

Building skills towards prosperity

A DRAFT ACTION PLAN
FOR CONSULTATION

JUNE 2020





The principles of workforce planning have never been more applicable than now, and this approach has the potential to dramatically improve employment outcomes across Queensland.



A way forward

Governments and businesses globally have quickly realised that 'business as usual' is redundant in a world changed by COVID-19.

We have made multiple local adjustments to the way we work to protect staff and customers, but the next response must be strategic and further reaching.

Australia and Queensland will need to develop broad strategic scaffolding to support the range of tailored actions needed over the coming months and years.

The economic fallout from the pandemic will sadly see many businesses forced to close permanently and thousands of hard working people will lose their jobs.

The construction industry is also impacted, but is better placed than most to continue to contribute to the economy throughout the crisis. Indeed targeted construction is going to be an important lever for governments to pull as they look to stimulate local economies and support displaced workers.

Construction Skills Queensland (CSQ) has been championing the benefits of workforce planning for many years and more recently has started developing regional workforce plans.

These are place-based training responses to assemble the skills needed to deliver large programs of construction work in a community. This approach provides opportunities to upskill or cross-skill local workers, to create an agile workforce while at the same time delivering new employment.

The principles of workforce planning have never been more applicable than now, and this approach has the potential to dramatically improve employment outcomes across Queensland.

As targeted infrastructure investments are unveiled, CSQ stands ready to work with state and local government, employer bodies, unions and communities to unlock the full human potential of each body of work.

Our role is to facilitate and coordinate the preparation of the workforce against the profile of the work to be done.

As targeted construction stimulus is unveiled, this is where the opportunity materialises.

It is logical that the first step in supporting displaced workers is communicating where the work is and providing pathways that allow these individuals to gather the skills to get on these jobs.

CSQ is ready to develop training and labour market programs to transition displaced workers, upskill existing workers and create opportunities for young people coming out of education and going into pre-employment programs.

Critically, this is not a one-size fits all solution.

It will require bespoke place-based programs that capture the skills of the local workforce, including displaced workers, and overlay these with the planned construction work.

While strategic investment is absolutely essential in the next chapter of our state, the success of that spending will rely heavily on the workforce scaffolding being in place.

CSQ's *Building Skills Towards Prosperity* proposes a flexible response to COVID-19 that:

- directly links skills, training and employment
- applies across residential, commercial and civil sectors
- relates to all areas of public and private capital expenditure
- supports other government policy goals, such as local content and participation levels
- enables reskilling and upskilling of existing workers, displaced workers and those new to building and construction.



Brett Schimming

CEO, Construction Skills Queensland

The challenge

COVID-19 | health and economic challenges

COVID-19 is both a health crisis and an economic crisis. This differentiates it from a localised disaster event and from other financial crises (e.g. the GFC) in history. The pandemic has created an environment of unprecedented uncertainty. What we do know is:

- lockdown restrictions have caused widespread unemployment and projections of the highest levels of underemployment in a generation
- major export industries such as tourism and education are suffering
- Australia faces negative population growth for the first time in history
- global supply chains have been disrupted, ways of working have been fundamentally altered and industries are under strain.

These factors should influence all infrastructure responses so that they can create value-add in the delivery of projects.

A range of considerations

Government infrastructure is diverse – as illustrated in Figure 1 adjacent – while 46% of capital is invested in transport, 49% is invested in areas including education, health, housing, electricity and law and order. This diversity helps support the residential, commercial and civil sub-sectors of building and construction.

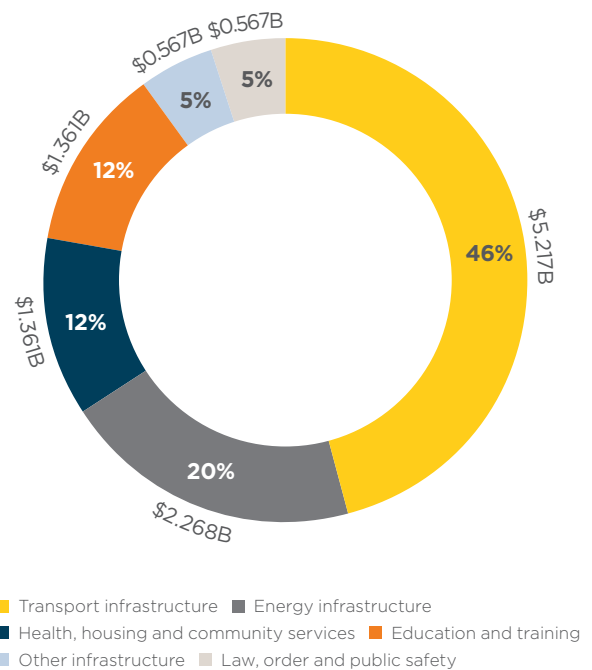
This underscores the need for a mix of interventions, across a range of portfolios. Consideration may also need to be given to issues such as:

