



Name: Master Electricians Australia

Submission date: 12/06/2025

Improve school student outcomes with the best available tools and resources

What (if anything) needs to be done to improve the use of edtech tools (including GenAI) in schools?

The participant did not respond to this question.

What more (if anything) needs to be done to improve awareness and access to high quality lesson planning and curriculum materials in schools?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Is there anything more you would like to say about edtech, GenAI or lesson planning and curriculum materials?

For the electrotechnology sector specifically, Master Electricians Australia advocates for the Federal Government to partner with state and territory Governments to implement an ATAR-scaled Energy Subject into the Secondary School curriculum that includes Cert II / Cert III introductory units. The intent is for this to be a typical senior schooling subject, not a 'VET pathway'. It would not replace any existing VET pathways, but be in addition, for students who do not wish to consider a VET pathway at high school, or whose school does not offer a suitable VET course.

We often hear that businesses considering taking on an apprentice want to know that the person has an understanding and appreciation of the sector, for example by undertaking a Certificate II course. For many young people, this is not an easy option during school. A senior school subject to give exposure to an electrical career would give those students an edge in seeking an apprenticeship.

For this senior schooling subject, emerging technologies such as Virtual Reality (VR) should be incorporated to provide school students practical exposure through a safe, engaging, and immersive practical tool; particularly valuable in teaching high-risk or technical skills. In the future, Generative AI could also play a role in customising lesson materials, simulating fault diagnostics, and supporting teacher professional development through automated planning tools and real-time student progress tracking.

Investing in modern education technologies and curriculum reform will help attract younger generations, including young women and first nations students, into skilled trades, address workforce shortages, and ensure graduates are better prepared for the future of the industry.

Which of the following best describes you?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Are you currently using any edtech tools (including learning games and GenAI) to support teaching and learning in the classroom?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, what has been your experience with using these tools?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Are there things you would like to do with GenAI or edtech tools that you can't do currently? What's stopping you from doing these things?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you tell us why you are not using any edtech tools?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Do you access lesson planning and curriculum materials online?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, what has been your experience with using these tools?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you tell us why you are not using online lesson planning and curriculum materials?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Support the workforce through a flexible post-secondary education and training sector

Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning

In your experience, how well does the credit transfer and recognition of prior learning system operate in Australia? Does it adequately support students to move between courses or have their work experience recognised as part of a qualification? Are there ways it could be improved?

Due to the high-risk nature of the electrical industry, it is essential that electrical apprentices are adequately trained and that any RPL process is undertaken with high integrity. MEA is strongly of the view that training requirements for licensing or accreditation outcomes must be fit for purpose, current, and focused on the required skills for the licensed outcome.

Whilst beyond the scope of this consultation, we also note that RPL for international qualified electrical labour should be improved with certain countries to streamline a more efficient process for their employment in Australia.

Which of the following best describes you? Please select all that apply.

The participant did not respond to this question.

In the past 3 years, have you applied for credit recognition or recognition of prior learning (RPL)?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, what was your experience in applying for credit recognition or RPL like?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you elaborate on why you didn't apply?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Work related training

What are the main reasons individuals and/or businesses do or do not participate in work-related training?

The participant did not respond to this question.

What role, if any, should businesses be playing to address any barriers and better support the offer of work-related training to employees?

Work-related training is already a core component of the electrical apprenticeship qualification. However, small businesses, despite limited resource, typically attract and train the bulk of new apprentices. This process is both financially and administratively burdensome.

The challenge is further compounded by a common practice where larger companies (often working on government projects) offer materially higher wages to apprentices

when they enter their 3rd and 4th years of training, or when they become trained electricians. This practice not only discourages small businesses from taking on apprentices but also undermines broader workforce development efforts to address the electrical skills shortage.

What, if anything, could government do to address barriers and better support the offer of work-related training to employees?

The costs to train an apprentice over four years are substantial and not limited to RTO costs or apprentice wages. Costs also include the unproductive time spent by a qualified electrician supervising the apprentice, with a significant portion of this incurred during the first two years.

