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# AFAM ITAB

Agriculture, Food  
& Animal Management

October 2024

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Hello everybody,

After three years of working with you since the establishment of AFAM, I will be moving on to a role with Skills Insight JSC working with stakeholders nationally. I'd like to thank you all for your support and for the voluntary time and effort you have put in to help us successfully operate AFAM NSW ITAB.

I'm happy to announce that Ben Holmes will be taking up the role of Executive Officer for AFAM. Ben comes to us after completing a successful project with PIEFA (Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia) delivering a Storm and Flood Industry Recovery Program which included delivering teacher and career adviser professional development events and working on the inclusion of horticulture curriculum in regional NSW classrooms. He has been a VET trainer in Production Horticulture and a school-based teacher across a number of fields, including science and agriculture. He is based in Northern NSW.

I will be going on leave from 7 November and Ben will be taking up his role from 13 November. I will continue to support Ben and AFAM throughout the next few months, and during December when Ben will be travelling and not undertaking AFAM work.

Ben's email will be [bholmes@skillsinsight.com.au](mailto:bholmes@skillsinsight.com.au)

If you have any questions relating to skills and training in NSW, please don't hesitate to contact me until 6 November and Ben from 13 November.

Best wishes,  
Jess  
Executive Officer

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# Engagement Activities

## NSW Industry Skills Forum

Jess attended the NSW Industry Skills Forum hosted by Hon. Steve Whan MP, NSW Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, at NSW Parliament House in Sydney on 23 September 2024. It was a great event that provided an opportunity for attendee participation particularly around the sharing of training matters and how equity can help to address skills challenges.

Facilitated by Jillian Kilby, a member of the NSW Skills Board, the forum included Jobs and Skills Australia's David Turvey, Executive Director, who provided a national overview on major trends shaping Australia's economy and workforce. The NSW Government and National sector priorities were discussed including critical skills covering industries with chronic and persistent shortages. Critical skill areas include those undergoing significant structural changes. This includes the agriculture and agrifood industry sectors as the way food and agricultural products are grown, harvested and bought continues to change rapidly impacting skills needs and priorities.

Dr Adam Lane, Director, Skills Performance and Insights, Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation NSW Government acknowledged in his presentation that addressing the skills challenges faced within these sectors will require broader industry, workforce or place-based approaches and solutions.

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## TAFE Manufacturing Centre of Excellence

The Albanese and Minns Labor Governments have announced joint funding of \$53.95 million to establish the TAFE NSW Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence - Western Sydney.

The Western Sydney Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence will provide targeted training for advanced manufacturing, food and beverage manufacturing, and pharmaceutical manufacturing and will support greater integration of digital technology in the country's manufacturing sovereign capability. Partnerships will be developed with local industry to inform course design, provide access to expertise, and host apprentices and trainees, providing benefits to both employers and learners.

Read the media release to [learn more](#).

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# Investment to Safeguard the Future of Regional NSW Industries

The Minns Labor Government is investing more than \$60 million to deliver vital upgrades to seven research facilities, and five emergency response sites across regional New South Wales. Research facility upgrades will support the 1,600 staff undertaking research across the state in areas such as, animal nutrition, climate change and aquaculture breeding as well as biosecurity surveillance and responses.

Upgrades to be delivered include a new state of the art dairy facility at Tocal College that will enable the highest animal welfare standard through an efficient and modern system while providing vocational training for students. Port Stephens Fisheries Institute will also receive upgrades to enhance breeding facilities for oysters and finfish which allows research to support innovation in commercial fisheries.

Read the media release to [learn more](#).

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## National Skills Plan

Australia's first National Skills Plan, released by the Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council, outlines a shared vision for the nation's VET system and serves as the foundation of the five-year National Skills Agreement between the Commonwealth, states, and territories.

The plan introduces a new stewardship model, emphasising collaboration among governments to achieve national priorities such as gender equality, digital capability, and the Net Zero transformation. Action plans from states and an Outcomes Framework will follow, marking a shift towards shared leadership and evidence-driven reviews in strengthening the VET system.

