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AFAM ITAB

Agriculture, Food
& Animal Management

11 August 2021

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Seeking Your Advice on the Impacts of COVID-19 on Industry and Training Delivery

AFAM would like to extend our support to all those currently impacted by restrictions in NSW. We encourage you to continue to update us on any impacts or potential disruptions of the recent COVID-19 restrictions on your workforce, industry and region. We also invite suggestions for any workforce development or training solutions that could be implemented to better support workers.

We know that the latest COVID-19 restrictions have affected some industries more than others. To help us get a better understanding of the impact on your workforce, we invite you to share your views by completing a short five question survey, linked below:

[Share your feedback](#)

The information gathered in this survey will be shared with the NSW Government to help guide policy decisions and short-term actions to address current issues.

The survey closes Friday 20 August 2021.

Training Services NSW has updated its COVID-19 guidance and information on [VET training](#) and for [organisations employing apprentices and/or trainees](#). This includes information on School based apprenticeships and traineeships (SBATs) and the lifting of suspension of some SBATs effective from 23 July 2021.

COVID-19 Support

There are a number of options to assist employers financially during this period. This may include business grants, payroll tax deferrals and concessions, as well as export assistance grants and other support packages.

The NSW government has a number of [grants and support packages](#) available for those impacted by the current Greater Sydney COVID-19 restrictions, which include:

- [COVID-19 business grant](#)
- [COVID-19 micro-business grant](#)
- [JobSaver payment](#)
- [Payroll tax support](#)
- [Small business fees and charges rebate](#)

TAFE NSW has developed a website that collates information and programs to assist small businesses in the recovery period from COVID-19. The [Small Business Recovery website](#) includes information on JobTrainer, the Boosting Apprenticeships Commencements Scheme, fee-free apprenticeships and traineeships, mature age workers' scholarships, foundation skills programs, the Adult Migrant English Program, AgSkilled, and the Women in Business Program.

Industry Engagements

AFAM continues to hold virtual engagements with industry and Training Services Regional Offices. We are also participating in the meetings of relevant Industry Reference Committees (IRCs), which provide the opportunity to hear industry updates on a national level as well as update these IRCs on NSW industry skills needs, challenges and opportunities.

In our recent meeting with the Training Services NSW team in the North Coast and Riverina, we discussed synergies between the work of the AFAM ITAB and the current and future projects of the Regional Industry Engagement Partnership (RIEP) officers and Skills Brokers.

Discussions with career advisors are underway and AFAM will be looking at building our work on careers promotion in the next few months. We would like to help industry connect with schools, identify and build on relevant and up to date career resources and support initiatives to increase industry's presence at key career events. AFAM will also work with AgSkilled 2.0 to showcase careers within food and fibre and the training pathways available in NSW. This initiative will be targeted at Skills Brokers, RIEP officers and career advisors, all of whom play a vital role in promoting career opportunities across industries.

AgSkilled - Funded Training

AgSkilled seeks to upskill NSW's cotton, grains, production horticulture, viticulture and rice growing industries to manage the challenges of the future. It is a \$15million investment by the NSW Government to offer fully funded accredited training to meet training needs across four key pillars: production, technology, business and safety.

There are currently 69 endorsed courses through the AgSkilled 2.0 program. The most popular course being [Drones in Agriculture](#) which provides information on collecting farm data to help make informed decisions, such as refined fertiliser, sowing, crop and weed management plans, as well as monitoring and maximising the efficiency of farm water systems.

There has been a huge increase in demand between June and July 2021 with participant numbers increasing by 630 participants which is approximately a 52% increase.

[More information](#)

Careers NSW Pilot – Expressions of Interest

Careers NSW will provide career guidance to NSW residents at any stage of their career. Students and people looking to change careers or further develop their skills will have access to tailored career advice wherever they live in NSW.

When fully operational, Careers NSW will provide a wrap-around service to:

- connect people to accessible and quality career guidance
- advise on educational pathways and qualifications that match people to the skills they need to be employed faster.

Expressions of interest for the provision of careers advice and guidance services for the Careers NSW Pilot close on 13 August 2021, 9:00am.

