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AFAM ITAB

Agriculture, Food
& Animal Management

April 2025

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AFAM is continuing to develop an industry response to the NSW Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001 review and the Federal Apprenticeships Incentive System, and later in the year will be focussing on providing the NSW Government with an Industry Training Priorities Report to provide guidance for following years.

If you have any feedback, questions or would like to discuss the skills or training needs of your workforce or industry, please don't hesitate to [contact me](#).

Best wishes,
Ben
Executive Officer

Last Chance to Share Your Feedback - Proposed NSW Primary Industries Workforce Strategy

The NSW Government is calling on stakeholders to provide feedback on the development of an industry-wide strategy designed to create a more resilient and skilled NSW primary industries workforce.

The proposed Strategy aims to generate outcomes that support and build the workforce necessary for delivering profitable, sustainable, and innovative agriculture, forestry and fishing industries in NSW, now and in the future.

The proposed Strategy recommends:

1. A shared vision for government, industry and stakeholders to work towards.
2. Three key priority areas for government and industry to concentrate their actions:
 - Improving business management, adaptability and innovation.
 - Fostering a diverse workforce accessible across NSW.
 - Careers and capabilities in primary industries.
3. A pathway to delivering NSW primary industries workforce outcomes by clearly articulating key actions to guide prioritisation, decision-making and investment by government and stakeholders.

You can read the [Proposed NSW Primary Industries Workforce Strategy 2025-2030](#) and share your insights and feedback by [completing the survey](#). The survey closes **Wednesday 30 April 2025**, but feedback after this date can be provided to AFAM and we will do our best to ensure it is considered.

Developing an Industry Response to the NSW Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001 and Apprenticeships Incentive System

The NSW [Apprenticeship and Traineeship \(A&T\) Roadmap 2024-2026](#) outlines strategic objectives and key areas of focus as part of adopting a more proactive, flexible and innovative approach to the delivery of A&T. One of the roadmap strategic priorities is to 'Strengthen internal systems and processes to support delivery'.

AFAM ITAB, in partnership with [MINTRAC](#), is gathering industry feedback on the A&T Act 2001 as part of informing a discussion paper that will be available as part the NSW government public consultations. Additionally, extensive industry stakeholder engagement is being undertaken to develop a NSW industry response to the [Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System - Skills for tomorrow: Shaping the future of Australian apprenticeships report](#).

We encourage you to provide feedback which will be used to help AFAM accurately reflect industry sentiment, highlight barriers and successes under the current Act and associated incentives, providing case studies and suggesting practical and aspirational reforms.

AFAM has contracted Michael Williams to conduct stakeholder engagement and write these reports. If you want to provide your feedback directly to Michael, please contact Ben at afamitab@skillsinsight.com.au.

Alternatively, you can provide your feedback via Microsoft forms by clicking on the buttons below. We are looking to finalise responses by the end of May.

Provide feedback on
A&T Act 2001

Provide feedback on
Incentive System

Opportunity to provide industry feedback closes 15 May 2025.

Engagement Activities

Pathways to Meaningful Indigenous Employment Workshop

This month Ben attended the Pathways to Meaningful Indigenous Employment Workshop presented by [NASCA](#) who provide wrap-around support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, so they can thrive at school and beyond. A key takeaway from the workshop was the importance of Cultural Safety initiatives involving First Nations leadership and mentorship within both schools and workplaces.

The Diversity Council of Australia is currently running a survey for First Nations employees across Australia who are invited to share their workplace experiences. The results of the survey will contribute to research aiming to drive meaningful change by influencing employer practices and policies to create culturally safe workplaces.

The survey is open to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, aged 18+ and currently working, or who have worked in the past two years. Eligible employees across Australia are invited to take the survey, and employers are encouraged to share the survey with their relevant team members and networks. **Survey closes 9 May 2025.**

For more information and to participate in the survey visit [Diversity Council of Australia](#).

Industry programs attracting new entrants

In collaboration with Skills Insight JSC, Ben visited [Silverdale Farm](#) in the NSW Southern Highlands region to learn more about their pre-vocational programs. The training programs are a successful example of improving regional community access to authentic industry experiences, career pathways and training for young people. Supported by the [Regional Industry Education Partnerships Program \(RIEP\)](#) and TAFE NSW, the programs provide opportunities for students to undertake an internship resulting in a Nationally Recognised Qualification which so far has resulted in both high completion rates and employment outcomes for participants.



