

PORTFOLIO REPORTS - STATE COUNCIL

Post Compulsory Report

Chandra Ridley – Portfolio Holder, March 2022

There were no Post Compulsory motions put forward at the 2021 State Conference.

There has been a huge push by both the State and Federal Governments to attract people to the Skills Sector with additional funding and reduced or fee-free courses being offered.

In May 2021, Premier Mark McGowan and Minister for Education, Hon. Sue Ellery announced a Skills Summit to be held in June to meet with leaders across a number of sectors including the resources, defence, construction and health care industries. The aim of the summit is to hear from business leaders as to what can be done collaboratively to address existing skills needs across WA.

TAFE fees have been reduced to make re-skilling more affordable. The McGowan Government has introduced a number of measures to ensure WA has a pipeline of skilled workers including:

- ‘Lower Fees, Local Skills’ – TAFE fees reduced by up to 72% on 180 courses.
- \$167.4 million in upgrades to TAFE infrastructure across the five WA TAFE colleges.
- Free TAFE short courses to upskill thousands of Western Australians.
- \$4.8 million for the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Re-engagement Incentive, providing financial support to employers who take on a displaced apprentice or trainee.

The 2021-2022 Federal Budget announced boosts to Skills and Training including:

- A \$12.1 million National Digital Australian Apprenticeships Portal which will be established to help employers manage their apprentice workforces and for apprentices to understand their entitlements.
- The \$1 billion Job Trainer Fund will be expanded to continue delivering low fee or free training places in areas of skills need. The Government will invest an additional \$500 million, to be matched by State and Territory Governments, to ensure Australians can upskill. This includes around 10,000 additional digital skills training places and around 33,800 additional training places in the aged care sector.

In July 2021 fifteen (15) Aboriginal and female students started a six monthly pilot program at the construction facility at South Metropolitan TAFE’s Rockingham campus. It is a partnership between TAFE and BHP in an effort to increase diversity in BHP’s Pilbara workforce. The program trains participants for a Certificate II in Construction Pathways – Building Maintenance and an additional skill set in electrical test and tag statutory compliance. Upon completion of the program, the students will take part in a recruitment process conducted by BHP, with successful applicants offered employment with the company starting in 2022.

The Careers and Employment Expo combined with Workskills Australia National Championships and Skills Show was held at the Perth Convention Centre on 26th to 28th August 2021. There were over 100 organizations with information on Career Pathways, Courses and Training. Exhibitors included Universities, TAFE and the Defence Forces.

More than 400 apprentices, trainees and students-including over 80 from team WA - competed in

National Championships across 45 skills and trades. The competition was adapted to accommodate travel restrictions with satellite competitions held in other states.

A Regional Skills Summit was held in Northam on 13th September 2021 to discuss opportunities to grow and sustain a skilled workforce in Western Australia's Wheatbelt. More than 30 Government and regional business leaders from a range of sectors including Agriculture, Construction, Hospitality and Healthcare attended.

Student course enrolments in the Wheatbelt have increased by 18 percent in the past year driven by affordable training opportunities through the 'Lower Fees, Local Skills' program and strong growth in employment-based training.

Construction has started on a \$4 million upgrade to the Visual Arts building at Central Regional TAFE's Geraldton Campus. The modern amenities will deliver training for fashion, textiles, jewellery making, paint and ceramics, photography, multimedia and design. It is part of the McGowan Government's \$184.3 million upgrade plan for the State's TAFE network. The project is expected to be completed mid 2022 with classes commencing in Semester 2, 2022.

The McGowan Government announced a \$121.4 million boost to training in the 2021-22 State budget. They will deliver on election commitments to ensure TAFE and training continues to be more affordable.

They will invest \$32.4 million to create 300 new jobs for apprentices and trainees with Group Training Schemes. The funding will provide small and medium enterprises with access to 150 additional and highly subsidized apprentices and trainees in 2022 and again in 2023 to work on State Government projects.

TAFE Colleges will receive \$25 million of modern equipment as part of a four year program to update and modernise TAFE equipment and facilities to contemporary industry standards.

A \$9.9 million investment over four years will support TAFE College lecturers to undertake industry placements to enable them to upskill and maintain industry standards, practices, qualifications and skills.

In October 2021, it was announced that the WA Government will match the Federal Government's second round of Job Trainer Funding which will see a \$103.5 million boost to local training.

Further expansion to the 'Lower fees, Local skills' program will mean reduced fees for a further thirty courses. The low fees courses will target specific qualifications in the key sectors of childcare, aged and disability care and civil construction which have a critical need to upskill workers.

Works started in November on a \$6 million health and hospitality training centre for North Regional TAFE's Kununurra Campus. The new facility will provide specialist training spaces for hospitality and tourism, nursing and aged and disability care to meet demand in the region.

Local businesses employing local apprentices will be used in the project.

Automotive apprenticeship and trainee commencements are at a record high due to the McGowan Government's massive investment in training. There was a 25% increase in enrolments to the end of October 2021 compared to the same time the previous year, 87% of these enrolments can be contributed to the McGowan Government's 'Lower fees, Local skills' campaign.

The opening of the new Automotive Innovation Training Centre in Balcatta will further drive skills creation and address the changing training needs of the automotive industry created by advancing vehicle technology.

In October 2021, a \$1 million partnership was struck between Shell and the WA Government to deliver state-of-the-art boiler training equipment to South Metropolitan TAFE (SMT). It will enable SMT to deliver hands-on training in steam and power generation. This will benefit the oil and gas sector as well as manufacturing, maritime and defence training.

Construction began in December 2021 on a significant upgrade to Roebourne's TAFE campus. The \$7.9 million project will deliver contemporary, multipurpose training facilities to the campus. The new buildings were designed in consultation with local Aboriginal people and the Architect was briefed to design culturally appropriate, contemporary facilities.

Construction is expected to be completed in late 2022 with training to commence in 2023.