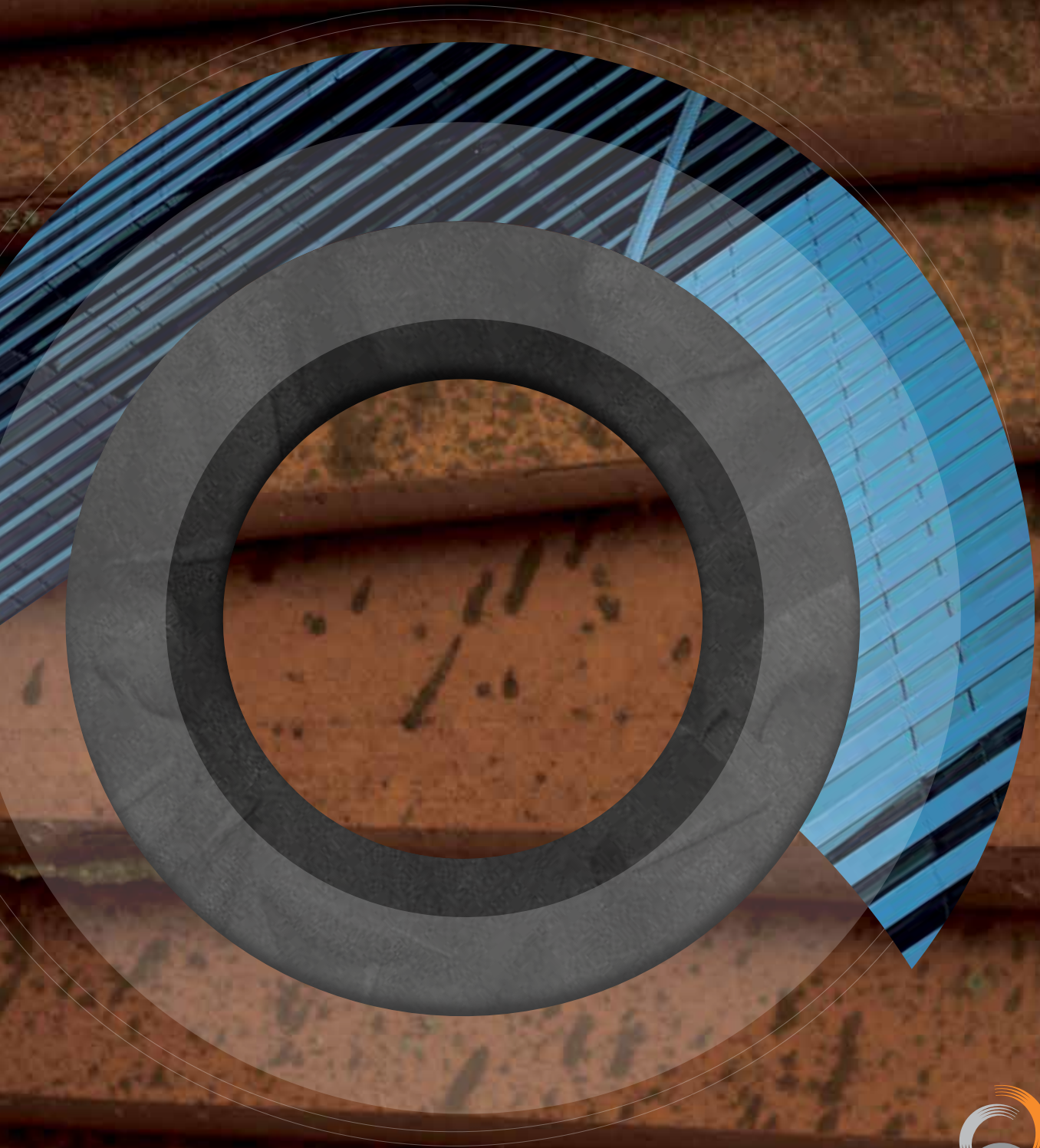


NATIONAL APPRENTICE EMPLOYMENT NETWORK

# ANNUAL REPORT **2022-2023**



National Apprentice  
Employment Network



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National Apprenticeship  
Employment Network