The Federal Government offers employers a \$5,000 incentive for a first-year apprentice through the Priority Hiring Incentive Scheme, however, Master Electricians Australia contends that further support is urgently needed. While appreciated, the value of the existing financial employer support is substantially insufficient compared to the significant costs employers face when training apprentices. For small businesses in particular, who lack the financial and administrative capacity of larger firms, this represents a significant, and at times unviable, burden.

The limited financial assistance suggests that the true cost of training apprentices, especially for small employers, has been underestimated. Without greater support, their continued participation in workforce development is at risk.

It is also worth noting that the current dynamic, where large contractors are able to offer higher wages and recruit from the existing apprentice pool, hampers broader efforts to expand the skilled electrical workforce.

If small businesses (who do the heavy lifting on apprentice training) were compensated for their significant investment during the first and second years of training an apprentice, this would likely encourage those businesses to continue hiring apprentices even if they move to larger businesses as they become more competent. Financial support could be restricted to businesses dedicated to undertaking training in apprentice supervision and demonstrating commitment to training their apprentices.

In addition, MEA supports a national CPD framework for electrical workers, which should involve delivery of CPD units at no or low cost by registered providers (not limited to RTOs) and include online learning modules. This will assist small businesses to undertake the required skills maintenance and skills development.

BARRIERS/CHALLENGES SMALL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS FACE IN PROVIDING SUPPORT

RTO Training – MEA members have raised concerns about the opportunity cost of sending apprentices to RTO training. Employers must continue paying wages during training periods, despite the loss of billable hours. These costs increase further if an apprentice fails a unit and requires additional time off the job to re-sit the course.

As part of a pre-election commitment, the Queensland Government pledged to conduct a trial in 2025/26 to subsidise (a limited number of) apprentice wages during block training periods for construction industry apprentices. MEA urges the Federal

Government to implement a similar scheme nationally to better support employers and encourage continued investment in apprentice training.

Supervision Ratios - Jurisdictions across Australia are increasingly adopting risk-averse approaches to apprenticeship supervision. Over the past year, New South Wales, Victoria, and the Northern Territory have tightened supervision ratios, including the introduction of 1:1 direct supervision requirement.

MEA members advise that apprentice competence and ability varies, and also that certain work can easily be undertaken with more than one apprentice while providing appropriate direct supervision (for example if, in a commercial fit-out where supervisor and apprentices are working in the same area within eye and earshot, a matter requires greater oversight other apprentices can stop work and watch while that occurs).

These changes limit employers' capacity to take on apprentices for work-based training due to insufficient supervisory capacity. As noted above, small businesses typically shoulder the responsibility of onboarding the bulk of new apprentices, meaning these restrictive requirements inherently hinder workforce development.

MEA believes such constraints are unnecessarily limiting and instead advocates for a greater focus on supervisor training and apprentice competency, while retaining concepts of direct, general and broad supervision, rather than rigid, time-based supervision ratios.

VET Teaching Capacity – Due to a shortage of VET teaching staff/trainers, our members face delays in securing timely training for their apprentices. MEA advocates for streamlined competency requirements and reduced costs for VET teacher qualifications to increase the number of TAE-qualified instructors and also incorporate elements of virtual reality in training to expand training capacity.

Free TAFE – As noted in MEA's Free TAFE Bill submission, not all jurisdictions currently offer fee-free TAFE courses for Certificate II and III in Electrotechnology. This places a significant financial burden on employers where such subsidies are not available. MEA recommends that free TAFE agreements under section 8(b) of the Free TAFE Act 2025 include reference to regulations outlining a prioritised list of core VET courses applicable across all jurisdictions, with Certificate III in Electrotechnology identified as a key priority area.

Rural and Remote Areas – Our members in rural and remote areas face challenges enrolling apprentices in RTO courses due to long travel distances and limited course availability. The continued reliance on face-to-face training places an unnecessary strain on resources, not only due to the shortage of qualified trainers but also the high costs associated with apprentices travelling to attend training.