[More information](#)

Industry Training Hubs – Gosford & Grafton

The Federal Government is investing \$50.6 million to trial Industry Training Hubs in ten regions across Australia.

Industry Training Hubs aim to improve opportunities for young people in regions with high youth unemployment, targeting Year 11 and Year 12 students. Each Training Hub will be managed by a full-time Career Facilitator, providing on-the-ground presence while delivering Training Hub services.

Career Facilitators will work with and encourage young people to build skills and choose occupations in demand in their region, creating better linkages between schools and local industry, repositioning vocational education and training (VET) as a first-choice option.

In NSW, two training hub locations have been identified, Gosford and Grafton, with the Gosford training hub underway and Grafton due to open progressively in 2021.

[More information](#)

Consultation on Qualifications that Support Animal Care Apprenticeships and Traineeships

AFAM NSW ITAB is seeking feedback on the recently updated qualifications for animal care and management. This also includes traineeships in animal care, animal care services, wildlife and exhibited animal care, animal regulation and management, and animal facility management. To support this training being available for funded traineeships and programs, AFAM will need advice on the appropriate length of traineeships, vocations associated with the qualification, course probationary periods and reasons specific to NSW that substantiates the need for funded programs. This information is included in Vocational Training Order submissions, which are the basis for the issue of Commissioner's Information Bulletins used by RTOs to make decisions as to the best training to offer.

Consultation with AFAM's Animal Care and Management Industry Training Advisory Committee is currently underway. If you would like more information or if you would like to provide input on the application for animal care and management qualifications in NSW, please email Jess Cleary jcleary@skillsimpact.com.au.

New NCVER Report: Impact of COVID-19 on Industry Innovation, Skills and the Need for Training

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) has recently released a new report exploring how businesses have responded to COVID-19 and the extent to which innovation was included in their response. Most of the 21 interviewed businesses changed their usual operations in response to COVID-19, but the majority of the training undertaken was short-term, unaccredited and internal.

View the report on the [NCVER website](#).

National Skills Week

National Skills Week will run from 23 to 29 August and will highlight the talents, the skills, the career pathways and the value of apprentices and trainees across Australia to the wider public and employers.

Held annually, the vision of National Skills Week is to raise the status of practical and vocational learning, enabling all Australians to gain a greater understanding of the opportunities, their potential, and how they can contribute to a successful, modern economy.

For more information and ideas on how you can get involved, visit the [National Skills Week website](#).

Ideas on how you and your organisation can get involved with National Skills Week 2021.



Schools

Ideas to get your started, how to plan your events and other resources for Schools.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Photo: Big Day Out - Belmont High School



Training organisations

Ideas to get your started and other resources.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Photo: National Skills Week Launch in NSW. RTOs working together. TAFE NSW showcasing their products and Pacific Training College students assisting with event managing the celebration.



Industry and Employers

Ideas to get your started and other resources.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Photo: Kurri Kurri High School careers Day 2019 during National Skills Week.



Supporters of VET

Ideas to get your started and other resources.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Photo: PwC Skills for Australia hosted the launch of the QLD National Skills Week. Panel Q&A including Tash Fao (VET Alumni), Minister Kim Robert MP, Tim Rowlings (PwC) and Brett Schimming (Construction Skills Queensland).

Feedback Invited on the National Training Register

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) is looking at the future of the National Training Register (training.gov.au) and areas for improvement.

Industry and RTOs users are invited to share their views and experiences by completing a survey. Your feedback will help inform future enhancements. The surveys close 20 August 2021.