## 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.

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
<b>Sharon Smith</b>	Chair (from November 2022), Deputy Chair (until November 2022), NSW/ACT Representative	HVTC
<b>Tom Emeleus</b>	Deputy Chair (from April 2023), Member Representative	NECA Electrical Apprenticeships
<b>David Nagy</b>	Chair (until November 2022), Deputy Chair (from November 2022), SA Representative (until March 2023)	Maxima Group
<b>Iain McDougall</b>	Member Representative	Hospitality Group Training WA Inc
<b>Stuart Diepeveen</b>	WA Representative	Electrical Group Training
<b>Megan Lilly</b>	Member Representative (until November 2022)	Australian Industry Group
<b>Kathryn Stenson</b>	Member Representative	GTNT Group
<b>Paul Hillberg</b>	QLD/NT Representative	Apprenticeships Queensland
<b>Leanne Wallace</b>	TAS Representative	Work and Training
<b>Peter Andersen</b>	Member Representative	TABMA
<b>Tracey Kelly</b>	Member representative (from November 2022), SA Representative (from April 2022)	MTE SA
<b>Andrew McCarthy</b>	Member Representative (from April 2023)	Victorian Group Training Company

## SUB-COMMITTEES

### AUDIT BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE

**Stuart Diepeveen (Chair)**

**Iain McDougall**

**Sharon Smith**

### GOVERNANCE BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE

**Stuart Diepeveen (Chair)**

**Sharon Smith**

**Tom Emeleus**

# BOARD BIOGRAPHIES

## DAVID NAGY, CHAIR



David was a NAEN Board Director from 2017 until April 2023 and Chair from 2019 until late 2022. He was also a AEN SA Board Director from 2014 until 2023, including as Chair for several years.

With extensive apprentice employment expertise, David worked with Maxima Group for 19 years, most recently as Executive Manager - Recruitment Services. David 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, 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 was the Nominated Member for 5 years 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 a 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 22 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. 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 worked for 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. Stuart was promoted to General Manager at EGT in 2007, the role he still holds today. Stuart represents WA on the NAEN Board of Directors, nominated by AEN WA. Stuart is Chair of NAEN's Board Audit and Governance Sub-Committees.

## 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.

## 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.

## TRACEY KELLY



Tracey is the Chief Executive Officer of mteSA. She has over 26 years in senior management roles in the NGO, health and training sectors where she has been pivotal in developing compliance, risk and governance practices as well as strategic planning, transformation and cultural change. Tracey has worked as a Trainer and Assessor for a large national community not-for-profit organisation and was part of the training team when they transitioned to a Registered Training Organisation. Tracey assisted in the development of some units of competency that were related to the National Program that she managed on their behalf. Tracey holds a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) majoring in HR and Governance and is currently completing a Graduate Diploma of Applied Corporate Governance and Risk Management. Tracey is currently President of the AEN SA Board and sits on several committees including the Regional Development Leadership Development Program Steering Committee Murray Bridge and Riverland, Murraylands Skills Centre Steering Committee and Business Murray Bridge Committee. Tracey is an active member in both the regional communities and metropolitan areas where her GTO operates and is a passionate advocate of group training and apprenticeships and traineeships.

## ANDREW McCARTHY



Andrew is the Chief Executive Officer of Victorian Group Training Company (VGTC), a prominent employer of apprentices and trainees situated in the South West Victoria region for over 20 years. Andrew's background is characterised by expertise in the areas of strategic management and business development. As a member of the Apprenticeship Employment Network in Victoria and Board Member of the National Apprentice Employment Network, Andrew's unwavering dedication to VGTC's charitable purpose, coupled with his contributions to community initiatives underscores his commitment to both the apprenticeship and training sector and the broader community as a whole.





## STAFF

**DIANNE DAYHEW**

Chief Executive Officer

**KRISTEN SYDNEY**

Executive Support and Projects Officer

**ANGIIE TURAY**

Projects Manager

## 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 2022-23 financial year was one of significant change across the skills and training landscape, where a host of new initiatives and policy reforms were introduced into the apprenticeship sector.

I was honoured to be elected by the NAEN Board to the position of Chair in November 2022, replacing David Nagy, who became Deputy Chair.

Also at the meeting, NAEN welcomed a new Board Member, Tracey Kelly, Chief Executive Officer of MTE SA (Murraylands Training & Employment SA). Megan Lilly, Executive Director at the Centre for Education & Training at Ai Group, completed her term as a member representative on the Board.

The election of a new Labor government in May 2022 saw a renewed focus on the vocational education and training sector, leading to the Jobs and Skills Summit in September and a wide-ranging review of policies and approaches.