Given advancements in technology such as Virtual Reality (VR), MEA encourages its integration into appropriate aspects of training and licensing requirements such as CPD and LVR. Incorporating VR could help reduce these barriers for rural and remote apprentices and serve as an incentive for more individuals in these regions to enter the trade, without being discouraged by the travel demands of traditional training models.

MEA understands it is possible to verify a 'play' of a training video via VR and for a trainer to remotely view the experience and assess an outcome. This would reduce the pressure on trainers and physical training places.

Which of the following best describes you? Please select all that apply.

The participant did not respond to this question.

For business owners, managers and sole traders, how many employees do you have?

The participant did not respond to this question.

For employees/individuals, have you participated in any work-related training in the last 12 months that did not relate to general compliance (such as WHS)?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, can you elaborate on the reasons for the training and any benefits you received from doing it?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you elaborate on any challenges or barriers you faced in attempting to undertake work-related training?

The participant did not respond to this question.

For business owners, managers or sole traders, have you provided or supported your employees to participate in work-related training in the past 12 months?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, can you elaborate on the reasons for the training and any benefits you or your employees received from doing it?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Can you describe whether you accessed any government assistance, what type, and the amount received? If you didn't access any financial assistance, please tell us the reasons why.

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you elaborate on any challenges or barriers you faced in attempting to provide or support your employees to undertake work-related training, such as the time or cost, availability of relevant or high-quality courses, and level of interest from your employees?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Balance service availability and quality through fit-for-purpose occupational entry regulations

What are the effects of occupational entry regulations? Please describe your experience and name the specific occupations you are referring to.

The electrical industry is a high-risk sector with a high-barrier to entry, including four years of training and the completion of a Cert III qualification. These requirements are essential to ensure competency, uphold safety, protect workers and consumers, and maintain public confidence in the industry.

MEA has provided a submission in relation to national licensing of electrical workers . Our response to this is attached to the survey.

Do you believe current occupational entry regulations are proportionate to the level of risk associated with different professions? Why or why not? If not, do you have any suggested improvements to regulations to better reflect risks? Please name the specific occupations you are referring to.

Regulations across Australian jurisdictions continue to impede efficient workforce development. Key issues noted earlier in this survey include:

- High training costs and the risk of losing apprentices to larger companies
- Restrictive supervision ratio requirements
- A shortage of qualified VET teachers
- Limited access to training in rural and remote areas
- Harmonised licensing.

Obtaining a Contractors License - Another concern affecting both industry and consumer confidence is the ease with which electrical workers can obtain a contractor's licence in certain states, such as New South Wales, where the process is largely administrative.

This can result in individuals operating as licensed electrical contractors without adequate competence, undermining trust within the industry.

MEA urges all states and territories to adopt a licensing framework aligned with Queensland's model, which requires minimum training and a defined period of experience as a qualified electrical worker prior to issuing a contractor's licence.

Adopting MEA's proposed nationally harmonised contractor licence eligibility framework would address these issues by establishing consistent, higher standards across all jurisdictions.

You can read more about MEA's advocacy on workforce development in the attached document "Workforce Development Policies"

Which of the following best describes your connection to occupational entry regulations? Please select all that apply.

Industry association or professional-body representative

Which state or territory are you predominantly based in?

Queensland

Cover sheet: Supporting document #1

National Competition Policy Analysis

FED

Georgia Holmes and Kate Raymond

June 2025



Master Electricians Australia (MEA) is a peak industry association representing electrical contractors and is recognised by industry, government and the community as a leading business partner, knowledge source and advocate. You can visit our website at www.masterelectricians.com.au

MEA welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Australian Government's review of national competition policy and its focus on enhancing productivity.

Amid a critical skills shortage and rising demand from electrification and housing, mobilising the electrical workforce across jurisdictional borders is vital.

MEA commends the Government's pre-election commitment to reforming occupational licensing in the electrical sector, which is a vital step toward building a more agile, cost-effective, and sustainable workforce. As a high-risk trade, licensing must be in place to ensure only qualified workers can perform electrical work.