- shovel readiness
- ability to ameliorate other concerns such as maintenance backlog
- potential to deliver local jobs and reskill displaced workers
- availability of local labour supply and existing projects
- potential to provide social and economic benefits
- the relative need for investment in certain regions in a post-COVID-19 environment.

A set of principles that expands these considerations has been drafted (Appendix A). These principles are designed as a thought-starter for government and industry to move investment forward.

This is an opportunity to deliver long-term value across Queensland.

Figure 1: Queensland Budget capital expenditure, 2019-20 budget (\$B and %)



The construction training sector

CSQ operates at the building and construction and Vocational Education and Training (VET) interface particularly as it applies to the supply of suitably skilled labour and requirements for ongoing upskilling.

Building and construction:

- has continued to operate through a range of COVID-19 restrictions
- is likely to feature in recovery efforts through infrastructure projects
- supports local job creation.

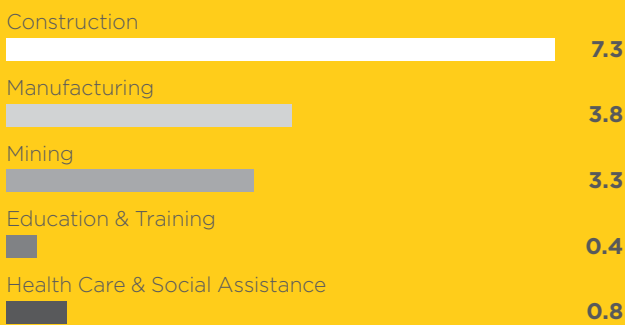
VET underpins qualifications, tickets and licensing for the building and construction industry. VET:

- faces the same challenges as the other educational sectors brought by social distancing compliance
- is shifting some delivery to online where permitted
- supports skills and experience transfer from other industries through recognition of prior learning (RPL).



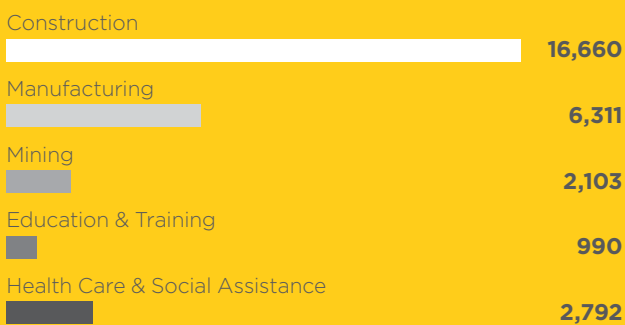
How much VET training does it do?

VET enrolments per hundred workers, Qld, Sept 2019



How many Apprentices does it employ?

Apprentices in-training, Qld, Sept 2019



- Sole traders
45,560
- SMEs (1-20)
30,640
- Large (over 20)
1,430



- Civil contractors
10%
- Builders
20%
- Subcontractors
70%



- Civil
49%
- Building
51%

Planning the way forward

Skills and development are critical to the success of COVID-19 recovery efforts. Reskilling creates opportunities for people to move within industries, such as between residential and civil construction but also from industries experiencing job losses into areas of jobs growth.

It is important that training is targeted, linked to jobs and adds value. A potential way forward is an expanded approach to workforce planning.

Workforce planning has been successfully undertaken at organisational, industry and regional levels. Opportunity now exists for a planned and deliberate expansion to all regions of Queensland. This will provide a clear line of sight for government investment to skilling and employment.

The action plan

A broader, scaled-up role for workforce planning should be considered as part of a COVID-19 recovery strategy.

CSQ will continue expansion of existing workforce planning programs.

