



# **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)



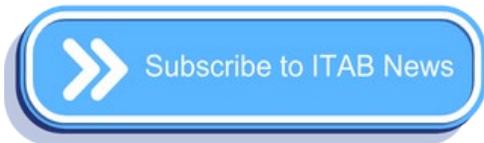
# ITAB Update

## 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**

[lisa.giammarco@aisglobal.org.au](mailto:lisa.giammarco@aisglobal.org.au)

[www.aisglobal.org.au/itab-home](http://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**



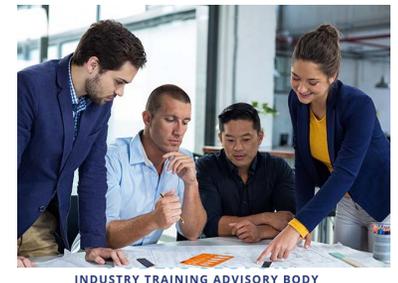
# VET updates

## 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 \(ASQA\)](#)



## 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1,338</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1,338</b>

# 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](mailto: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

3 June 2025

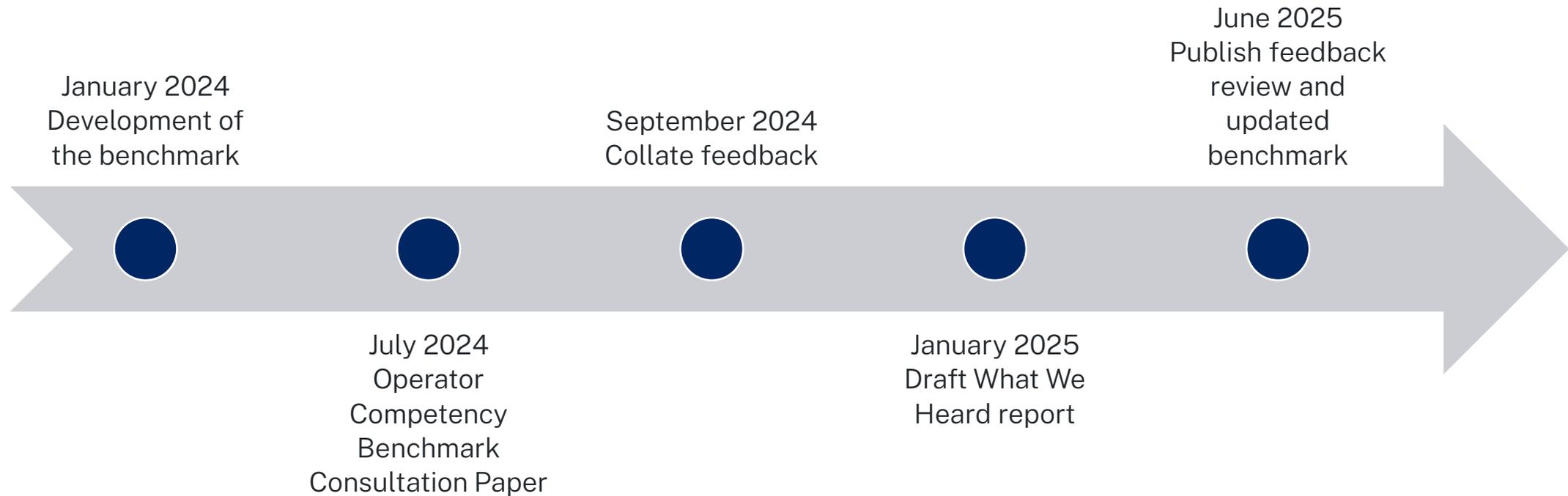
# Wrapping up Phase 2

# 1

# Competency Benchmark for Local Water Utility Operators in NSW



Revised benchmark with implementation actions



# Water industry traineeship guide

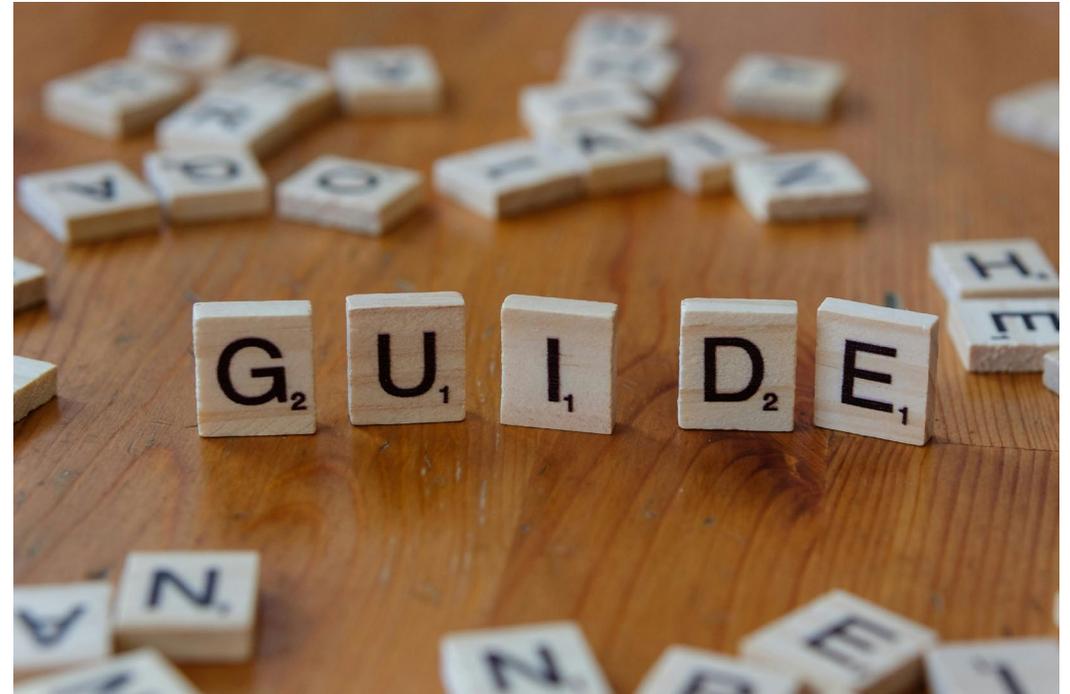
A handbook for local water utilities

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 finding 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

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Fresh Start Apprentices, Trainees & Cadets Program

3<sup>rd</sup> 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

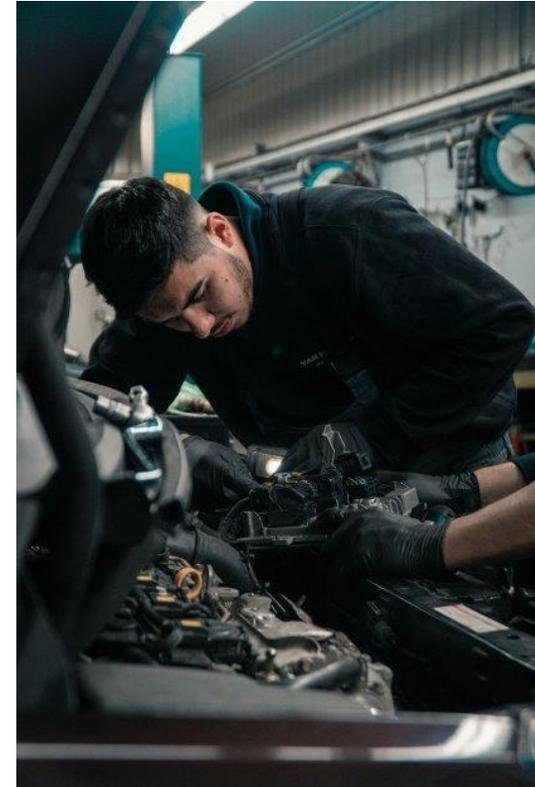
*Outcomes of Phase 1 programs to form and influence Phase 2 programs.*