Harmonising licensing eligibility rules across all states and territories ensuring the highest standards are retained, combined with consistent national CPD requirements, and removing the requirement to pay licensing fees across multiple jurisdictions will significantly improve safety and quality outcomes in the electrical sector while reducing barriers to workforce mobility.

MEA also advocates for free access to Australian Standards for all electrical workers, particularly given electricians must legally comply with the Wiring Rules. A national licensing model that ensures free and consistent access to these standards is essential for a safe and fair electrical industry.

Occupational Licensing

Which occupations would be best-suited to a national licensing scheme?

MEA believes national occupational licensing is best suited to high-risk occupations such as electrical, plumbing, mechanical and fire protection. We address those of relevance to MEA below.

Electrical workers - We support a harmonised licensing model for electrical workers, where all states and territories adopt consistent eligibility requirements for electrical licensing, while each jurisdiction retains control over administration, compliance, and enforcement. This model strikes the right balance between national consistency and local oversight, without compromising jurisdictional authority.

All jurisdictions currently licence electrical workers, but with differing eligibility rules for obtaining a licence and differing status of mutual recognition acceptance. Instead, one set of requirements for licensing across the nation, maintaining high standards, would produce more streamlined outcomes and improved safety and quality outcomes for some jurisdictions.

Unlike full national licensing (which centralises regulation and diminishes state autonomy), or AMR alone (which is limited by inconsistent entry standards), harmonised rules with state-based governance would promote workforce mobility, uphold safety standards, and respect the unique regulatory needs of each state and territory.

With each state and territory maintaining contractor licensing requirements, notifications in relation to jurisdiction-specific regulatory requirements (outside occupational licensing) can still be maintained via the employing electrical contractor.

Air Conditioning and Refrigeration – We believe installation, maintenance and repair of air conditioning would also suit a national harmonised licensing model.

Currently, electricians in some jurisdictions are able to install split system air conditioning units less than 18kw provided they also have the 'ARCTick' accreditation. In other jurisdictions, an electrician must complete another full qualification and obtain an additional licence to install a split system air conditioner even if they hold the ARCTick qualification.

Even more concerning, in South Australia there is current advocacy for air conditioning and refrigeration mechanics to be able to undertake the electrical installation work involving the initial connection of air conditioning units, which is normally restricted to fully licensed electrical workers and very dangerous for trades who are not qualified electricians to undertake full connections (as opposed to a restricted licence which would allow disconnection/re-connection as part of repair or maintenance, but does not provide for any work at a switchboard or for the initial connection from the local isolator).

National licensing eligibility rules would prevent some states permitting non-electricians to undertake electrical work and would ensure consistency of work is able to be permitted by electrical workers and air conditioning and refrigeration workers.

Plumbing and Gas Fittings – In some jurisdictions, licensed electricians can obtain a restricted plumbing licence to carry out like-for-like hot water system and gas appliance (e.g. stove) replacements. However, this restricted licence is not nationally consistent.

This fragmented regulatory model undermines workforce mobility and drives up costs for consumers. As with air conditioning and refrigeration licensing, MEA urges the adoption of a nationally harmonised restricted plumbing and gas licence, a reform that supports safety, compliance, and economic efficiency.

Fire protection – Another area impacting multiple trades is fire protection work. We consider this work suitable for national occupational licensing as it is a high-risk trade with inconsistent requirements around Australia.

There is also a lack of clarity whether electricians can perform inspection and testing of emergency and exit lighting in jurisdictions with fire protection licensing or accreditation requirements, and debate as to the necessary training for a qualified electrician to perform maintenance and testing on alarm and detection systems.

Other Electrical Work Licenses – such as linesperson, electrical fitters and jointers would also be suitable for national harmonised licensing.

Contractor Licensing – While significant attention is being given to harmonised occupational licensing, MEA members are also calling for improved harmonisation of electrical contractor licensing and reduction of multiple licensing fees across jurisdictions.