Industry Survey

RTO Survey

Ongoing Programs

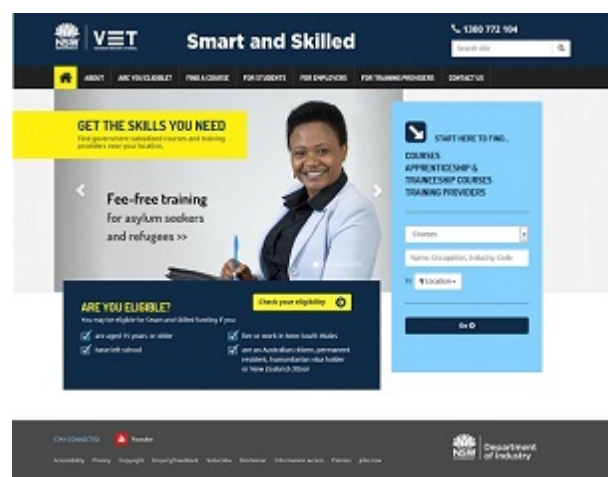
Smart and Skilled

Smart and Skilled is helping people in NSW get the skills they need to find a job and advance their careers. It is administered by Training Services NSW in the NSW Department of Education, and offers subsidised training for courses on the [NSW Skills List](#) (which was recently updated on 1 July 2021)

Are you eligible for government-subsidised training?

- 15 years old or over?
- no longer at school?
- living or working in NSW?
- an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident, humanitarian visa holder or New Zealand citizen?

If you answered 'Yes' to all four questions, then you're eligible to enrol in a government-subsidised course with an approved Smart and Skilled training provider.



For more information, please visit the [Smart and Skilled](#) website.

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](#)

Barrangirra: 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](#)

Free Workshops to Assist in Supervising Your Apprentice or Trainee: a series of face to face and/or virtual workshops 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. It has now been extended until June 2022. 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](#)

National Training Package Projects

Reminder: New Projects Approved for 2021-22

Eight new projects to review and improve national qualifications and skills standards have been approved to commence. The projects are across the agriculture, horticulture, animal care, food, pharmaceutical and meat processing industries.

They were approved by the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) on 22 June, based on the project proposals (cases for change) submitted as part of the [2021 Annual Updates](#) to the IRC Skills Forecasts and Proposed Schedules of Work.

The projects will be overseen by the relevant Industry Reference Committees and will be managed by Skills Impact. Consultation will take place with the broader industry to review and develop the necessary skills standards.

Agriculture, Horticulture, Conservation and Land Management

Review of Unit Sectors Project: This project continues the full review of the AHC Training Package outlined in the 2019 – 2022 Skills Forecast. It will consist of four sub-projects across the following areas and sectors:

- Community and common work-related skills
- Composting, organic production and permaculture
- Livestock
- Indigenous

Water Trading 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.

Animal Care and Management

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.

Companion Animal Incident Management Project: The 2019-2020 bushfires highlighted the important role of animal facility workers, emergency service workers and evacuation centres in supporting injured and displaced animals. This project will provide a national approach to the skills standards for responding to incidents involving companion animals.

Food, Beverage and Pharmaceutical

Indigenous Food Skills Project: There are growing national and international markets for Australia's indigenous food. New skills are required to guide the harvesting and processing of wild food including dealing with cultural concerns and working in remote locations, as well as ensuring products meet strict international regulation relating to identification of foods as being indigenous. Skills standards will be reviewed and developed to incorporate these requirements.

Pharmaceutical Good Manufacturing Practice Project: Recent industry and RTO feedback on previously updated units have indicated a need to update the units to improve training delivery and accurately reflect current Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) requirements.

Sugar Milling Project: Current sugar milling qualifications will be redesigned to reflect the skills shared across industry job roles, and to encourage use of training within the VET system.

Meat Processing

Meat Processing Skills Review Project: A full review of the AMP Australian Meat Processing Training Package will start with creating foundational training products that will lead to simplification of the training package and training delivery. MINTRAC will support this project development, identifying stakeholders for participation through their networks, and managing the revision of draft skills standards.





Update on Current Projects

The following projects are underway to review and update national qualifications and skills standards. Follow the links to find out more and to provide input.

Validation complete and further updates being made:

- [Horse Care Project](#)

Endorsed by AISC:

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

In Final Stages:

- [Animal Reproduction Project](#)
- [Crops Pastures and Seeds Project](#)
- [Dairy and Milk Harvesting Project](#)
- [Landscaping Project](#)
- [Parks and Gardens Project](#)
- [Skills for Land Rehabilitation \(Mined Land\)](#)
- [Meat Rendering Project](#)
- [Meat Slicing Project](#)

For the August update on national training package projects from Skills Impact, [click here](#).

Please feel welcome share this newsletter with anyone you think might be interested.

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