# 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.

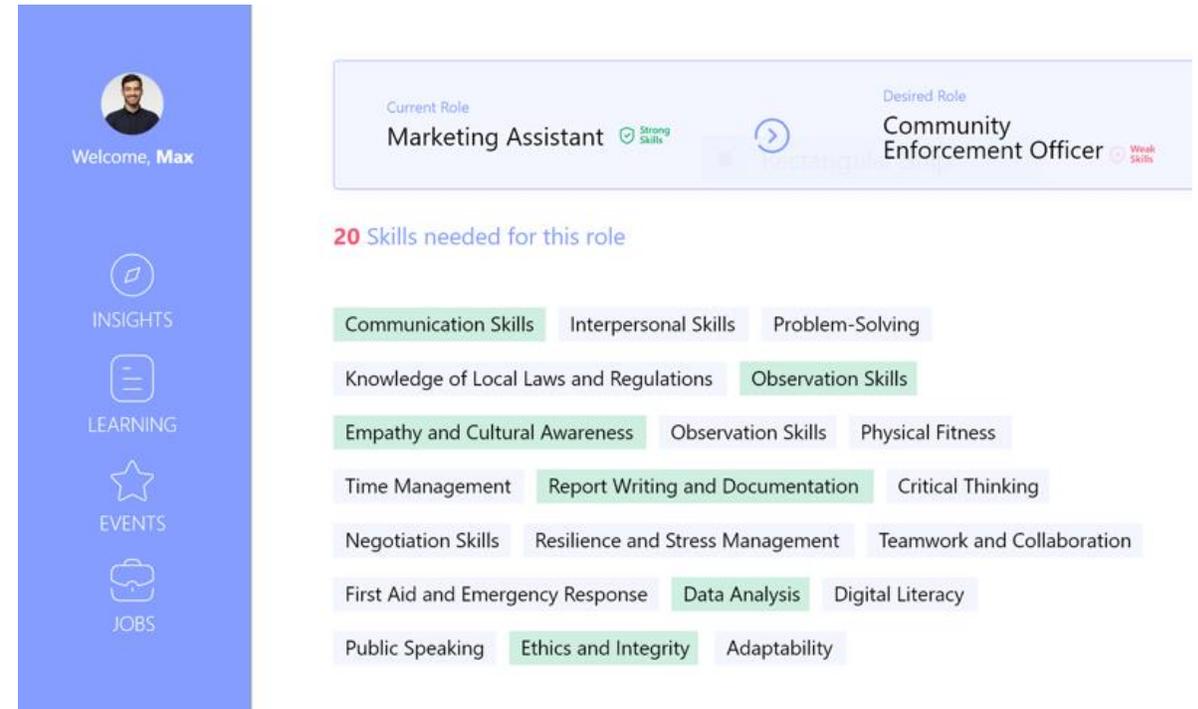
**Key Focus Areas:** Horticulture, Civil construction, and Water

## **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



The screenshot displays a user interface for a Skills Gap Analysis Program. On the left is a blue vertical sidebar with a profile picture of a man and the text "Welcome, Max". Below the profile are five menu items: "INSIGHTS" (with a magnifying glass icon), "LEARNING" (with a document icon), "EVENTS" (with a star icon), and "JOBS" (with a briefcase icon). The main content area shows a comparison between a "Current Role" and a "Desired Role".

**Current Role:** Marketing Assistant (Strong Skills)

**Desired Role:** Community Enforcement Officer (Weak Skills)

**20 Skills needed for this role:**

- Communication Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Problem-Solving
- Knowledge of Local Laws and Regulations
- Observation Skills
- Empathy and Cultural Awareness
- Observation Skills
- Physical Fitness
- Time Management
- Report Writing and Documentation
- Critical Thinking
- Negotiation Skills
- Resilience and Stress Management
- Teamwork and Collaboration
- First Aid and Emergency Response
- Data Analysis
- Digital Literacy
- Public Speaking
- Ethics and Integrity
- Adaptability

# 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;





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**Next WTAN – 24 September 2025**