Currently, the AMR scheme and the Federal review of occupational licensing apply only to individuals. This leaves businesses needing to undertake different assessments/qualifications in some jurisdictions and needing to pay multiple contractor licensing fees to operate across various jurisdictions. MEA members, particularly those located near jurisdictional borders, often operate interstate, typically having to absorb these expensive and time-consuming costs.

What would be the first steps towards a national licensing scheme for selected occupations?

- *Determining the Nationally Agreed Licensing Requirements (Competencies and Assessment Process) for All Electrical Workers* - MEA supports a review of all requirements, with a view to upholding the highest licensing standards across Australia and uplifting requirements in some jurisdictions to meet that standard. Collaboration and agreement among state and territory electrical safety and building industry regulators will be required to secure a unified set of requirements. An industry working group of government, employer and employee representatives should be established for each occupation under consideration for national licensing, to make recommendations to government. MEA submits it should be represented on groups discussing electrical, air conditioning and fire protection licensing as well as in relation to restricted licences in plumbing and gas.
- *Determining The Regulatory Body/Bodies* – MEA proposes each jurisdictional regulator remain the governing authority for licensing and enforcement within

its state or territory. This allows continuity of service and oversight in each jurisdiction.

- *Communication and Consultation* - Industry organisations, such as Master Electricians Australia, will play a critical role as communication channels and support networks to ensure the success of the transition.
- *Enhancing the Licensing Framework* – A national occupational licensing scheme is an opportunity to enhance safety and quality outcomes in the electrical sector, by:
 - Enhanced rigour in the qualification assessment process – MEA advocates for a national suite of learning and assessment resources be provided for use by RTOs. This will assist with more consistent training outcomes across Australia. MEA notes Energy Skills Australia has developed some resources which could be reviewed and considered by Powering Skills Organisation (the national jobs and skills council for the energy sector).

In addition, to ensure rigour in the capstone assessment process and address the additional licence assessment process in Victoria (which we submit other jurisdictions are unlikely to be able to implement), an independent audit of how RTOs are conducting their capstone assessments could be implemented. For example, an independent industry body like MEA could conduct random audits of RTOs and how the capstone assessments are undertaken to ensure students are being adequately assessed as competent before passing their qualification.

- Improved and consistent use of eprofiling – We often hear that Exemplar profiling (eprofiling) is not being undertaken properly, or that the requirements are not appropriate for current settings. A review of the requirements (with Powering Skills Organisation as part

of the review) of the certificate III qualification should be undertaken. This should be combined with training for apprentice supervisors and business owners on how to properly implement eprofiling, to improve outcomes for all.

- [Introduction of nationally consistent Continued Professional Development \(CPD\) requirements for licensed electrical workers](#) - This would ensure electrical workers have current knowledge of all relevant rules and regulations and maintain their knowledge and understanding of inspection and testing requirements. In addition, CPD would ensure electricians obtain requisite knowledge of new technologies impacting their work. MEA advocates for a framework whereby registered entities (not limited to RTOs) can deliver free and low-cost training modules with online options (with learning outcomes), with annual review of mandatory topics to ensure up-to-date knowledge of regulatory changes, technological advancements and areas with highest defect rates.
- [Free access to the electrical Australian Standards for all licensed electrical workers](#) – This would be possible with a national occupational licensing scheme. Electricians must legally comply with the Wiring Rules (the set of electrical Australian Standards) and is therefore imperative all electrical workers have free access to these mandated rules.

Why did previous attempts at a national licensing scheme, such as the National Occupational Licensing Scheme, fail? How could a renewed attempt overcome the barriers to a national licensing scheme?

In 2007, the Labor Government initiated the National Occupational Licensing System (NOLS) to standardise occupational licensing across Australia, including the electrical industry. However, we understand the initiative lacked support from several states and territories due to concerns over the proposed model, associated costs, and

discrepancies in electricians' permitted scopes of work.¹ In particular, MEA understands that some states did not agree to change their requirements to reduce rigour in licensing processes to what was seen as 'coming down to the lowest common denominator' and other states did not agree to increasing requirements.