Under the incoming Minister for Skills and Training, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, NAEN was delighted to be re-connected with a senior Cabinet minister who has a long and positive association with group training.

There was also change at the Commonwealth departmental level, with the appointment of Ms Natalie James as Secretary of the new Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, replacing Dr Michele Bruniges who moved to a restructured Department of Education.

The incoming government delivered its Federal Budget in October, with a strong focus on measures to address workforce and skills shortages, including funding to establish Jobs and Skills Australia as a new broad-based national agency.

For NAEN, a highlight was the 30th anniversary gala dinner in Melbourne in December where the rich history of group training, its people and its achievements were showcased. Many Group Training Organisations (GTOs) also celebrated significant milestones during the period.



At its meeting in April 2023, David Nagy stepped down as Deputy Chair and Board Director. I extend my immense thanks to David for his contribution to group training and to NAEN since he joined the Board in 2018, becoming Chair in 2019.

The Board elected existing Director, Tom Emeleus, General Manager of NECA Training and Apprenticeships, as the new Deputy Chair. Also, Andrew McCarthy, CEO/Managing Director of Victorian Group Training joined the Board.

NAEN, under the direction of the Board, has contributed extensively to a wide range of policy and program reviews and consultations that affect group training apprentices and trainees. It is very encouraging to see the high regard in which group training is held, which is reflected in official publications published over the period.

I have been very encouraged by the positive member feedback about the work of the national body over this period, as well as the growth in membership which reflects the valuable work that NAEN performs.

I 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 extend its reach and influence.

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of our Patron, the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd). We are enormously thankful for the interest and commitment in group training by both the Governor-General and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley.

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

**Sharon Smith**  
Chair





## CEO'S REPORT

NAEN's member Group Training Organisations (GTOs) experienced a major shift in tempo during 2022-23 as businesses transitioned out of the COVID-19 era and entered a period that saw important changes to financial arrangements and policy direction.

From the end of June 2022, the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements (BAC) and Completing Apprenticeship Commencements (CAC) programs, which had assisted businesses to take on and retain their apprentices, closed to new entrants.

This coincided with the commencement of a new Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System that saw more targeted financial support from the Commonwealth, including on apprentice completions and priority skills.

NAEN worked extensively with member GTOs, the incoming Labor government, and officials in the restructured Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to assist GTOs in managing this transition.

This period also saw significant change across the VET sector as the new government, and the Minister for Skills and Training, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, embarked on a series of major reforms.

The establishment of Jobs and Skills Australia and the plan to create ten new Jobs and Skills Councils brought a new era of industry engagement, and new opportunities for the group training network to play a key role in a modern, efficient skills and training system.

NAEN took an active part in these reforms, including advocacy through meetings with Ministers, advisors, departmental officials, and through formal submissions to the reform process, including to the September Jobs and Skills Summit and to the consultation for the Employment White Paper.

During the period of the BAC and CAC employer incentive payments, the number of apprentices and trainees 'in training' reached the highest level in more than a decade. While this was a positive development, it also saw many employers taking on apprentices and trainees for the first time.

NAEN expressed its concern about falling completion rates and added its voice to calls for measures to lift retention. In particular, NAEN drew attention to the superior completion rates achieved through group training as a result of dedicated field officers, mentoring, and the 'rotation' that is enabled across host businesses.

NAEN also contributed to consultations on future arrangements for non-financial assistance through a revamped Australian Apprenticeship Support Service.

A proud moment was the celebration of NAEN's 30th anniversary in late 2022 – a landmark occasion for all those associated with the national peak body.

In the area of Indigenous employment, NAEN continued its long association through the valuable work of GTOs across the country, including in remote Australia. NAEN also undertook a co-design process with First Nations organisations for funding under the Commonwealth's Indigenous Skills and Employment Program.

There was growth in NAEN membership over the financial year, up from 59 members in 2021-22 to 63 by the end of 2022-23.

NAEN member GTOs perform remarkable work for tens of thousands of apprentices and trainees across diverse industries and communities. It is an honour to represent these incredible individuals and organisations.

I would like to acknowledge the small but tightknit team of staff, consultants and service providers that enable the national body to operate efficiently and with great impact.

Finally, I would like to thank the remarkable Board of NAEN whose insight, expertise and generosity enable NAEN to provide the services and support that contribute to skilled careers for thousands of Australians.