The Commonwealth and all states and territories are preparing action plans that will detail specific actions each jurisdiction will take to address the national outcomes and priorities explored in the National Skills Plan. Learn more about the [National Skills Plan](#) and [download the Plan](#).



# AgSkilled - funded training available for NSW agricultural sector

The NSW Government AgSkilled workforce training program supports agricultural workers to access training and helps them adapt to evolving industry demands and opportunities.

The latest list of Courses and Units of Competencies funded under AgSkilled has been updated: access the [latest list](#). You can also find a list of training providers endorsed to deliver AgSkilled training on the Department website.

Learn more by visiting the [NSW Department of Education](#) website or contact the AgSkilled team at [TSNSWAgSkilled@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:TSNSWAgSkilled@det.nsw.edu.au)



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## Occupation Shortage List 2024 Released

The 2024 Occupation Shortage List (OSL), formerly the Skills Priority List, was released by Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) this month. It provides a point-in-time assessment of the shortage status of occupations in the Australian labour market. A shortage exists when employers are unable to fill or have significant challenges filling vacancies or specialised skill needs within the occupation at current levels of remuneration and conditions of employment and in reasonably accessible locations. Note that for some occupations, a lack of evidence will, by default, result in the occupation being rated as 'no shortage'.

The following occupations, listed with their ANZSCO codes, have changed classification from 'No Shortage' to 'Shortage' in NSW:

- **234314** Park Ranger
- **361114** Zookeeper

The following occupations, listed with their ANZSCO codes, have changed from being classified as in 'Shortage' or 'Regional shortage' to 'No Shortage' in NSW. These occupations may still be classified as in shortage or regional shortage nationally:

- **121111** Aquaculture Farmer
- **121311** Apiarist
- **121312** Beef Cattle Farmer
- **121313** Dairy Cattle Farmer
- **121316** Horse Breeder
- **121318** Pig Farmer
- **121321** Poultry Farmer
- **121322** Sheep Farmer
- **121323** Mixed Cattle and Sheep Farmer
- **121399** Livestock Farmer nec
- **121511** Cotton Grower
- **121512** Grain, Oilseed, Pulse or Pasture Grower / Field Crop Grower
- **121513** Sugar Cane Grower
- **121611** Flower Grower
- **121612** Fruit Grower
- **121613** Nut Grower
- **121616** Vegetable Grower (AUS) / Market Gardener (NZ)
- **121699** Horticultureal Crop Growers nec
- **121711** Broadacre Crop and Livestock Farmer
- **121799** Mixed Production Farmers nec
- **149911** Boarding Kennel or Cattery Operator
- **234116** Aquaculture or Fisheries Scientist
- **234411** Geologist
- **311115** Irrigation Designer
- **311311** Fisheries Officer
- **351112** Pastrycook
- **363111** Aquaculture Supervisor
- **363115** Senior Broadacre Crop and Livestock Farm Worker
- **363116** Senior Broadacre Crop Farm Worker
- **363211** Senior Beef Cattle Station Worker
- **363212** Senior Cattle and Sheep Farm Worker
- **363213** Senior Dairy Cattle Farm Worker
- **363215** Senior Sheep Farm Worker
- **363299** Senior Livestock Farm Workers nec
- **363311** Shearer
- **363312** Wool Classer

Evidence is required to support a change of classification for next year's list. Types of evidence that may be used include independent research-based data and verifiable collections of data from industry bodies. Any evidence to support a change can be forwarded to Skills Insight JSC and AFAM (if NSW specific) at any time, as we continuously provide feedback on these lists to relevant bodies.

You can learn more about the national and state/territory classifications by using the [OSL online tool](#) and download the [Key Findings and Insight Report](#) on the [Jobs and Skills Australia website](#).



# Regional Jobs and Skills Roadmap Interim Report Published

Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) recently published an interim report called *Towards a Regional, Rural and Remote Jobs and Skills Roadmap* that focuses on the unique experiences and perspectives of Australians who live and work outside major metropolitan areas.