Nearly a decade on, the electrical industry is grappling with a critical skills shortage amid surging construction demand driven by electrification and increased housing supply. As outlined in MEA's [AMR Matrix](#), several jurisdictions have yet to include electricians under the AMR scheme, resulting in ongoing limitations and administrative barriers to workforce mobility.

Given these challenges, MEA advocates that a system involving nationally agreed and consistently applied requirements for high-risk occupational licensing across Australia delivered by existing state and territory licensing bodies would strike the right balance between retaining state and territory control over regulation and compliance while enhancing safety and compliance standards and workforce flexibility to address the pressing demand for skilled professionals in high-demand, high-risk occupations.

As an example, in Queensland the Electrical Safety Regulation provides for equivalence of licences obtained outside Queensland enabling holders of an equivalent licence to lawfully carry out electrical work within the scope of the deemed equivalent Queensland licence category (without the need for any notification or application).

What benefit would a national licensing scheme provide over an expansion of the automatic mutual recognition scheme?

Harmonised licence eligibility rules across Australia, implemented through harmonised legislation, would offer a more permanent solution if established through a nationally agreed framework, similar to national work health and safety laws or the National Building Code.

¹ Select Committee on Red Tape "Effect of red tape on occupational licensing Interim report" *The Senate* [August 2018] < [Report: Effect of red tape on occupational licensing](#) >

In contrast, AMR is simply a recognition of the separate and different rules applying in other jurisdictions. AMR is also applied inconsistently throughout Australia and often requires notification or application process to occur in additional jurisdictions.

We believe a national electrical licensing framework adopting the elements set out in this submission would reduce red tape, enhance workforce mobility, improve safety and compliance, and support a more efficient and safer national electrical industry. It would benefit not only practitioners but also regulators, employers, and consumers by increasing confidence in the competency of individuals working interstate.

How could the PC best quantify the benefits of a national licensing scheme?

- **Construction Output:** Increased licensing flexibility would enable labour to move to high-demand areas, reducing delays and boosting productivity. This can be measured through changes in national construction output over time.
- **Compliance and Safety:** A unified licensing eligibility system that takes advantage of the opportunity to increase and enhance standards across Australia would improve understanding of obligations, and compliance and safety outcomes. Key indicators include rates of licensing breaches and electrical safety incidents before and after implementation. The cost and delay impacts of defective work and unsafe work are significant.
- **Economic Modelling:** The Productivity Commission could commission cost-benefit analyses or economic impact models to compare the long-term productivity and fiscal outcomes of a national licensing eligibility scheme including reductions in defective work/rework and injuries.
- **Apprentice Completions and Licence Qualifications:** Clarity and consistency of licensing requirements could increase apprentice completions and overseas workers qualifying for a licence, resulting in more electrical workers to meet the currently predicted shortfall in this sector.

International Standards

Are there examples of Commonwealth, state, territory or local government regulation where there should be greater harmonisation with international or overseas standards and related conformity assessments or approvals? What sectors should be prioritised for reform?

Digital product traceability would enable the linkage of the product with the requisite product information including conformance with an ability to verify its accuracy.

The National Building Products Coalition has prepared an implementation guide for adopting traceability and digitalisation of product information in the construction industry. For further information please see: [Traceability and Digitalisation of Building Product Information Guide by the National Building Products Coalition](#)

Other Competition Reform Options

Which sectors or policy areas need reform to further promote competition?

Free Access to Australian Standards

Standards Australia is a “non-government not-for-profit organisation”² that holds a vertically integrated monopoly over producing standards that are mandated in legislation and regulations.

All intellectual property used in the Standards is voluntarily contributed by industry at no cost to Standards Australia. As a long-standing industry partner, Master Electricians Australia alone contributes well over \$100,000 worth of IP, technical expertise, travel and accommodation costs, and in-kind support annually towards Australian Standards relating to the electrical sector. These contributions (along with those of other industry stakeholders) are subsequently commercialised and sold back to Master Electricians Australia and the broader industry at a significantly inflated price.

