



In this newsletter:

- [Industry Training Advisory Committee Meetings](#)
- [Register for Regional Roundtables](#)
- [Meat Industry Workforce Forum](#)
- [Industry Careers Showcase](#)
- [Extension to the Apprenticeship Wage Subsidy Program](#)
- [Introducing Careers NSW](#)
- [National AgDay](#)
- [AgriFutures Australia to join AgSkilled 2.0 Steering Committee](#)
- [ANZSCO Proposed Changes](#)
- [2021 NSW Training Awards](#)
- [Smart and Skilled Updates](#)
- [Returning to VET guidelines](#)
- [Training and Assessor Review is Underway](#)
- [National Safe Work Month](#)
- [Update on National Training Packages](#)
- [NSW Grants, Opportunities and Scholarships](#)
- [COVID-19 Support](#)

Industry Training Advisory Committee Meetings

This month, AFAM will be holding two Industry Training Advisory Committee (ITAC) meetings. This is in addition to the ITAC meeting for the meat industry held this week. We look forward to catching up with representatives from the agriculture production and horticulture sector and the animal care and management sector. Meetings for food, beverage and pharmaceutical, and for amenity horticulture, landscaping, conservation and land management will be held in November.

One of the AFAM ITAB's roles is to identify current trends and industry intelligence that are relevant to addressing skill needs and gaps. ITAC members gather information from their industry sector and networks and meet to discuss skills needs, challenges and opportunities. This enables the ITAB to identify workforce and training trends to report back to the NSW Government.

ITAC members previously met during the months of April – June, prior to the NSW lockdown restrictions. We are interested to hear how COVID has impacted your industry, including how it has affected future plans as States and Territories exit lockdowns. This information will help inform advice provided to the NSW Government around long-term workforce development initiatives. Please contact Jess on jcleary@skillsimpact.com.au.

Register for Regional Roundtables

We are pleased to announce the date and time of our first regional roundtables. The industries that AFAM ITAB works with are largely based in rural, regional and remote NSW and this brings about unique attributes, needs and opportunities. To better understand and respond to each region's needs, AFAM is hosting roundtables to hear directly from industry, registered training organisations (RTOs) and career advisors.

These roundtables provide an opportunity for attendees to discuss regional workforce and training issues such as local work opportunities, emerging skills needs, promotional opportunities and barriers to apprenticeship and traineeships, career pathways and access to funding.

The first regional roundtables will be for those operating in the Newcastle, Hunter, Central Coast and Western NSW regions. They will be held virtually.

Newcastle, Hunter and Central Coast

Wednesday 17 November 2021, 10am - 12pm

Western NSW

Friday 26 November 2021, 10am - 12pm

If you are interested in attending, please contact Jess at jcleary@skillsimpact.com.au.

We encourage stakeholders that are from and work alongside the following industries to attend:

- Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management
- Animal Care and Management
- Meat Processing (supported by MINTRAC)
- Food and Beverage Manufacturing
- Pharmaceutical manufacturing
- Racing and Breeding
- Seafood, Aquaculture and wild catch fishing

Due to uncertainties around travel between regions throughout NSW, any regional roundtables hosted this year will be held virtually. This will be reviewed for 2022, as AFAM's preference is to travel to regions to host these events.

Meat Industry Workforce Forum

This Wednesday, AFAM held a workforce forum (virtually) in partnership with the National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council (MINTRAC). Drawing on their extensive networks in the meat industry, MINTRAC brought together employers, RTOs and career advisors to discuss the unique skills challenges and opportunities in the meat processing industry in NSW.

Forum participants brainstormed how meat processing can better support jobs and the region's economy, the drivers and barriers to training, attracting and supporting new entrants, retention and upskilling of staff and skills transferability between different jobs and industries.

Industry Careers Showcase

Following the success of the *Agriculture and Horticulture Industry Careers Showcase* held in September, AFAM are keen to work with industry in showcasing opportunities in the other industry sectors, including food, beverage and pharmaceutical, and animal care and management industries.

