

# ELECTROTECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP REPORT

## *Executive Summary*

The electrotechnology industry recognises that the supply of skilled tradespersons does not meet current market demand and that skill shortages are projected to increase, especially in rapidly developing areas of high technology.

### **Issues**

- The need to ensure that training is developing skills relevant to changing market demands, in particular the rapid development of new technologies and changing applications of existing technology. This means that there is an ongoing need to upskill the existing workforce and to facilitate new training pathways in response to demands for new skill sets.
- The need to increase the number of skilled tradespersons in the workforce through improved uptake of contracts of training; the need to reduce occupational wastage as tradespersons leave the industry.

### **Findings**

1. Despite growth in numbers in structured training, employers report that supply is still not meeting demand for skilled workers in identified trade areas.
2. Growing employment rates, particularly in new areas of high technology trades, means that skill shortages are projected to increase, especially for voice and data communications trades.
3. At the same time, enterprises are undergoing structural changes resulting in a great increase in contracting work. Technological and structural changes experienced by the industry lead to market demands for new skill sets and an ongoing need to upskill the current workforce.
4. Employer investment in training remains low, and New Apprenticeship opportunities are not adequate for the number of suitable applicants.
5. Demand issues arise as high employment growth in specific sectors requires more skilled tradespersons and new technology skill sets.
6. Supply of skilled workers remains an issue as qualified tradespersons leave the industry for alternative careers or pathways; and rates of attrition during training remain high.
7. Flexibility in addressing skills needs and shortages is affected by licensing, safety and technical-based regulation and the impact of different legislations on the uptake of New Apprenticeships.
8. Employers, industry and training personnel need to consider flexible and alternative pathways for trainees and apprentices in order to:
  - make a career in electrotechnology both more attractive and more accessible, and
  - provide appropriate training pathways that will lead to improved retention rates and outcomes appropriate to market demand.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations are made under four Focus Areas for Action. These are:

1. *Increased marketing and promotion of the Electrotechnology Industry.*
2. *More flexible and alternative training pathways, particularly in new areas of high technology.*
3. *Evaluation of regulatory, legislative or systemic barriers to New Apprenticeships.*
4. *A streamlined response to demand for new skill sets.*