

Dear Productivity Commission,

I am a member of a family of tradespeople. Most of the men in my family, including my grandfather, father, husband, 3 brothers and a son are hardworking tradies working in various construction and manufacturing industries most of their lives.

Trades are hard: apprenticeships are long and low-paid, and many trades do not offer secure work nowadays. There is concern that not enough people are choosing to train and develop trade skills.

Yet it seems that there is little recognition of the need for tradespeople to be able to enjoy the benefits of secure employment.

The possible shutdown of the automotive manufacturing sector of the economy is another attack on the skilled workers of this country. While the loss of direct and indirect jobs is obvious, there will also be an extension of the 'rust belt' - neighbourhoods/suburbs that become economically depressed due to the loss of their central industry.

The problem that is not considered in the economic decision-making behind the reduction of support for the automotive industry of Australia is the loss of skills. How is it good for Australia as a nation to lose the capacity to build the vehicles required for transport in this country. It is unlikely that Australians will cease to need personal transport, trucks, and other vehicles. How short-sighted it would be to reduce our self-sufficiency in this area. We should not forget that Australia is an island, and dependent on sea transport to receive most imported products.

I don't want to see Australia become a nation that cannot make the things it needs itself. This is a national security issue!

Kind Regards,
Lyndal Breen