**Dianne Dayhew**

Chief Executive Officer



## ADVOCACY

*“Apprenticeships remained high on the new government’s agenda, and Minister O’Connor signalled his intention to improve participation by Australians from diverse backgrounds and increase overall completion rates”*

Following the election of the Albanese Labor government in May 2022, NAEN set to work establishing key relationships with new the Minister for Skills and Training, the Hon Brendan O’Connor MP, newly elected MPs, and key representatives within the newly formed Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

In September 2022 the Federal Government held its flagship Jobs and Skills Summit, leading to the formation of Jobs and Skills Australia and eventually 10 new Jobs and Skills Councils. NAEN was an active contributor in the lead up to the Summit and has worked hard to contribute to ongoing policy development during this time of significant policy change.

Apprenticeships remained high on the new government’s agenda, and Minister O’Connor signalled his intention to improve participation by Australians from diverse backgrounds and increase overall completion rates.

NAEN provided policy advice to the government through a range of mechanisms including direct discussions with the Minister and his Advisers, meetings with senior officials from the Department, participation in numerous working parties and steering committees, as well as the submission of formal policy papers.

NAEN’s advocacy during the year covered changes to the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives System (AAIS), implementation of the New Energy Apprenticeships policy, roll-out of the Apprenticeship Data Management System (ADMS) and reforms to the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network, as well as a range broader VET sector reforms.





## EVENTS



NAEN celebrated its 30th Anniversary with a gala luncheon in December 2022 at the Windsor Hotel, Melbourne. A large cross-section of NAEN members, life members and friends of the national group training network gathered to mark the occasion.

Guests heard a presentation from award winning apprentice Lucinda Shilcock, and a keynote address from Dr Daniel Mulino, the federal Member for Fraser, representing the Minister for Skills and Training the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP.

NAEN also attended the anniversary celebrations of member GTOs, My Gateway and Skillset.

NAEN was pleased to attend the Australian Training Awards where eight GTOs featured as finalists.

A member webinar was held to inform GTOs about the Annual Wage Review and important changes to the Fair Work Act.

Extensive planning occurred throughout the year for the 2023 NAEN National Conference, themed 'New Skills for a New World', being held in August 2023 in Melbourne, coinciding with the WorldSkills Australia National Championships.



## MEMBER ALERTS AND NEWSLETTERS

NAEN continued to communicate with members and the wider VET stakeholder network during 2022-23 through member alerts, newsletters and targeted emails.

NAEN's member alerts are designed to keep members updated with timely and important information as soon as it becomes available. This gives the NAEN member network early access to news from governments, departments and industry that helps with important business decisions.

NAEN's newsletter provides an overview of all the key information that is happening across the apprenticeship sector. It features 'good news' stories on the positive work of group training and individual GTOs across the country.

The provision of relevant news and information assists GTOs to stay in touch with various grant programs, NAEN-brokered programs, webinars, the NAEN National Conference, and NAEN's longstanding professional development program for apprentices and trainees – Today's Skills; Tomorrow's Leaders.

## MEDIA RELATIONS

**Building challenges are starting to ease, but that doesn't mean you'll be able to find a tradie**



**Apprentices to be screened for reading, writing and maths skills**

**The school that aims to stem the apprentice exit**

Christopher Harris  
Education reporter

**Jobs summit brings 180,000 more free TAFE places**

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

Coinciding with both the Jobs and Skills Summit and the federal government's review of Australian Apprenticeship Support Services, many media outlets reported on the problem of low apprentice completion rates.

NAEN Chief Executive Officer Dianne Dayhew featured in newspaper, radio and television reports that discussed these and other issues impacting apprentices and trainees.



# 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.

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.

Over the period, BCRITAB undertook extensive consultation with industry on a wide range of issues relating to workforce and skills shortages, apprenticeships, and training packages, and undertook promotion of career opportunities with schools, RTOs and careers advisers.

At the end of June 2023, a Funding Deed was signed between NAEN and TSNSW for an extension of the agreement for the 12 months to 30 June 2024.

## NAEN INDIGENOUS PROGRAMS

NAEN continued its important work with the National Australians Indigenous Agency (NIAA) to support First Nations apprentices and trainees through the national group training network.

Following delays in the rollout of the Commonwealth's new Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP), NAEN received an extension to its Targeted Assistance Employment Grant funding. Through this program NAEN was able to broker funds to 24 member GTOs that supported the employment of around 160 First Nations apprentices and trainees during 2022-23.