With agreement for coordinated state-level action for this kind of intervention, the following steps are proposed:

- 1 | Investment determination**
 - Early identification of COVID-19 recovery initiatives with sufficient time and notice to support workforce planning.
- 2 | Stakeholder engagement**
 - Government supported coordination bringing together industry, major employers and key infrastructure departments.
- 3 | Creation of workforce plans**
 - Developed for each region, by investment area to provide state-wide coverage.
 - Providing a link between skills, training and employment at an occupational level.
- 4 | Monitor, report, evaluate**
 - Social and economic outcomes.
 - Stakeholder engagement and accountability.

CSQ will continue expansion of existing workforce planning programs.

The case for workforce planning

Workforce planning is the identification and analysis of what an industry, sector, region or project requires for a supply of skilled labour to meet business objectives.

Workforce planning considers the size, experience, knowledge, skills and qualifications that will be needed.

For occupational and diversity groups, workforce planning analyses and explores opportunities to attract, develop and retain people and addresses both increased participation or specific occupational challenges or shortages.

A collaborative partnership approach, such as that used by CSQ workforce planning, builds capacity and capability aligned to the training and skilling needs of selected projects, sectors, regions and diversity groupings.

What is training needs analysis?

Information from workforce analysis is used to develop detailed training and workforce development opportunities against packages and programs of construction.

A skills development plan supports implementation by linking to education and training qualifications and providers.

Wraparound programs

Workforce planning requires wraparound support. This includes staff dedicated to working with industry on specific outcomes, expertise in occupational analysis, VET competencies and the capacity to deliver education and training solutions. A summary of these types of specific activities and programs is provided at Appendix B.

Figure 2: Key components of workforce planning in Queensland building and construction



Why does it work?

CSQ's workforce planning model works by:

- Providing a direct and tangible link between employment and education
- Considering the needs of the project and the supply of skills of the local workforce
- Identifying and filling skill gaps.

CSQ assists industry providing access to information and market intelligence regarding industry demand, workforce supply, skilling gaps and future trends.

1. We model workforce numbers for Queensland, by region and by sector
2. We model workforce numbers by occupation through the various stages of a construction project
3. We forecast workforce numbers required by region and sector, and contrast it to supply
4. We model workforce numbers for apprenticeships on large construction projects, in line with Queensland government procurement policy
5. We provide employment pathways into the industry to support contractors to attract and retain their workforce, and comply with policy requirements
6. We identify the skills and training requirements of construction projects and fund their completion
7. We support contractors to monitor compliance against government training policy and assist achieve workforce outcomes for new entrants and indigenous participants
8. We support industry to gain an insight into regional and state-wide activity and navigate potential impacts to skills and labour demands and shortages
9. We promote a collaborative approach to meeting community engagement, local content and workforce development outcomes
10. We develop strategies and workforce plans to support development initiatives for contractors, regions and increase participation by diversity groups.



Workforce planning considers the size, experience, knowledge, skills and qualifications that will be needed.

Case Study 1 | Regional workforce planning in Central Queensland

The Central Queensland Regional Workforce Plan (the plan) was developed by CSQ in partnership with Capricorn Enterprise and principal contractors of major projects in the region.

The plan for the period 2019 and 2025 provides insight into workforce demand and skill requirements for the region for major projects and supports engaging the local community in employment, training and other policy requirements.

Activities

CSQ created Occupational Demand Profiles (ODP's) using CSQ's Skills Calculator based on project data provided by industry participants.

CSQ Regional Workforce Plans were delivered providing a comprehensive regional profile incorporating the ODP's.

Skills Actions Plans identified:

- local focus skilling activities to build awareness and delivery
- ways to attract suitably skilled workers to the region.

Objectives

- Supporting industry insight into regional and state-wide activity and navigate potential impacts to skills and labour demands
- Apprentice and trainee engagement
- Employment and training outcomes for Indigenous people
- Measurable training outcomes
- Employment for local residents and businesses
- Maintaining a collaborative approach to meeting community engagement, local content and training and development outcomes alongside compliance with government policy objectives.

Outcomes

CSQ Regional workforce planning for Central Queensland has facilitated:

- structured workplace learning opportunities
- design and implementation of skilling opportunities
- compliance with the Queensland building and construction industry training policy.