Those who participated expressed how much they valued the opportunities that came with the experience. In particular, participants valued the opportunity to speak to [Training Services NSW Skills Brokers](#) and [Regional Industry Education Partnership \(RIEP\) Officers](#) from across NSW.

Contact Ben bnortonsmith@skillsimpact.com.au with expressions of interest in showcasing your industry career opportunities.

Extension to the Apprenticeship Wage Subsidy Program

The Australian Government has extended the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidy to 31 March 2022. They have also introduced a Completing Apprenticeship Commencement wage subsidy to support apprentices and trainees in their second and third years of an apprenticeship or traineeship.

The **Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements** is a great opportunity, with a 50 per cent wage subsidy available to businesses that take on new apprentices or trainees between 5 October 2020 and 31 March 2022., to a maximum of \$7,000 per quarter.

The introduction of the **Completing Apprenticeship Commencement** wage subsidy is designed to encourage apprentices and trainees to complete their training. Eligible employers will receive a 10 per cent wage subsidy in the second year and a 5 per cent wage subsidy in the third year of their employee's apprenticeship, to a maximum of \$750 per quarter per apprentice.

Both wage subsidies are available to employers of any size, industry or geographic location.

[More information](#)

Introducing Careers NSW

Careers NSW was created following a recommendation from the NSW VET sector review led by David Gonski AC and Professor Peter Shergold AC. It aims to provide career guidance to all NSW residents at any stage in their career.

An online pilot will begin through Service NSW later this year with a full rollout expected in mid-2022.

When fully operational, Careers NSW will provide an all-round service to:

- Provide tailored career guidance.
- Identify educational pathways and qualifications that match individuals to the skills they need to enter or progress in their career.
- Connect individuals with others currently in the industries they are looking to enter who can provide them with insight into the skills to succeed.

Volunteer as an Industry Expert

We encourage you to [get involved](#) by sharing your career journey, industry insights, experiences, top tips and advice that will give clients of Careers NSW an understanding of your industry and the skills required to succeed. For more information you can email the team at careersnsw@det.nsw.edu.au



National AgDay

During COVID-19 farmers have been supporting us everyday, continuing to grow the food and fibre we all depend on. This National Agriculture Day, we're keeping it local while celebrating the fabulous and fulfilling career opportunities on offer in agriculture. From mustering cattle in the Top End to developing the next breakthrough wheat variety, there's a career pathway whatever your passion, you really can choose your own #AgVenture.

On **Friday 19 November**, the National Farmers' Federation is encouraging Australians everywhere to participate by:

- Hosting or attending an AgDay Long Table Lunch, picnic or BBQ celebrating all that is good about Australian agriculture and the people behind it.
- Sharing #AgDayAU posts on social media.
- Attending the Careers Expo to learn from fellow Aussies working in the agriculture industry.
- Enter the Photo Competition - snap a photo of your #AgVenture for a chance to win.
- Wearing an I Love Farmers shirt.

To find out more about the day, visit agday.org.au



AgriFutures Australia to Join AgSkilled 2.0 Steering Committee

Funded by the NSW government, the [AgSkilled 2.0](#) program provides fully funded accredited training to meet industry skills needs across four key training pillars: Production, Technology, Business and Safety.

The AgSkilled 2.0 Steering Committee made up of industry representatives from cotton, grains, production horticulture, viticulture and rice-growing industries, has recently welcomed Angela Wakeman, Manager – Capacity Building, AgriFutures Australia to the Committee. [AgriFutures Australia](#) will represent the remaining plant-growing agricultural industry sectors and will play a valuable role, along with AFAM, in representing the training and workforce development needs of the broader agricultural sector.

The latest funded training additions to AgSkilled 2.0 include eight courses and 3 units of competency. The courses are related to chemicals for horticulture, seeding operations, propagation for nursery, tractor and harvest operations and truck driver licensing. The units of competency relate to onsite biosecurity procedures, operation of tractors and managing business risk.

ANZSCO Proposed Changes

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has partnered with several Australian Government agencies to produce a targeted update of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupation (ANZSCO).

Thank you to those who provided feedback to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment on the classification of job roles for the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries. A document outlining the proposed changes to agriculture, forestry and fishing ANZSCO classifications is now available on the [ABS website](#).