NAEN was also notified of its success in Stage 1 of the ISEP tender and was provided funds to work with First Nations communities in the Northern Territory to co-design an apprenticeship employment program aligned to local needs. Partnering with Aboriginal owned consultancy firm AAKITHER and member GTNT, NAEN held community co-design workshops in Darwin and Alice Springs, and submitted the proposed model to NIAA in May. NAEN is yet to hear the outcome of this final stage of the ISEP funding allocation process.

# STATE AND TERRITORY REPORTS



## NEW SOUTH WALES & AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

BY JASON SULTANA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

2022-23 has continued to be challenging, with governments and host employers working through a candidate-short market.

I want to congratulate the NSW and ACT Members during this testing period, as each GTO has managed a range of operational issues and state government initiatives to keep their businesses in a strong position.

We continue to work hard with the New South Wales and ACT Governments to support our members in several programs to improve apprenticeship commencements and completions. The strength of GTOs in achieving higher completions creates opportunities to work with the government on new initiatives.

In the financial year that has passed, we saw a new NSW Labor Government take power and a new Minister for Skills, TAFE, and Tertiary Education. With this change, a new government brings fresh ideas and philosophies to be implemented. We look forward to working with the NSW Minns Labor Government in the future.

Our members continue to work on a range of projects across the two states, including an emphasis on the following:

- GTO Recruitment Program
- Women in Trades Initiatives
- School-to-work programs
- School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

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

The markets in Queensland and the Northern Territory continue to present buoyant skills and employment opportunities matched to the social and community challenges of large rural and remote populations. The opportunities have led AEN QLD & NT to again grow in membership in 2022-23, whilst also supporting numerous new entities seeking initial GTO registration in Queensland.

Queensland Government modelling predicts Queensland will need an additional 280,000 workers by 2024-25 and of these workers, more than a third (38%) will require a vocational education and training (VET) qualification including those in high demand areas of health and community care, building & construction, and hospitality & accommodation services. A new Queensland VET strategy, currently in consultation, is looking to support the ever-expanding direct and adjacent skills needs in the renewable energy, advanced manufacturing and digital services sectors.

Similarly, seizing the employment and skills opportunities in the Northern Territory is made more difficult by a lack of available housing and accommodation, even for temporary workers. Defence, construction, maritime, and resources opportunities for apprentices and trainees are difficult to support due to the regional location of major projects and the lack of surrounding infrastructure.

Our 2023 GTO survey produced a record response from 37 Group Training Organisations; providing back to government the most insightful view into Group Training for some years. Survey data showed that GTOs continue to invest in infrastructure, resources, and programs that enable engagement and deliver results in all industries, communities, and regions, and with growing capacity to support candidates with higher or specific support requirements. The gathered data was also used to inform the Queensland Government of the widening VET access issues for our rural and regional industries and communities – further compounded by shortages of local accommodation, services, and social support.

During the period the GTO Pre Apprenticeship Program entered its third round with many projects being approved for delivery out to July 2024. These programs offer “paid from day one” opportunities for Queenslanders seeking downstream apprenticeships in the construction, engineering, hospitality, and automotive sectors with Round Three being reserved for candidates representing diverse, disengaged, and disadvantaged groups.

The 2022-23 period saw us complete a calendar of events and professional development; aligning the needs of members and government to provide opportunities to share knowledge and information across the network. Our monthly “Lunch & Learn” events have again provided access to topical online content that can be consumed “on the road” where our business is conducted. We will round out 2023 with the return of “Fieldy Forum” – now titled “GTO Forum” and the GTO Leaders Dinner in November.





## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BY IRENE WALKER, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Western Australian Association has had another successful year, with a record number of 25 Group Training Organisations (GTOs) as members. This is a testament to the Association's commitment to providing quality services.

WA's position as the economic powerhouse of Australia has ensured that our members have thrived. The State's fee-free vocational education, matched with skill shortages identified through skills priority lists, drove apprenticeship and traineeship employment for our members in key sectors, including automotive, building and construction, electrical, manufacturing, community services and health, finance, business services, hospitality and tourism.

Unfortunately, in January 2022, our member GTOs operating in the Kimberley region, suffered significant flood damage to their businesses, homes, roads and lands, from cyclone Ellie. Recovery efforts were hampered by the remoteness of the region and still continue today. It's heartening to know that the affected GTOs have continued their membership despite the challenges they faced.