Rockhampton Northern Access upgrade



Cross River Rail station to stadium - artist's impression

Case Study 2 | Workforce planning for Cross River Rail

Delivery of this major infrastructure project will occur over several years, in stages and is a high profile project.

Objectives

- Maximising apprentice and trainee engagement
- Employment and training outcomes for Indigenous people
- Measurable training outcomes
- Employment for local residents and businesses.

Activities

CSQ and the CRR team are developing a strategic workforce plan, operational workforce plan and training needs analysis that:

- Creates entry pathways for trainees, apprentices and cadets
- Increases indigenous participation
- Provides training and skills assessment for subcontractors.

Expected outcomes

Workforce planning at the major project level enables CSQ and industry partners to:

- project labour modelling and skills forecasting
- identify labour tightening at specific project stages and in specific occupations
- achieve apprentice and trainee targets
- access resourcing for training.

CSQ looks forward to working with CRR to boost education and employment opportunities.



Case Study 3 | Queensland Country Bank Stadium (Townsville) workforce planning

The recently opened Queensland Country Bank Stadium is one of the largest and most iconic buildings in the Northern region. The construction ran for 2.5 years and required a large and skilled workforce.

CSQ worked with Watpac, the Principal Contractor, to identify the skilling requirements, associated skills gaps and develop a suitable training program.

Objectives

The building and construction effort provided an excellent opportunity to achieve the following objectives:

- employ locally
- get people back to work
- engage local businesses
- provide apprenticeship opportunities
- provide training to upskill the existing workforce
- maximise employment opportunities from within our indigenous community.

Activities

Watpac and CSQ established a *Workforce Plan* that aligned the training with the work on the project.

In addition, we established an *NQS Indigenous Participation Action Plan*.

CSQ conducted workforce modelling by construction stage, linked to occupation and skills requirements, and identified apprenticeship and traineeship pathways applicable over the life of the project.

Outcomes

- CSQ provided Major Project training investment to deliver hundreds of cross-skilling and upskilling courses across the project workforce
- CSQ delivered Trade Ready investment through TAFE Qld and local Group Training Organisation Torgas to provide youth and career seekers, particularly indigenous, with a structured pathway resulting in employment on the project
- CSQ provided ongoing advice, and support to Watpac and requisite supply chain, to assist the project achieve their desired workforce employment objectives and comply with workforce training targets.

Highlights

Working collaboratively with Watpac, this workforce planning exercise and subsequent training delivery exceeded both the new entrant apprenticeships and the upskilling/training targets:

- Contribution of hours from the indigenous workforce of nearly 12%, exceeding the target of 6.6%
- Overall 242,000 training hours were delivered, exceeding the target of 150,000 training hours.

Case Study 4 | Metricon residential construction workforce planning

CSQ is pleased to deliver workforce planning and training solutions with Metricon, an award winning home builder. In South East Queensland, Metricon typically engages a network of 900+ sub-contractors and delivers construction work in excess of \$200M per annum.

CSQ has been engaged with Metricon Qld since early 2017 to provide workforce planning support that assists Metricon attract, develop and retain both the direct hire and subcontractor workforce.

Objectives

- To support Metricon retain and develop their existing workforce and strengthen career pathways.
- To provide a range of skilling solutions that encompass both Metricon's internal and sub-contractor workforce; and cover a range of occupations from administration to construction management.
- To further support the sub-contractor network by extending small business support and promoting workforce development.

Activities

Working with Metricon, CSQ has:

- assessed the capability of the subcontractor workforce
- delivered a training needs analysis
- put in place structured post trade pathways for supervisors including accredited training, funded through wrap around programs.

Outcomes

CSQ has supported 300 home build projects.

Courses currently being undertaken include:

- Certificate IV and Diploma in Building and Construction
- Certificate IV and Diploma in Work Health and Safety
- Diploma of Business
- Working Safely at Heights
- Working Safely on Scaffolding
- Asbestos General Awareness.

CSQ has helped future proof the workforce by promoting the residential building and construction as a viable and attractive career pathway through:

- Delivery of a Gateways to Schools Program to outline para professional careers in residential building and construction such as drafting, interior design, administration and site management.
- Onsite Try'aTrade events for Year 10 students.

CSQ is excited by the opportunities to help local communities through the Metricon partnership and will continue to monitor outcomes as this partnership progresses.