The interim report provides some initial insights into the pressures and drivers of regional labour market performance and looks at two of the three key pillars of the national skills system, higher education and VET, to assess if the regional skills system is making effective connections and pathways to supply the growing and changing skills demand of the future. Considerations include:

- ageing populations and the rising demand for care and support services
- an increased use of digital and advanced technologies
- the net zero transformation roll out across the broader economy
- high unemployment, limited job opportunities, lower education levels and difficulties attracting suitable workers
- gender segregation
- decreased remote education opportunities

JSA welcomes feedback to help shape the research agenda that will underpin the Regional, Rural and Remote Jobs and Skills Roadmap. Read the [interim report](#).

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## Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC) Project Updates:

**Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance (MISA) JSC** have released their [2024 workforce plan](#) which outlines the skills and training opportunities and challenges for manufacturing. Snapshots of the food manufacturing workforce can be found on pg. 28 and pharmaceutical manufacturing on pg. 31.

**Skills Insight JSC** currently have both training package and research projects underway in various stages. To learn more and provide input please follow the links below.

Development Stage:

- [Rural Operations Project](#) (this project has been paused while qualification reform work takes place)

Broad Consultation Underway:

- [Essential Meat Processing Skills Project](#)
- [Textiles, Clothing and Footwear Workforce Insights Project](#)
- [Worker Safety Induction Pilot](#)

Broad Consultation Complete:

- [Exploring Training Demand Supply Challenges Project](#)
- [From Training Package to Training Delivery](#)

Finalisation stages:

- [Livestock Operations Project](#)
- [Shearing and Wool Classing](#)

Finalised:

- [Training Support Materials for Meat Processing Project](#)

Other Projects Underway:

- [ANZSCO review project](#)
- [Qualification reform](#) – watch the video on the project webpage.



# NSW Grants, Opportunities and Scholarships

The following grants, opportunities and scholarships are available to employers and vocational learners. Follow the links for more information.

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

[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.

[Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Grant](#): the grant adopts a number of strategies to develop and support First Nations people through the creation of training and employment opportunities.

[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.

[Free Workshops: Supervising your apprentice or trainee](#): free workshops for employers and supervisors of apprentices or trainees in the workplace held across NSW.

[OCHRE Opportunity Hubs](#): aim to provide First Nations young people with the confidence and knowledge to follow a supported pathway between school and further education and/or employment through partnerships with schools, coordination of local opportunities, mentoring, support and more.

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

## **Other Grants and opportunities:**

[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.

### **Food Rescue Rebates**

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is working to reduce good quality food suitable for human consumption from being disposed to landfill. The rebates are part of a suite of organics programs available to support NSW to halve organics waste to landfill by 2030.

**Amount:** Up to \$2,000 per rebate with a total funding pool of up to \$800,000

**Status:** Open, ongoing until 30 June 2027, until funding is expended, or at the EPA's discretion.

**Seafood Innovation Fund** - The NSW Government is offering low interest loans up to \$500,000 to assist commercial fishers and aquaculture farmers to identify and address risks to their business, improve permanent assets and infrastructure, ensure long term productivity and sustainable use of the marine, estuarine and land-based environment.

Seafood Innovation Fund loans are available to businesses within the seafood sector in NSW.

**Amount:** Loans are up to \$500,000 for 100% of the net, GST exclusive cost of eligible works.

**Status:** Open, until funding is expended.

### **Living Carbon Grants**

NSW Government is investing \$5 million in Living Carbon grants to assist eligible applicants in delivering carbon abatement through planting projects in 3 regions in



NSW:

- the Riverina Local Land Services region
- the North Coast Local Land Services region
- the MidCoast Local Government Area.

Amount: Successful applicants will receive up to \$200,000 of grant funding, and the landholder is expected to commit funding and/or in-kind contributions to complete the project.

Status: Open. Closes 30 April 2025.

Find information about these and all available grants and funding opportunities on the [NSW Government website](#).

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