Once again, our members excelled at the State and Australian Training Awards. We would like to extend a special mention to Brittany Leigh-Wragg, a Programmed employee, who emerged victorious in both the 2022 State Trainee of the Year and Australian Trainee of the Year categories. Additionally, Directions Workforce Solutions achieved remarkable success at the WorldSkills Regional championships, securing gold and bronze medals in carpentry. Furthermore, WPC Group employees were awarded two WA Duke of Edinburgh Scholarships.

Our annual Awards for Excellence program was again a resounding success. This year, our sponsors provided a record amount in prizemoney and donations. Thank you sponsors and congratulations to all the lucky recipients.

Our GTO members continue to provide apprenticeships and training opportunities for a pipeline of WA projects that will contribute to long term social and economic outcomes in various areas, including infrastructure, education, health, Aboriginal, and energy decarbonisation projects.

I extend my gratitude to the Management Committee and our members for their continued support of the Association.



## VICTORIA

BY GARY WORKMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 2022-23 financial year has seen members working through the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and a wide range of stimulus programs that have supported businesses over the past few years.

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

It is pleasing to see the recently elected state and federal labor governments prioritising youth employment, especially through apprenticeship programs.

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

Recent announcements on new initiatives will create opportunities for our network to support long term government priorities including the rollout of the Regional social housing and renewable energy programs in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Gippsland.

Also, work with the Victorian government on the new Clean Energy workforce strategy and the new State Electrical commission (SEC) will see the need an additional 6000 apprentices by 2030.

Overall, 2022-23 has been a strong year for the Association with significant government project funding to support new apprenticeship/traineeship opportunities. The AEN will continue to work on a range of projects in 2023-24 including:

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

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members, the AEN Board and staff for their support throughout the year.



## TASMANIA

BY LEANNE WALLACE, CHAIR

Apprentice Employment Network (Tas) is the representative body for GTOs in Tasmania and, as such, represents the largest employer group of apprentices and trainees in the state. The five companies who are members of Apprenticeship Employment Network, Tas are MEGT, Tasmanian Building Group Apprenticeship Scheme, NECA, TACC and Work & Training. Collectively they employ over 900 apprentices and trainees with the majority under 23 years of age. We contribute significantly to the future development of a skilled Tasmanian workforce, now and in the future.

In the past year two programs were funded by the Department of State Growth and managed by Skills Tasmania – the “With a GTO Your Good to Go” marketing campaign and the Mentoring for Success grants program. Both programs have been very successful and have begun to achieve the valuable objective of increasing the use of GTOs by small to medium enterprises, in all industries across the state. The Mentoring for Success program continues to encourage additional enterprises to consider using GTOs due to the financial support provided through the program.

AEN Tas was pleased to have a number of guest presenters attend our meetings in 2022-23. These included representatives from TasTAFE, Industry Training Hub and Skills Tasmania. Guest speakers will continue to be invited to our meetings to increase our connection and co-operation with Tasmanian organisations, with shared values, that can assist us to achieve our mission.

AEN Tas does not have an Executive Officer, instead the Chair, Deputy Chair and various members of the association advocate for the benefit of all Tasmanian GTOs, while creating a strong relationship with the Department of State Growth and the Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth.

In the coming year 2023-24, the members will again collaborate, openly share information, and continue as a respected industry association that is a relevant partner with businesses and Government in Tasmania.





## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

BY TROY AITKEN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The 2022-23 financial year has been a positive period for AEN SA, Group Training, the VET sector, and the South Australia Government.

AEN SA Membership currently sits at 23 Full Members and 3 Associate Members.

According to the most recent figures supplied by Skills SA in September 2023, apprentices, and trainees currently in training, employed by GTOs amounts to 4,508. This equates to 3,467 apprentices and 1,041 trainees employed by South Australian GTOs.

Recent data supplied by Skills SA indicates that commencement numbers for both Direct Employers and GTOs are down when compared to the same period in 2021/22. This decline in commencements is no doubt due to the end of Commonwealth Government BAC Funding and State Government GTO Boost funding for all commencements.

In spite of this decline, GTO market share in South Australia when compared to Direct Employers, has risen to from 21% to 30% for apprenticeships and 10% to 17% for traineeships.

