

CSQ Training Plan

Building a skilled, resilient
and sustainable workforce
in construction

2025-26



Message from the Chair and CEO

Queensland has a robust construction pipeline, underpinned by steady population growth, record public infrastructure investment in the future energy network, and the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Planning for an unprecedented demand for skilled workers relies on a reliable medium-range profile of Queensland's unfolding book of work.

CSQ has released Horizon 2032: Imagining Queensland's Future Construction Workforce as a new annual report into the pipeline of building and engineering projects and the projected workforce demand, to increase understanding of the scope and scale of projected construction work.

As the research highlighted, our industry faces significant challenges in delivering the future pipeline, dominated by increasing difficulty sourcing an appropriately skilled talent pool at the right time and location to match project demands.

The industry's workforce challenges did not appear overnight, and they will take time and work to resolve. Without new approaches to attracting and retaining talent, the gap between the construction-work-done and the work-yet-to-be-done will continue to widen.

Sustained and ongoing growth in the construction pipeline presents an opportunity for CSQ to grow our investment in key programs and services, in partnership with industry and government.

The 2025-26 CSQ Training Plan outlines our \$60 million investment to boost the capability and agility of Queensland's building and construction industry to meet unprecedented demand.

This record level of investment will enable CSQ to expand our programs and services to better match the needs of industry, including successful Construction Pathways activities that directly respond to calls from employers for targeted support to attract new workers.

But it is not enough to simply channel more entrants into the industry. So we will continue to champion diversity and wellbeing initiatives, recognising the strong connection between workplace culture and retention.

Our building and civil programs will grow, to support additional workers to undertake the short courses and qualifications required to meet occupational licensing, enhance workplace productivity and further develop their careers.

We are also proud to continue to invest in projects that support healthy workers and keep workers safe, including strategies to reduce potentially harmful exposure to silicosis and asbestos.

This is an exciting period for the industry and CSQ looks forward to continuing partnering with employers, industry associations, unions, training providers and the Queensland Government to attract, develop and retain a strong future-ready workforce.

Sue-Ann Fresneda

Chair

Geoff Clare

Chief Executive Officer



Image: Hutchinson Builders



Image: CPB Contractors

Programs and services

PATHWAYS AND PRE-TRADE

- Working with schools, students and industry to promote and trial building and construction careers, providing realistic career experiences to support transition.
- Directly supporting potential workers to enter the industry, through a range of pre-employment programs.
- Helping to keep our industry supplied with talent.
- Monitoring emerging technology and new practices to prepare industry for the jobs of the future.

BUILDING AND CIVIL

- Addressing labour and skills demands to keep large projects moving on time.
- Providing tailored qualifications and services for residential and commercial builders, workers and subcontractors.
- Providing new skills and services to meet the large pipeline of infrastructure and energy projects and needs of civil workers and businesses.

BUSINESS CAPABILITY AND WELLBEING

- Enabling best practice workforce planning on Queensland's construction projects.
- Raising the capability of sole traders and small and medium businesses.
- Supporting a safe, healthy and diverse industry.
- Enhancing participation in and completion of apprenticeships and traineeships through mentoring.

Cover image: CPB Contractors

Investment plan 2025-26

\$60M

CSQ provides the Queensland building and construction industry with the skills and information it needs for a strong and sustainable future. Each year, CSQ develops a training and investment plan for the industry. This year, CSQ will be investing \$60M to support the industry.

PATHWAYS AND PRE-TRADE						\$3.35M
CONSTRUCTION PATHWAYS = \$1.85M			PRE-TRADE = \$1.5M			
Partnership initiatives - Try'a Trade - Virtual Reality	- Gateway to Industry Schools* - School to Industry Advisory Services	Education initiatives - Year13	Get Ready	Trade Ready	Infrastructure Ready	
BUILDING AND CIVIL						\$41.1M
MAJOR CONTRACTORS = \$8.1M		BUILDING PROGRAMS = \$19.85M		CIVIL PROGRAMS* = \$13.15M		
- Higher Qualifications - Short Courses - Skills Assessment and Gap Training - Workforce initiatives		- Higher Qualifications - Short Courses - Skills Assessment and Gap Training		- Higher Qualifications - Short Courses - Skills Assessment and Gap Training - Workforce initiatives		
BUSINESS CAPABILITY AND WELLBEING						\$5.55M
INDUSTRY WELLBEING = \$2.75M		SME CAPABILITY = \$450K		APPRENTICE SUPPORT = \$1.25M	INDUSTRY SKILLS COORDINATION = \$1.1M	
- Mental health and wellbeing - Social inclusion initiatives						
INDUSTRY SUPPORT SERVICES						\$10M
INDUSTRY SERVICES AND SUPPORT = \$4.4M		WORKFORCE CAPABILITY AND RESEARCH = \$1.3M		MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS = \$3.4M	QLEAVE LEVY ADMINISTRATION = \$900K	
				- CSQ general - Construction Pathways		

*These programs are delivered in partnership with Department of Trade, Employment, and Training (DTET) under a co-investment model.