ANZSCO is used when gathering statistics about the Australian workforce. ANZSCO underpins the apprenticeship system and informs important government programs and funding, including the National Skills Needs List, eligibility for VISAs and skilled migration programs.

This 2021 update aims to produce an experimental version of ANZSCO that better reflects modern agriculture by improving how existing and emerging agriculture and related occupations are captured, and skill levels are attributed to those occupations.

2021 NSW Training Awards

AFAM would like to congratulate Benjamin Lye who was awarded 2021 NSW People's Choice Award for Apprentice of the Year, Jack Ackling who was awarded 2021 NSW People's Choice Award for Trainee of the Year, and Erin Jacob who was awarded 2021 NSW VET Trainer/Teacher of the Year. Congratulations to Ben, Jack, Erin and all the finalists who were recognised for their outstanding achievements in the VET sector.

Benjamin Lye - 2021 NSW People's Choice Award for Apprentice of the Year

Region: New England Region
Qualification: Certificate III in Parks and Gardens
Trained by: TAFE NSW
Employed by: Tamworth Regional Council



Raised on a small farm where he loved helping his father work on their veggie crop, Benjamin rediscovered his joy of gardening after being medically discharged from the army with PTSD. He started from scratch in his mid-thirties by embracing the challenge of an apprenticeship while also providing for his young family. Taking on the apprenticeship gave him a renewed sense of purpose. He enjoyed taking new apprentices under his wing throughout the process and his can-do attitude was rewarded with a promotion to operator before finishing his apprenticeship.

Jack Ackling - 2021 NSW People's Choice Award for Trainee of the Year

Region: New England Region
Qualification: Certificate III in Rural Operations
Trained by: Joblink Plus Ltd
Employed by: BackTrack Works Ltd

Jack loves working with livestock and hopes to follow in his family's footsteps and become a farmer. Throughout his training journey Jack has faced and overcome several personal hurdles. Jack joined BackTrack as a 16-year-old with little work or life experience. He was quickly promoted and now aspires to become a BackTrack supervisor. Jack undertook training with Joblink Plus which improved his confidence, pride and self-esteem. He also gained his forklift, excavator and bobcat tickets, allowing him to become a more flexible employee. He is now a mentor for younger trainees, interpreting difficult concepts and mediating on their behalf.



Erin Jacob - 2021 NSW VET Trainer/Teacher of the Year

Region: Hunter & Central Coast Region
Field of study: Horticulture
Employed by: Central Coast Community College

Erin designs trauma-informed programs for students who've experienced hardship. Her innovative Step Forward and Keep on Stepping programs at Central Coast Community College successfully re-engage individuals in learning and facilitate pathways to education and employment. During COVID-19, Erin quickly navigated the delivery of online learning. Her trainers delivered real-life demonstrations to hundreds of at-risk participants boosting their wellbeing during this distressing period. Due to Erin's hard work, the college received a substantial contribution from the NSW Government to create the Step Forward Learning Centre, a safe space for trauma survivors.



Smart & Skilled

Updates to the Priority Part Qualifications List

A list of the part qualifications (i.e. short courses) that are approved under Skilling for Recovery has been updated. The Priority Part Qualifications List includes details of the units of competency, price and loadings amount for each part qualification. View the most up-to-date [Priority Part Qualifications List here](#).

JobTrainer Enrolment Period Extension

The current JobTrainer enrolment period has been extended from the current end date of 30 September 2021 to 31 December 2021. This extension will give providers the opportunity and added flexibility to continue to deliver courses this year as COVID restrictions start to ease across the state.

For key dates regarding enrolment of students and commencement and/or completion of training under JobTrainer, please visit the [Training Services NSW website](#).

Returning to VET Guidelines

Training Services NSW has released guidelines for the return to face-to-face training delivery for RTOs, community colleges, group training organisations (GTOs), learners and employers. The guidelines have been underpinned by the NSW Government's Roadmap for Recovery and provide clarity and flexibility to manage needs across different local government areas in response to changes in health advice.