Commencement numbers for Direct Employers and GTOs are in most cases also down for the targeted underrepresented groups, however GTO commencements for these cohorts have not diminished at anywhere near the same rate as is the case for directly employed apprentices and trainees.

The AUKUS announcement is exciting and welcome news for South Australia, creating excellent employment opportunities for future generations.

Whilst this is welcome news it will be now, more than ever, crucial for our State to invest in apprenticeships and traineeships, to ensure we have the skilled workforce required as we move forward.

The South Australian Budget released in June 2023, saw the Malinauskas Labor Government announce the continuation of GTO Boost Funding, committing \$2.2 million over the next 4 years.

Unfortunately, this funding is now only to support mature age apprentices rather than the previously funded cohorts which included Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; a person living with a disability; Adult Apprentice or Trainee; School-based Apprentice or Trainee; and All Female learners.



The SA Minister for Education, Training and Skills also recently announced a new National Skills Agreement for South Australia. This new five-year Agreement will see a \$2.29 billion joint investment in training and skills for the state. This represents an increase of almost \$690 million in funding, with \$440 million from South Australia and \$250 million from the Commonwealth over the life of the agreement from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2028.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our members, who have once again 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; Skills SA; 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.

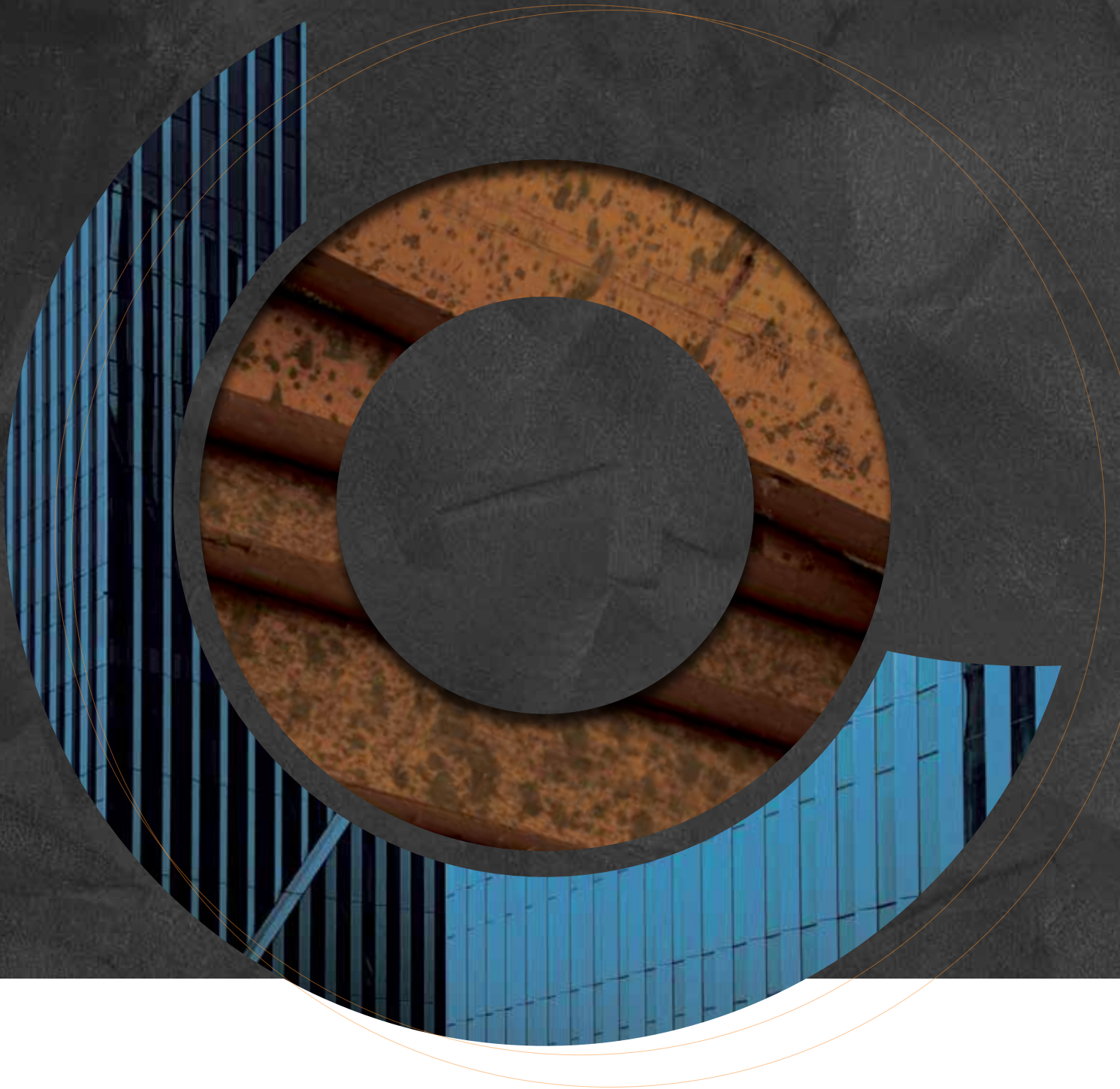


## OUR MEMBERS

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



IAHA Group Training	<a href="http://www.iaha.com.au">www.iaha.com.au</a>
Kestrel Recruitment	<a href="http://www.kestrelrecruitment.com.au">www.kestrelrecruitment.com.au</a>
Kimberley Group Training Inc	<a href="http://www.kgt.org.au">www.kgt.org.au</a>
Master Builders Apprentices (SA)	<a href="http://www.mbasa.com.au/apprentices">www.mbasa.com.au/apprentices</a>
Master Builders Apprenticeship Service (NSW)	<a href="http://www.mbansw.asn.au">www.mbansw.asn.au</a>
