



WATER INDUSTRY SKILLS AND TRAINING NETWORK (WTAN) FORUM

3 June 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

WTAN Program

- **NSW Public Sector skills and training update**
- **JSC update – BuildSkills Australia**
- **TWRRP Skills and Training Action Plan Update**
- **Fresh Start for Apprenticeships and Traineeships Program**

NSW ITAB – Industry Skills Update

Lisa Giammarco

Executive Officer

NSW Public Sector ITAB



Public Sector ITAB Coverage

❖ LOCAL GOVERNMENT (LGA)



❖ PUBLIC SAFETY (PUA, POL, DEF)



❖ WATER (NWP)



❖ PUBLIC SECTOR (PSP)



❖ CORRECTIONS (CSC)



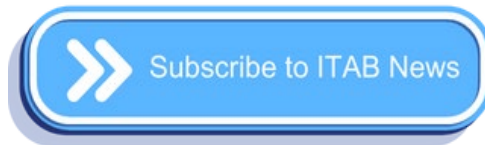
ITAB Update

The ITAB's remit is to:

- Collect employment and workforce development data for public sector industries to inform DoE on sectoral and regional issues around skills and training
- Communicate issues related to critical skills shortages and training supply and demand and disseminate information on skills and training and VET more generally to NSW stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement with ITAB

- **Contact me for**
 - Information on accredited training courses
 - NSW Skills List
 - Access to training providers in your region
 - Apprenticeships & Traineeships
 - Advice on school to work pathways
- **Stay up to date by subscribing to monthly newsletter**



- **Let me know about your successes and innovative practices**

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www.aisglobal.org.au/itab-home



Key ITAB Activities

- **Key activities**
 - National Training Package updates – Requests for fb/validation from TS
 - OLG: Fresh Start Program for 1300 Local Government A&Ts
 - Training Services: 1000 Public Sector A&Ts Program
 - DCCEEW TWRRP Focus Group
 - Improving access to training in regional NSW
- **Mid North Coast Local Schools and Employers Forums**
(Taree, Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour)
 - 27, 28 & 29 May 2025 (Cancelled)
- **Water (WTAN) and Government (GTAN) Industry Network forums**
 - *GTAN: Tuesday 23 September 2025*
 - *WTAN: Wednesday 24 September 2025*



Key ITAB Activities

2025 Review of NSW Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001

- NSW Department of Education is embarking on a Review of the NSW A&T Act
- ITAB has disseminated a Briefing Paper on the Act and shared a feedback survey with employers aiming to –
 - gather feedback about nay issues currently impacting the uptake of A&Ts our sectors, the challenges and any administrative burden
 - use feedback to inform future reforms to NSW A&T Act and/or Regulations
- [A&T Act Review Survey](#) closed on 2 June but you can still submit your input by emailing directly.

Current funded training and grants

Smart and Skilled

- NSW Fee Free arrangements for qualifications listed on NSW Skills List
 - NWP20122 Certificate II in Water Industry Operations Entitlement A&T (Traineeships)
 - NWP20122 Certificate II in Water Industry Operations NFF Jan-Jun 2025 Entitlement Full Qualifications
 - NWP30222 Certificate III in Water Industry Operations Entitlement A&T (Traineeships)
 - NWP30222 Certificate III in Water Industry Operations NFF Jan-Jun 2025 Entitlement Full Qualifications
 - NWP40120 Certificate IV in Water Industry Operations Entitlement A&T (Traineeships)
 - NWP40120 Certificate IV in Water Industry Operations NFF Jan-Jun 2025 Targeted Priorities Full Qualifications
 - NWP50118 Diploma of Water Industry Operations Targeted Priorities Full Qualifications
- 2024-25 Targeted Priorities Prevocational and Part Qualifications (TPPPQ) Program



Current funded training and grants

1000 NSW Public Sector Apprentices and Trainees Program

- For NSW Gov Departments & Agencies, State-owned Corporations and Public non-financial Corporations
- Employer **Round 3 Applications are now open**
- Around 340 positions will be available



1300 Fresh Start Apprentices and Trainees for Local Government Program (2025-30)

- Focus on training up new apprentices and trainees that will build better communities and alleviate skill shortages from 2025 - 2030
- Administered by the Office of Local Government (\$252M over 6 years)
- Round 2 applications closed April 2025 and grants now awarded
- **Round 3 applications open July 2025**



VET updates

Qualification Reform:

- Jobs and Skills Councils: Training Package products (Quals, Skills Sets and Units of Competency) must align with product/process requirements under new Organising Framework (TPOF) from 1 July 2025
- **New model features:**
 - qualification design **based on the qualification's purpose and industry needs**
 - **more flexible ways to address skills challenges**, rather than defaulting to training package changes
 - **a focus on identifying transferable skills**, so learners can understand their various career pathway options
 - **support for RTOs** through better information on how to use the qualifications
 - **a new alternative template for units that describe how knowledge and skills are applied** in a workplace setting (in addition to the current template for units that describe job functions and tasks)
 - **a consistent approach to foundation skills**, which are now mandatory in qualifications and must align to the *Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)*
 - **a greater emphasis on high quality data and meaningful stakeholder engagement** to justify qualification reviews and development.

ASQA: Revised Standards for RTOs - Full regulatory effect from 1 July 2025

[Practice Guides](#) | [Australian Skills Quality Authority \(ASQA\)](#)



INDUSTRY TRAINING ADVISORY BODY

Smart & Skilled Commencements

Qualification ID & Name	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	Total
NWP20115 Certificate II in Water Industry Operations					10	10
NWP20119 Certificate II in Water Industry Operations			<5	5		6
NWP20122 Certificate II in Water Industry Operations	<5	8				12
NWP30215 Certificate III in Water Industry Operations					21	21
NWP30219 Certificate III in Water Industry Operations		<5	186	199	65	451
NWP30222 Certificate III in Water Industry Operations	124	364	223			711
NWP30315 Certificate III in Water Industry Treatment					<5	<5
NWP40120 Certificate IV in Water Industry Operations	5	70	42			117
NWP50118 Diploma of Water Industry Operations			9			9
Total	133	443	461	204	97	1,338

Stream	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	Total
Entitlement A&T (Traineeships)	37	70	71	53	72	303
Entitlement Full Qualifications	91	284	334	151	25	885
Other (Full Qualification)		19	5			24
Targeted Priorities Full Qualifications	5	70	51			126
Total	133	443	461	204	97	1,338

National Jobs and Skills Councils

Public Skills Australia (PSA)

- [Defence Public Affairs Qualifications](#)
- [Firefighting Appliance Pump Technicians](#)
- [Emergency Tree Operations](#)
- [DEFEXO Defence Explosive Ordnance](#)
- [POL Police Training Package Release 9.0](#)
- [Correctional Services Implementation Findings Report](#)



Future Skills Organisation (FSO)

- [Update ICT30519 Certificate III in Telecommunications Technology](#)
- [ICT Training Package: Needs and Gap Analysis](#)
- [Qualification Design to Support Digital Capability](#)



Build Skills Australia (BSA)

- [White Card Implementation](#)
- [Minimum Australian Context Gap Training for Migrant Plumbers](#)
- [VET Future Readiness Review](#)
- [Civil Construction Review](#)
- [Hydrogen Skill Needs in the Plumbing and Gas Industry](#)
- [Insulation Installation & Inspection](#)



Jobs and Skills Council Update

BuildSkills Australia (BSA)

George Wall, National Manager, Water Sector Industry Engagement
BuildSkills Australia (BSA) GeorgeW@buildskills.com.au



Town Water Risk Reduction Program (TWRRP) Skills and Training Action Plan Update

Hannah Crockford

Local Water Utilities Branch,

Dept of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)





Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water



Skills and training project update

WTAN Meeting

Hannah Crockford
Skills and Training Project Officer

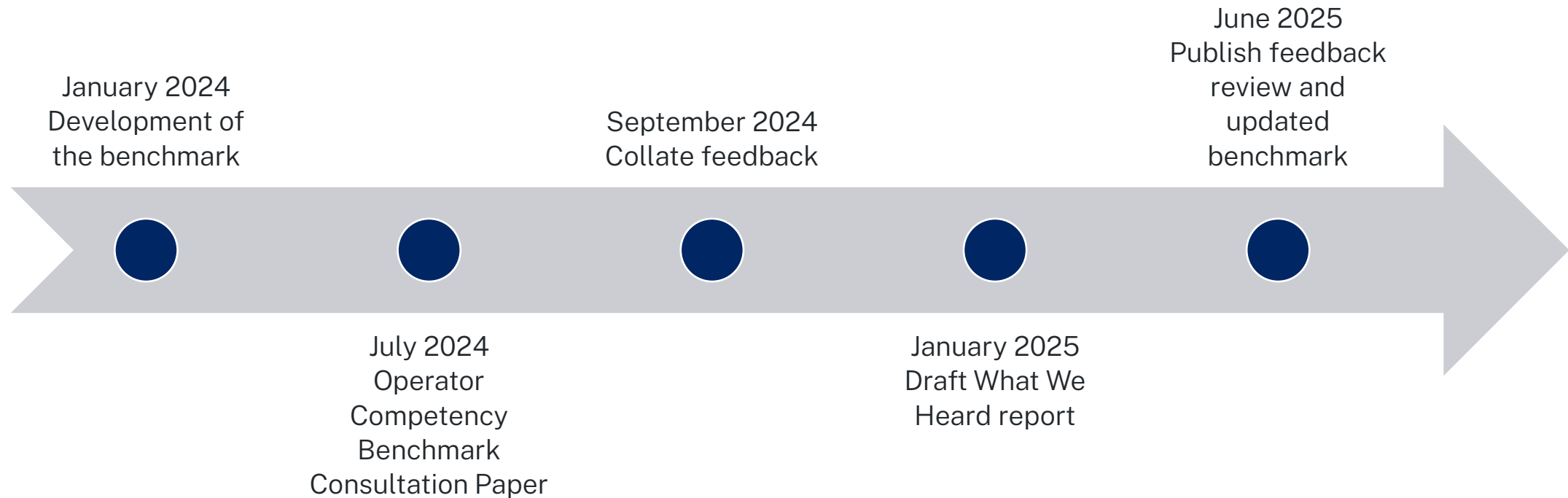
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Wrapping up Phase 2

1

Competency Benchmark for Local Water Utility Operators in NSW

Revised benchmark with implementation actions



Water industry traineeship guide

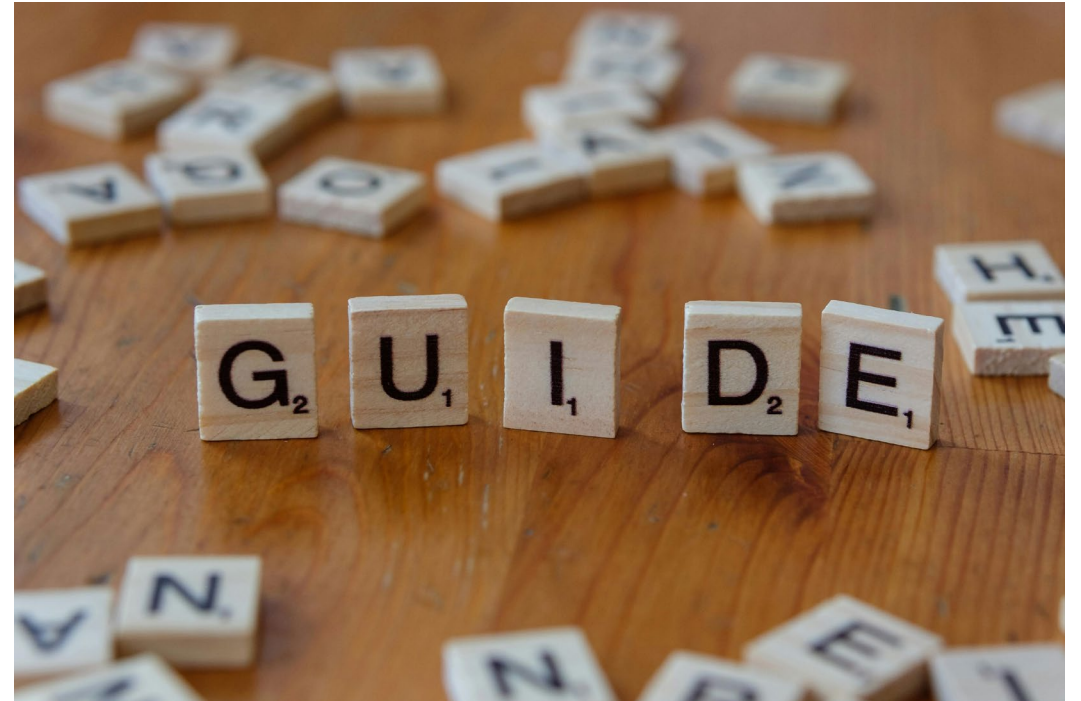
A handbook for local water utilities

Why invest in Water
Industry Traineeships?

