



AFAM ITAB

Agriculture, Food
& Animal Management

October 2025

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Recently AFAM ITAB facilitated meetings of the four Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITAC) that provide regular industry intelligence and insights. The Food, Beverage and Pharmaceutical Industry ITAC, the Amenity Horticulture Conservation and Land Management ITAC, the Agriculture and Production Horticulture ITAC and the Animal Care and Management and Racing and Breeding ITAC committee members reviewed and discussed the ITAB response to the [Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System](#). They also reviewed the [Industry Training Priorities Report 2025](#). Thanks to everyone involved in helping us to identify areas of significance to highlight in the submission to Training Services NSW.

Please contact Ben if you would like to discuss your workforce development skills and vocational education and training needs at bholmes@skillsinsight.com.au.

Best wishes,
Ben
Executive Officer

Industry Training Priority Report 2025

As part of the NSW Skills Plan, and in preparation for the implementation of the recommendations from the NSW VET review conducted over the last two years, Training Services NSW asked AFAM to complete an industry skills priority report.

Working closely with stakeholders to gather insights on skills needs, understand industry challenges and recognise opportunities, AFAM has produced the Industry Training Priority Report 2025. Prior to submission, the report was reviewed by the Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs) with edits made to highlight areas of

significance.

The Industry Training Priority Report 2025 will be published on the AFAM webpage in November. Your feedback is welcome and any additional feedback will be reported to Training Services NSW.

New Jobs and Skills Australia 2025 Occupation Shortage List (OSL) released

The 2025 OSL was released on 15 October. It is based on a diverse range of sources to assess occupation shortages, including data modelling, additional statistical analysis of labour market data, employer and stakeholder surveys, and engagement with various stakeholder groups. Input was also sought from the Commonwealth Government, state and territory governments, and Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) which included Skills Insight and the Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance.

AFAM has worked with industry throughout 2025 where listings of shortage or no shortage for specific occupations affected access to subsidised training or incentives for apprenticeships. AFAM encourages industry stakeholders to review [the 2025 OSL](#) and consider how the feedback provided in late 2024 industry surveys has informed the current list. If your feedback did not generate the desired result, please reach out to AFAM to consult on targeted strategies for a more effective outcome on the next round of feedback.

A stakeholder survey will be available to the public from November until February to inform the 2026 OSL. The survey is one source of information, among others, used when assessing occupations. The survey primarily targets peak bodies, industry groups, professional associations, unions, regional representative bodies, and education and training advisory bodies such as AFAM. However, government agencies, recruitment agencies/labour hire firms, employers and JSCs are welcome to complete the survey.

If you would like to participate in the survey please send a request to be added to the mailing list here OccupationShortageList@jobsandskills.gov.au and consider sharing this information to raise awareness of the survey with other industry bodies or organisations you work with.

Les Young Scholarship awarded to Miriam Drinnin

AFAM would like to congratulate this year's Les Young Scholarship winner, Miriam Drinnan. Miriam credits being entrusted with responsibility early with shaping her ambitions: to lead in her industry, contribute to its sustainability and repay the mentoring that has already been pivotal in her life.

Thanks to the [Les Young Scholarship](#), which is supported by AgriFutures Thoroughbred Horses Program, Miriam will be accessing a tailored program combining practice and theory at the National Stud in the United Kingdom from January 2026. When she returns to Australia, Miriam plans to combine hands-on industry work with a Bachelor of Business (Agriculture) and pursue her goal to give back to the industry that has already given her so much.

For more information, visit [AgriFutures Australia](#)



Miriam Drinnin, winner of the Les Young Scholarship 2025

1000 NSW Public Sector Apprentices and Trainees Program - round 3 now open

Up to 430 additional roles will be funded under the third and final round of the 1000 NSW Public Sector Apprentices and Trainees Program. The apprenticeship and traineeship program combines formal qualification, industry recognised certification and practical experience working within a NSW Government Agency or State Owned Corporation.

The program is currently open until June 2026 for a number of qualifications across different government agencies and State Owned Corporations. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is one of the many agencies offering positions in this round. AFAM supported industry occupations in the public sector include management of sporting and public land spaces, horticulture and protected area management.

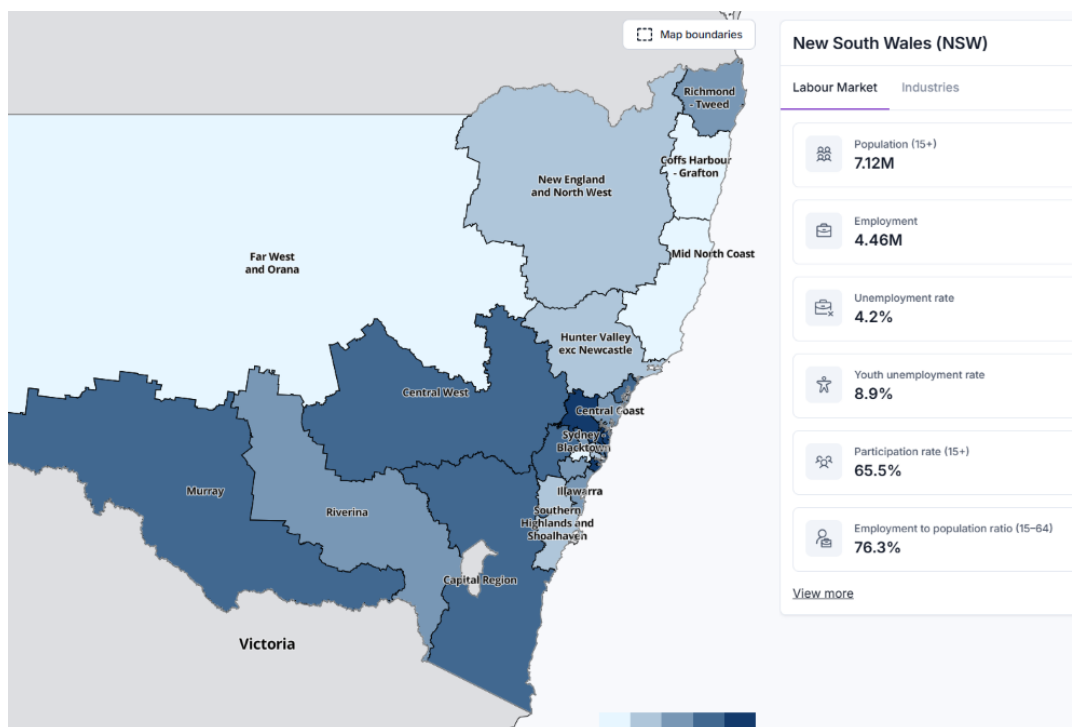
For more information about the Program, visit the [NSW Government website](#).