The guidelines outline a series of phases and the type of return settings that the VET sector should follow. The following principles are key factors across all phases of the return:

- Vaccination
- Mask wearing
- Physical distancing
- COVID-19 Safe plans for workplaces and premises

For more information and to download a copy of the guidelines, visit the [Return to Vocational Education and Training Guidelines \(nsw.gov.au\)](#) webpage.

For international students - [Sydney Community Forum and Oz International Student Hub](#) are gathering information about support available to international students, including information about how to get vaccinated.

Training and Assessor Review is Underway

A holistic review of the TAE Training and Education Training Package is now underway. This covers six qualifications and 55 units of competency and the project will run until end-2022. There will also be an urgent response addressing an identified gap in e-assessment in the training package that will consist of the development of two new units of competency.

This is an opportunity for the industries we work with to identify and address some of the issues related to accessibility of training and we encourage you to participate. Please visit the [PWC website](#) for more information on this review, including the case for change and updates on the consultation process.

National Safe Work Month

October is [National Safe Work month](#) - a time for employers and employees to commit to building a safe and healthy workplace.

One of the key goals of vocational education and training is to create a safe workforce, as well as an effective workforce. We know that everyone benefits from a safe and healthy workplace; one that is free from physical and psychological harm, where no job is unsafe and no death or injury is acceptable.



AFAM works with a number of industries that are classified as high risk. Safety considerations continue to be priority considerations for the ITACs and stakeholders we engage with. This month, Safe Work Australia suggests a focus on planning and implementing work health and safety procedures.

Now's the time to ensure your procedures are up-to-date and being followed. Safe Work Australia encourages you to implement improved work health and safety this month by thinking safe; using planning and forethought, working safe; implementing measures to manage and reduce risks and avoid incidents, and being safe; using ongoing processes of managing and monitoring risks.

To improve safety and minimise the risk on farms, feel welcome to utilise the free resources developed by [Farmsafe Australia](#) and the [National Farmers Federation](#).

Managing safety during the COVID-19 pandemic is an added challenge for industry and has been at the forefront of discussion for many of the industries we work with. For further information on how to be a COVID safe business, [click here](#).

[Safe Work Australia](#) has also developed guidance on what employers can do to protect their employees from COVID-19 in the workplace and mitigate these risks.

National Training Package Projects

The following projects are underway to review and update national qualifications and skills standards, by the relevant Industry Reference Committees supported by Skills Impact. Follow the links to find out more and to provide input.

New projects underway



Ag & Horticulture Core Skills Project

This project will look at the common skills that feature across all sectors of the industry. It will focus on the broader qualifications that apply to these sectors, and which can be contextualised to apply to numerous job roles. [Read more](#)



Australian Native & Bush Food Project

Domestic and international consumers are hungry for Australian native and bush foods, which offer both nutritional benefits and cultural appeal. This project aims to address the national skills standards of the Australian native and bush foods sector. [Read more](#)



Permaculture, Organic Production & Composting Projects

This project will look at the job skills associated with permaculture, organic farming and composting. Guided by industry experts, the skills will be defined in national qualifications and skills standards to support the future training and development of the workforce. [Read more](#)



Pig & Poultry Farming Project

Skills in animal welfare, safety and sustainability are critical for pig and poultry farmers. This project entails the review of 10 pork and 11 poultry units, along with nine skill sets, so they meet the current skills needs of industry and align with current legislation. Relevant qualifications will be updated to reflect the changes to the units. [Read more](#)



Respect for Country Job Skills Project

Skills Impact is seeking to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about whether qualifications and skills standards for respecting Country accurately reflect the skills and knowledge required for this work, and to hear about any improvements that can be made. [Read more](#)



Water Allocation & Entitlement Skills Project

Access to water resources is vital to Australian farmers and it is equally vital that farming communities understand the water market. Skills standards related to the acquisition, management and trading of water will be developed. [Read more](#)



Small Companion Animal Incident Management Project

The bushfire events of 2019-20 underlined the need for national skills standards to be developed to support the important role of animal facility, emergency service, animal welfare and evacuation centre workers involved in the coordination and care of small companion animals during disasters caused by natural events. [Read more](#)