What a Water Industry
Traineeship involves

How to successfully implement
a traineeship program

Resources
and contacts



Local Water Utilities Workforce Development Roadmap

2025



Storytelling to promote Aboriginal employment opportunities in Local Water Utilities

Videos at Bega Valley and Kempsey Shire Councils



Benchmarking template

Workforce planning for LWUs



- Workshops held at Snowy Valleys Council and Cobar Shire Council
- Workforce planning drafted
- Template will be made available for LWUs



Moving into Phase 3

2

Phase 3 TWRRP focus areas



Improve operator competency by establishing the competency benchmark

- Governance committee
- Training resources, assessment requirements
- Training needs analysis
- Skills passports

Increase workforce sustainability –roadmap to 2030 workforce development strategy

- Attraction and recruitment
- Employee support and career progression
- Understanding workforce skills and training needs
- Sector collaboration

Improve Aboriginal employment opportunities in LWUs

- Provide targeted support
- Multi-agency collaboration
- Increase uptake of traineeships

Promote collaboration, inclusion and consistency of training and workforce development across the sector

- Seek funding opportunities
- Investigate regional training centres
- Ensure NSW requirements are met through national collaboration

Workforce Futures team



Competency benchmark implementation:
training and assessment resources, advisory group, skills passport

Workforce development strategy:
attraction and retention, survey, water careers showcase days

Promote regional collaboration, inclusion, national conversation, funding opportunities, focus group, project and team management

Improve employment opportunities, inclusion and diversity for Aboriginal People, women and other minorities, increase traineeships

Manager Workforce Futures

Senior Skills & Training Officer

Senior Workforce Development Officer

Senior Workforce Participation Officer

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Fresh Start A&T Program for Local Government and Regional Water

Peter O'Dougherty

Office of Local Government NSW



Fresh Start-Workforce Development Program – WTAN Forum

Fresh Start Apprentices, Trainees & Cadets Program

3rd June 2025

Fresh Start Overarching principles

- Build capacity in councils and a stronger local government sector
- Increase the local government workforce
- Create positive social outcomes by generating local education and employment opportunities
- Contribute to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap

**Fresh Start for
Apprentices,
Trainees and Cadets
Program**

Fresh Start Program

Support councils to maintain sustainable workforces and develop capability.

- Fresh Start Program: Grant to fund 1,300 new apprentices, trainees, and cadets over 6 years (from January 2025).
- Address workforce shortages, boost local government sector (50,000+ employees)
- Create education and employment opportunities for the local community.



Workforce Development Plan

Phase 1: Foundations - *(January 2025 – Jun 2026)*

1. Establishment of Fresh Start Workforce Development Working Group *(Commenced)*
2. Supervisor Workshops *(Commenced)*
3. Trade Skills Recognition Pilot *(Initiation Phase)*
4. Skills Gap Analysis Pilot and Research Piece
5. Report – Options Analysis and Best Practice Blueprint

Phase 2: Scaling & Refinement

- Skills Gap Analysis tool
- Awareness
- Upskilling programs: Leadership, reskilling, emerging technologies, key sectors
- Area Strategies
- Other Projects

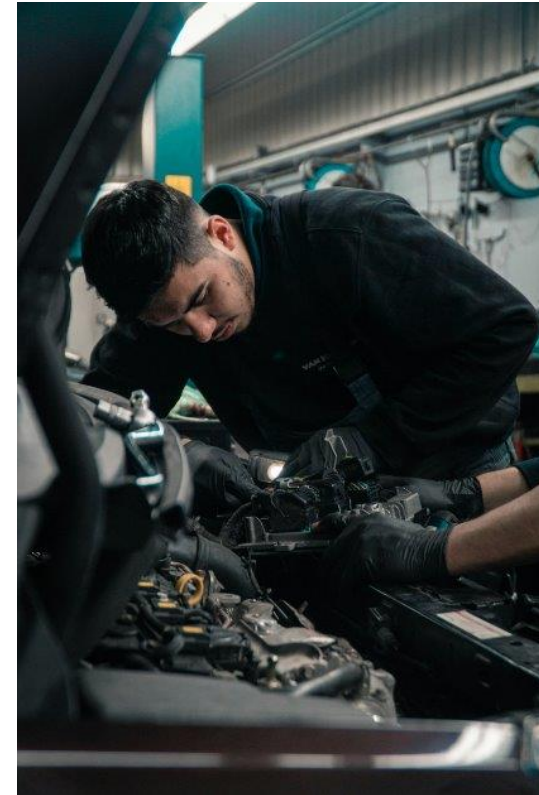
Outcomes of Phase 1 programs to form and influence Phase 2 programs.