Jobs and Skills Atlas providing customised data

The Jobs and Skills Atlas, available on the Jobs and Skills Australia website, provides insights into the Australian labour market at national, state and regional levels. It can be a useful tool to analyse a range of data presented in user friendly formats. Refined

searches using the filtering option can provide insights into regional labour markets, industries, occupations, higher education and vocational education and training. AFAM would be happy to discuss the data with stakeholders. Contact Ben at AFAM bholmes@skillsinsight.com.au.

[Access the Jobs and Skills Atlas](#)



Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act Review informed by voices of apprentices and trainees

Earlier this month some of the State's leading apprentices and trainees, who also represent school-based apprentices and trainees (SBATs), women in trades and regional apprentices and trainees, sat down with NSW Skills Minister Steve Whan to share their views on how to improve the apprenticeship and traineeship system.

The roundtable, held in Dapto, gave the VET Ambassadors an opportunity to talk about their experiences as apprentices, trainees, students, and trainers in a facilitated discussion and Q&A session, offering insights into what works well in the system and where improvements could be made.

The Minister said, 'Hearing directly from people who have lived the experience is essential to make sure this review delivers real improvements for apprentices and trainees, trainers and employers.'

As part of the NSW Skills Plan, the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act Review aims to strengthen the system by making it easier to navigate and better matched to the real-world needs of priority industries. More than 8,000 survey responses to the Review have already been received with emerging insights pointing to the importance of consistent workplace support, stronger awareness of learner entitlements, and streamlined processes to lift completion rates.

Learn more about the [Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act \(2001\) Review](#)

Upcoming: Celebrate National Ag Day 2025

National Agriculture Day is a day to support our farmers and encourage all Australians to think about where their food and fibre come from. Held on the third Friday of November each year, it's one day to celebrate an industry that's part of our lives – every single day. This year, Australians are being called on to Stand with the Land to unite Australians in solidarity with our farmers and rural communities.

Australians everywhere are encouraged to celebrate National Ag Day on Friday 21 November. You can:

- [host](#) or [attend](#) an AgDay event
- [shop the iconic range](#) of 'I Love Farmers' merchandise which includes T-shirts, trucker caps, tea towels and tote bags along with bumper stickers, bookmarks and pet bandanas
- enter the [photo and video competition](#) with a prize pool of \$5,000. Capture Australian agriculture giving an insight into life on the land, celebrations on the day and what agriculture means to you for a chance to win. Entries close 5pm on 21 November 2025.



Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC) project updates

Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance (MISA) JSC have published their [2025 Workforce Plan](#) (WFP). The 'Make it ManuFACTuring' campaign to reshape public perceptions of manufacturing is exceeding expectations with more than 480 submissions having been made through the 'Find your Fit' profile tool and thousands of visitors to the campaign website. The initiative targets young Australians, showcasing the industry as modern, innovative, and future-focused and it aims to inspire career interest and boost apprenticeship uptake. Visit the interactive website at www.makeitmanufacturing.com.au.

Skills Insight JSC recently launched their [Workforce Plan 2025-2026](#) and data dashboard. The data dashboard brings together workforce, occupation, and training data to provide an overview of 13 industry groups. It highlights demographics, employment trends, top employing occupations, and VET activity. Industry-specific webpages are in development and will be available in the coming months.

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

Development Stage:

- [Community-based Aquaculture Training Tools](#)
- [Rural Operations](#) (project recommencement in planning)
- [Veterinary Nursing Skills and Qualification Review](#)

Broad Consultation:

- [Attraction and Retention Guidance](#)
- [Career Pathways for Agricultural Trades](#)
- [Flock Safe Project](#)
- [Vet Workforce Project](#)

Finalisation:

- [Concept for an Ag Trade Apprenticeship](#)
- [Essential Meat Processing Skills](#)
- [Worker Safety Induction Pilot](#)



NSW grants, opportunities & scholarships

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

[2026 Hay Inc Rural Education Program](#): An opportunity for young people to gain new agricultural skills, education and experience in industry.

[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.

[Continuing Apprentices and Trainees Placement Service \(CAPS\)](#): CAPS helps apprentices and trainees find jobs or continue with their qualification when their training contract ends before completion.

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

[Fee-Free training for agriculture, forestry and fishing](#): giving broad access to government-subsidised training and high-level courses in targeted priority areas.

[Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal](#): Strengthening Rural communities – Small and Vital Program: gives small remote, rural and regional communities the opportunity to access funds for a broad range of initiatives that directly and clearly benefit local

communities including education and training. There are two tiers of Small & Vital funding available. **Current applications close 4 December 2025.**

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.

Women in trades: Resources available to attract women into trades for industry and educators.

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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