Appendix A | Infrastructure Investment principles in COVID-19 response

The following principles have been drafted to provide a wide focus on the potential benefits that can flow from well planned, targeted infrastructure investment.

- 1 |** COVID-19 response infrastructure initiatives will have a range of benefits and will:
 - help ameliorate the broader economic and social impacts of the pandemic
 - deliver skills and employment opportunities for targeted cohorts in regions and local communities in-need (e.g. youth, indigenous, displaced workers)
 - support apprenticeships and the associated need for skills, training and work-based learning
 - consider community, regional and state-wide impacts across a range of indicators and outcomes.
- 2 |** The investment will deliver long-term value for Queenslanders and continue to deliver benefits post-COVID-19.
 - The potential social or economic impact aligns with budget expectations and impact.

- 3 |** COVID-19 response efforts will consider the broader economic and social context and focus on:
 - Queensland's regions with the greatest need for jobs creation and educational or skilling opportunities
 - projects with the greatest employment and educational impact
 - projects that reduce or remove other policy problems (e.g. reducing backlog or waitlists, social issues, environmental concerns or economic bottlenecks) and encompass a range of government infrastructure activities (e.g. social housing, accommodation for DV support, maintenance and capex for schools, police stations and hospitals, accommodation for young adult disabled/disadvantaged)
 - sections (civil, residential, commercial) of the building and construction industry needing the most support
 - complementing rather than competing with private sector work.
- 4 |** The response effort will be supported by an ongoing consultation process between the industry and government.
 - Helping to close the loop through shared commitment to and understanding of the broader impact of building and construction investment.





Appendix B | CSQ programs

These CSQ programs highlight the close linkages between achievement of relevant qualifications and employment in the construction industry.

Industry Skills Coordination Program

Under this program CSQ works with industry to deliver and fund a range of workforce planning and skills development services including:

- guiding local and sectoral workforce planning, development and training strategies
- identifying trends in skilling and workforce planning
- reviewing future workforce skills needs
- coordinating and promoting workforce training programs
- promoting diversity
- identifying and promoting:
 - ways to improve the uptake, retention and completion of apprenticeships and traineeships, including mentoring practices and models
 - better practice skilling improvements in retention, safety, productivity and innovation.

Skills Assessment and Gap Training Program

Existing workers, career seekers and those with previously acquired skills and knowledge in building and construction are able to have their skills and prior learning recognised, receive gap training and gain a recognised building and construction qualification. This includes gaining a recognised qualification, attainment of occupational registrations and licenses, to obtain employment and move within the industry.

Higher Level Skills Program

The Higher Level Skills | General and Civil Construction programs enhance the capability of the building and construction industry. The Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications in this program build knowledge and skills, pathways to further learning and career development into higher level and paraprofessional roles.

Extended program eligibility to the under-employed or out of work, assists with re-entry to the building and construction industry through new, required qualifications.

The Higher Level Skills program provides funding to eligible RTOs to deliver training and assessment services in higher-level qualifications.

Major Projects Program

The Major Projects program, sees CSQ work in targeted major projects and selected programs of work to:

- help principal contractors identify project-specific training through the development of a training needs analysis (TNA)
- provide funding solutions to address the project's specific needs identified in the TNA
- assist provide ongoing support for training and skilling requirements, and maintain a safe workplace
- implement strategic training and employment programs aligned to project objectives
- identify potential skills shortages and provide meaningful solutions
- assist individuals to become more multi-skilled and productive
- provide career pathway opportunities.

Short courses

General construction short courses provide funding to eligible RTOs for up-skilling and cross-skilling training. This training focuses on adapting to licensing and regulatory changes as well as changing job requirements caused by new products, processes, methodologies, consumer demands and technologies.

Safety short courses includes courses such as asbestos identification, disposal and management, working with silica and operating high risk equipment through to mental health amongst many others.

CSQ understands:

- Construction and skills
- The policy and legislative environment for building and construction
- Industry stakeholders; their goals and objectives
- The economic and social value of the industry
- The occupation profiles and different skills required in the construction of infrastructure, buildings, and houses
- The supply of workers and existing skills, in Queensland's regions, cities and towns
- The baseline skills required to successfully enter each industry sector
- The best training pathways to guide workers through the industry
- How innovation and technology is shaping the industry.





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