² *Memorandum of Understanding Between the Commonwealth of Australia and Standards Australia Limited (The Memorandum of Understanding)* [13 November 2048], at 4 < [Standards Australia's Memorandum of Understanding](#)>

All Australian jurisdictions have incorporated multiple electrical Australian Standards into legislation and regulations, making it a legal requirement for electrical contractors to maintain access to the most current version of these Standards in order to perform their duties lawfully.

Master Electricians Australia calls for free access to Australian Standards to support compliance with legal and regulatory obligations. This access should be included as part of the proposed national occupational licensing eligibility model. Any cost recovery via occupational licence fees should be kept to an absolute minimum.

We anticipate this will enhance the safety of workers, customers, and the broader economy as well as improving compliance. Furthermore, it will reduce the financial burden on businesses and strengthen industry confidence in government by demonstrating a clear recognition of the essential role small businesses play in the economy and a genuine commitment to supporting their compliance and safety at worksites.

Conclusion

MEA commends the Government's pre-election commitment to mobilise the electrical workforce. We strongly support national agreement on and implementation of national licensing for the electrical and related sectors. Our approach involves harmonised licensing eligibility rules administered and enforced by existing state and territory regulators. This approach would unlock workforce mobility, reduce red tape, improve safety and compliance, and ease the financial and administrative burden of interstate work, while preserving jurisdictional autonomy and respecting the distinct legislation governing each state and territory. Ultimately, MEA's proposal would foster a fairer, more competitive market, particularly benefiting small businesses with limited resources.

In addition, we call for more rigour in the qualification and capstone process, enhanced and consistent eprofiling requirements, a national CPD scheme for

electrical workers and free access to Australian Standards to support compliance with legal and regulatory obligations.

MEA looks forward to collaborating with the Productivity Commission on the National Competition Policy and we are available for further consultation.

Cover sheet: Supporting document #2

Electrical Industry Workforce Development



Electricians are suffering a critical skills shortage. With the increase in demand for private electrification and increase in housing supply across the country, it is critical we seek to alleviate these pressures by increasing the number of electricians available in the country.

An estimated additional 42,000 electricians will be needed within the decade to overcome the electrical industry skills shortage crisis.

Key factors driving workforce shortages include:

- **Lack of Diversity** – under representation of different cohorts, including women.
- **Perceptions** – idea that ATAR career pathways are superior.
- **Insufficient Trainers / Teachers** – VET teacher shortage limits RTO enrolment capacity
- **Limited Employer Apprentice Training Financial Support for Smaller Businesses** – Large electrical businesses attracting apprentices from smaller employers with higher wages.

Workforce Development Solutions

Employer Training Support - Provide SMEs with financial support to assist with the training hours spent by a qualified electrical worker in the business supervising the apprentice during the business supervising



Skilled Migration - Enhanced incentives for internationally licensed electrical workers & financial assistance to undertake the 'recognition of prior learning' process.



Subsidise costs for small businesses to sponsor immigrants and create a priority sponsor scheme for small businesses.

Mature Age Grants - Additional wage subsidies for mature age apprentices and rebates for employers who are required to



Diversity - Improve operational practices and policies to improve female attraction to the industry.



Amenities Funding - Subsidise female toilet facilities on worksites. amount.



ATAR - Australian Governments to partner together to implement an ATAR Electrotechnology Subject into the Secondary School curriculum that includes Cert II / Cert III Block 1A units.



Rural and Regional Support - Increase targeted support for apprentices to complete their apprenticeships in regional and remote areas.



Fee-Free TAFE - All Australian jurisdictions to include Cert III Electrotechnology within the Fee-Free TAFE offerings.



Trainers - Increased funding for VET trainers to complete the Cert IV Training and Assessment Education (TAE) course, to address and reduce the backlog of block release training. Additionally, review the TAE to streamline the content.