Trainers of Assistance Dogs Project

Growing evidence for how assistance animals can improve the quality of life for people with impairments and disabilities is driving demand for more skilled trainers of assistance dogs. The specific skills standards for this job role will be developed and packaged as a specialisation in existing qualifications. [Read more](#)



Pharmaceutical GMP Project

Feedback is invited on four draft units that describe the skills for GMP. They are being revised to reflect the appropriate level of skill required in Australian pharmaceutical manufacturing workplaces. [Read more and provide feedback](#)



Sugar Milling Project

The skill needs of the sugar milling industry will be identified and addressed as part of this project. Consultation will take place to review the *Certificate II in Sugar Milling Support* and the *Certificate III in Sugar Milling Industry Operations*, along with 41 units and one skill set. [Read more](#)



Meat Processing, General, Quality and Safety Skills Project

Consultation will take place throughout this project to update qualifications, skill sets, and units of competency that support quality assurance, safety, leadership and general skills in the meat processing industry. [Read more](#)

Projects in final stages

The AFAM ITAB recently provided industry feedback on the Cases for Endorsement for the Horse Care Project and all agricultural and horticultural (AHC) related projects to Training Services NSW. The Case for Endorsement for the Horse Care Project was fully supported by industry and the AHC Case for Endorsement received broad support from industry and some industry feedback. AFAM will continue play an important part in providing NSW stakeholder input on the new projects that are now underway.

Submitted for endorsement:

- [Animal Reproduction Project](#)
- [Crops, Pastures and Seeds Project](#)
- [Dairy and Milk Harvesting Project](#)
- [Horse Care Project](#)
- [Landscaping Project](#)
- [Pulp and Paper Manufacturing Review Project](#)
- [Parks and Gardens Project](#)
- [Skills for Land Rehabilitation \(Mined Land\) Project](#)

Endorsed and will soon be published on the national training register:

- [Meat Rendering Project](#)
- [Meat Slicing Project](#)

Endorsed and published on the national training register:

- [Food and Beverage Processing Project](#)
- [Flour Milling Project](#)
- [High Volume Production Baking Project](#)
- [Greyhound Racing Careers and Jockeys Project](#)

For the October update on these projects from Skills Impact, [click here](#).

NSW Grants, Opportunities & Scholarships

Training Services NSW is offering the following grants, opportunities and scholarships to employers and vocational learners. Follow the links to find out about more.

Aboriginal Business Advisory Initiative: support for existing Aboriginal owned and operated businesses to grow and diversify their business. [More details](#)

Barranggirra: to provide end to end support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners through culturally appropriate mentoring to ensure successful retention and completion of training and improved post-training employment outcomes. [More details](#)

Resources to Assist in Supervising Your Apprentice or Trainee: a series of videos and resources are available. [More details](#)

Free Training for Veterans: to broaden their career opportunities and help transition to civilian life after service, veterans and their partners will have access to free training. [More details](#)

Skills Brokers: sixteen skills brokers are located across NSW to help employers locate new staff who are trained and ready to fill roles with specific skill requirements; find ways to upskill existing staff; redeploy existing staff who have been stood down; and respond rapidly to skills needs. [More details](#)

Other support and opportunities:

Skilling for Recovery - JobTrainer: this is the NSW program supported by the Australian Government's JobTrainer Fund. Skilling for Recovery offers fee-free and low-fee training options for school leavers, young people and job seekers. [More details](#)

Free Support to Help Create Mentally Healthy Workplaces: SafeWork NSW has a range of programs, tools and resources available to help on the journey to create mentally healthy workplaces. [More details](#)

COVID-19 Support

Services NSW is working with federal, state and local government and the private sector to bring together all the COVID-19 support and services for businesses on the [Services NSW website](#).

TAFE NSW has developed [a website](#) that collates information and programs to assist small businesses in the recovery period from COVID-19.

The pandemic has brought about new challenges and your mental wellbeing is important. If you are feeling stress, anxious or negatively impacted by COVID-19, there are resources and services available to help on the [NSW government website](#).