Maxima Group Training	<a href="http://www.maxima.com.au">www.maxima.com.au</a>
MEGT	<a href="http://www.megt.com.au">www.megt.com.au</a>
METL	<a href="http://www.metl.com.au">www.metl.com.au</a>
MIGAS	<a href="http://www.migas.com.au">www.migas.com.au</a>
MRAEL	<a href="http://www.mrael.com.au">www.mrael.com.au</a>
Murray Mallee Training Co Ltd	<a href="http://www.mmtc.com.au">www.mmtc.com.au</a>
Murraylands Training & Employment	<a href="http://www.mtesa.com.au">www.mtesa.com.au</a>
MyGateway	<a href="http://www.mygateway.org.au">www.mygateway.org.au</a>
NECA Education and Careers	<a href="http://www.necaeducation.com.au">www.necaeducation.com.au</a>
NECA Electrical Apprenticeships	<a href="http://www.necatrainng.com.au">www.necatrainng.com.au</a>
NextGen Jobs	<a href="http://www.nextgenjobs.org.au">www.nextgenjobs.org.au</a>
Novaskill	<a href="http://www.novaskill.com.au">www.novaskill.com.au</a>
OSMAC Group Training Pty Ltd	<a href="http://www.ogt.com.au">www.ogt.com.au</a>
PEER	<a href="http://www.peer.com.au">www.peer.com.au</a>
Prestige Staffing Solutions	<a href="http://www.prestigestaffingsolutions.org.au">www.prestigestaffingsolutions.org.au</a>
Programmed Skilled Workforce Ltd	<a href="http://www.programmed.com.au">www.programmed.com.au</a>
Skill360	<a href="http://www.skill360.com.au">www.skill360.com.au</a>
Skillset Ltd	<a href="http://www.skillset.com.au">www.skillset.com.au</a>
Smart Employment Solutions Ltd	<a href="http://www.sasat.com.au">www.sasat.com.au</a>
Squad	<a href="http://www.squad.org.au">www.squad.org.au</a>
Statewide	<a href="http://www.sgt.asn.au">www.sgt.asn.au</a>
Sunraysia & Murray Group Training (SMGT)	<a href="http://www.smgt.com.au">www.smgt.com.au</a>
NTHA Trainees & Apprentices	<a href="http://www.ntha.com.au">www.ntha.com.au</a>
TAPS – Trainee & Apprentice Placement Service	<a href="http://www.tapssa.com.au">www.tapssa.com.au</a>
TasBGAS	<a href="http://www.tasbgas.com.au">www.tasbgas.com.au</a>
The Apprentice and Traineeship Company	<a href="http://www.atcemployment.com.au">www.atcemployment.com.au</a>
Victorian Group Training	<a href="http://www.vgtc.org.au">www.vgtc.org.au</a>
Work & Training Ltd	<a href="http://www.workandtraining.com.au">www.workandtraining.com.au</a>
WPC Group Limited	<a href="http://www.wpcgroup.org.au">www.wpcgroup.org.au</a>



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