(L-R) Danielle Tiller, Executive Associate Silverdale Farm, Neil Bessant, Senior Project Officer (RIEP), Christine Milner, Stakeholder Engagement Manager from Skills Insight and Ben Holmes from AFAM.

Another program having success attracting new entrants is the 'Float Your Boat' program, also funded by [RIEP](#), which addresses careers and training opportunities for the Seafood and Maritime industry. Ben attended the latest event in Newcastle this month where he had the pleasure of meeting with Belinda Cooper from the Training Services Regional Office and Chris Saunders from Maritime Australia Safety Training (MAST). With 50 students from more than 20 regional schools in attendance, the participants were able to gain insights into the careers and employment opportunities available in the seafood industry and pathways into related VET training programs.



Mid North Coast Industry Employer and School Forums

Places still available for the **Taree event: Tuesday 27th May Time: 9am – 1pm**

In partnership with Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) and the Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABS), AFAM would like to invite employers to participate in a forum to represent your industry and build valuable connections with schools. This is a great opportunity for industry to showcase the career pathways and job opportunities in regional and rural areas and connect with careers advisors and teachers in local schools (spaces are limited).

At each of the Forums, employers and local experts will discuss:

- platforms for industry and schools to build stronger connections to strengthen careers, work experience and work placement programs
- the transfer of knowledge about local market trends, skill shortages, skill gaps, employment opportunities and future skills needs
- strengthening school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

Employers are invited to [register interest in attending](#). ALL interested attendees MUST register their interest individually). This event is not suitable for RTOs.

We look forward to your support of this event to build connection and partnerships between schools and industry. For further information contact Ben at AFAM afamitab@skillsinsight.com.au

Smart and Skilled Update

Apprenticeships and Traineeships: Amendments to the Training Plan Proforma

The department has amended the NSW Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Plan proforma, with the new version coming into effect from 1 May 2025. All existing Training Plans will need to be updated within 6 months from this date. The new Training Plan proforma is available to download on the [NSW Government website](#).

For more information read the [Smart and Skilled Update](#)

Free Apprentice and Trainee Supervisor Workshops

Training Services conduct free workshops throughout regional and metropolitan NSW – Supervising your apprentice or trainee.

These workshops are for employers with supervisory responsibilities for apprentices and trainees and aim to help employers support their apprentice or trainee to successfully complete their training by learning how to:

- Effectively supervise and 'coach' apprentices and trainees
- Understand the importance of effective communication in the workplace
- Understand the relationship with the training provider
- Arranging training that works for the employer and their business
- Address workplace bullying and harassment issues.

Learn more about [Supervisor Workshops](#) and [book a spot at one of the planned workshops](#).

Industry Events

Total Field Days 2 - 4 May 2025



One of the major agricultural events in NSW, Total Field Days will be held on the first weekend in May, as it has been since 1984. Attendees will find an incredible mix of exhibitors and demonstrations from cutting-edge farming equipment to sustainable practices that are shaping the future of agriculture.

Learn more and buy your tickets for [Total Field days](#).

Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC) Project Updates

Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance (MISA) JSC is developing their 2025 Workforce Plan following input from over 150 stakeholders.

Approved project in initial stages:

- To review the impact of training delivery of baking qualifications on the industry.

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.

Initial Stages:

- [Veterinary Nursing Skills and Qualification Review](#)
- [Flock Safe Project](#)

Development Stage:

- [Rural Operations Project](#) (this project has been paused while qualification reform work takes place)
- [VET Workforce Project](#)
- [Community based aquaculture training tools](#)
- [Career Pathways for Agricultural Trades](#)

Broad Consultation Underway:

- [Worker Safety Induction Pilot](#)

Consensus Gathering:

- [Essential Meat Processing Skills](#)

Finalised:

- [Exploring Training Demand Supply Challenges](#)
- [Livestock Operations Project](#)
- [Shearing and Wool Classing](#)

Other Projects Underway:

- [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.

[Boarding scholarships for isolated students](#): assists eligible students from rural areas who are required to board to attend NSW public specialist high schools – including agricultural boarding schools.

[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.

[Employers funding and support](#): learn about government incentives and supports to employ and train apprentices and trainees.

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

[Living Away From Home Allowance for Apprentices](#): an allowance is available to eligible full and part-time apprentices and school-based apprentices during the first 3 years of training who need to move away from home in order to start or remain in an apprenticeship.

[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.

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

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

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