1. WFD Working Group

Facilitate collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and problem-solving among stakeholders to provide feedback for Workforce Development strategies and programs, and advance shared goals in the Fresh Start for Apprentice, Trainee and Cadet Program.

To date

- Four meetings complete
- 9 councils, OLG and industry body members



2. Supervisor Workshops

- Equip supervisors to mentor apprentices and trainees
- In-depth adaptable program for long-term leadership development. Includes vocational knowledge and soft skills training
- Outcome: Higher retention and engagement



3. Trade Skills Recognition



Objective: Upskill council employees by developing skill sets that lead to a full qualification.

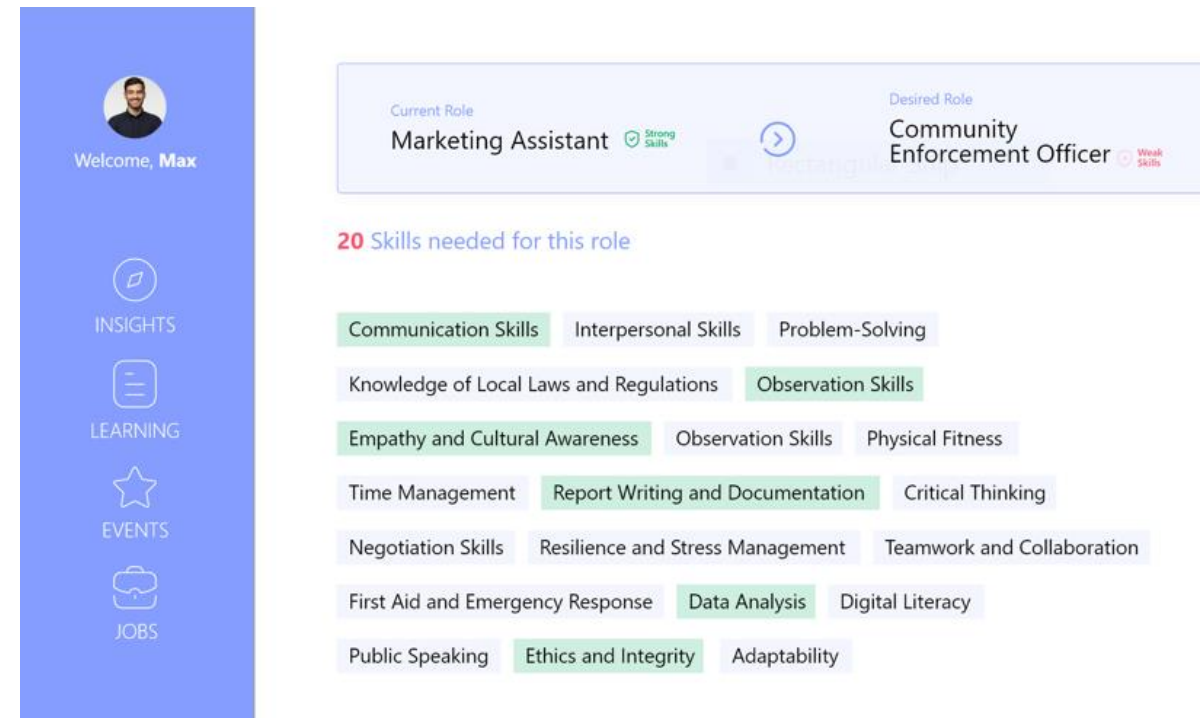
Key Focus Areas: Horticulture, Civil construction, and Water

Pathway to Trade Recognition

- Employees with trade experience but no formal Australian qualification can complete a gap assessment.
- Gap training is available at a registered trade provider.
- After training, employees can apply for a **Certificate of Proficiency** from the **Commissioner for Vocational Training**.
- Successful candidates gain formal recognition as a tradesperson or similar.

4. Skills Gap Analysis Program

- Research project in partnership with UTS
- Ai driven Insights: proactive identification of skills gaps (engineers, cyber, disaster planners, operations)
- Targeted upskilling
- Mentoring, retention and engagement



5. Options Analysis and Best Practice Blueprint

Objectives:

- better understand the workforce challenges affecting the sector;
- identify domestic and international examples of best practice frameworks and programs;
- evaluate successful programs and frameworks for benefit to the local government sector in NSW;





Lisa Giammarco

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Next WTAN – 24 September 2025