Research and industry consultation

CSQ undertakes ongoing research and monitoring of industry activity and influences. However, on its own, data only tells half the story. We complement this quantitative analysis with a rolling program of on-the-ground engagement across the state, providing real feedback and experiences to round out the data. This model informs and directs decision making and planning of investment levels in the Training Plan.

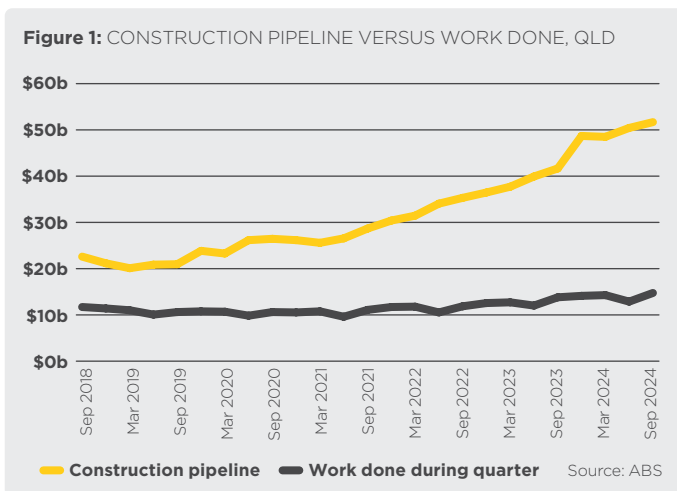
RESEARCH

Queensland's construction outlook

Queensland's construction sector is set for strong growth in the coming years. As of September 2024, the state's construction pipeline stood at \$54.5 billion (Figure 1), with engineering projects leading at 43% (\$23.3 billion). The residential and non-residential sectors followed closely behind, accounting for 29% (\$15.8 billion) and 28% (\$15.4 billion), respectively.

The public sector continues to dominate engineering investments (64%), primarily in water projects (35%), bridges, rail, and harbours (30%), and electricity (18%). Meanwhile, private sector contributions (36%) are concentrated in electricity (41%) and heavy industry (34%).

However, the gap between the construction pipeline and work done continues to widen; it is now (September 2024) three times larger than five years ago (Figure 1).



Looking ahead, CSQ forecasts an average construction pipeline of \$61.3 billion through 2031–32. This surge in activity will drive higher demand for construction workers, yet supply is expected to fall short, with a projected average shortfall of 18,200 workers.

To address this, the industry must prioritise greater workforce diversity and increased apprenticeships/traineeships.

In June 2024, 31,200 construction apprentices were training in Queensland. While apprenticeship commencements peaked above 14,000 in 2020–21 and 2021–22, they have since declined to 11,800 in 2023–24.

From 2021–22 to 2023–24, apprentice cancellations averaged 7,400 per year; significantly higher than the 5,400 average from 2019–20 to 2020–21.

Encouragingly, more women are joining the construction workforce, yet growth remains insufficient to meet industry demands.

As of November 2024, 277,000 workers were employed in the construction industry, including 41,500 women—a 32% increase over three years.

Despite this progress, female representation remains low at 15%, and even lower at just 4% in trade, labourer, and machine operator roles.

Addressing these challenges will be key to sustaining Queensland's construction boom and meeting future workforce demands.

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Strengthening industry collaboration for workforce solutions

At CSQ, we ensure industry insights remain at the heart of our strategy. Each March and August, we conduct formal industry consultation sessions across nine regions, validating economic data with real-world experience. Throughout the year, we also engage with regional industry groups, fostering ongoing collaboration and solution-focused discussions.

Our Industry Engagement team maintains over 8,000 industry touchpoints annually, providing continuous consultation through face-to-face engagement across Queensland. We also work closely with Industry Skills Coordination partners and the Major Contractors Forum to take a comprehensive, industry-wide approach to workforce planning.

Industry feedback directly shapes CSQ's Training Plan and informs policies for program delivery, ensuring our initiatives address real workforce needs.

Queensland's construction sector faces significant workforce constraints across all sectors and occupations. With major projects expanding regionally and increasing in complexity, different sectors are competing for the same limited talent pool, alongside other industries experiencing similar labour shortages.

To tackle these challenges, the industry must tap into new labour sources while breaking down barriers to entry and retention. CSQ is actively working with government, unions, and employer groups to understand these issues and develop strategies that attract a more diverse workforce to Queensland's construction sector.

In 2025–26, CSQ will enhance its support for the civil construction sector through the launch of our Civil Pathways strategy. This initiative will:

- Raise awareness of careers in the civil sector
- Help industry establish clear pathways for new workers
- Ensure the workforce meets forecast labour demands in the years ahead

Through strategic partnerships and proactive workforce initiatives, CSQ remains committed to building a strong, skilled, and sustainable construction workforce for Queensland's future.



Image: Fulton Hogan

PATHWAYS & PRE-TRADE

CONSTRUCTION PATHWAYS \$1.85M

Working with schools, students and industry to promote and trial building and construction career and job options.

PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES

> experiential hands-on programs

This flagship program brings together several partnerships with education providers, principal contractors and schools to deliver unique, hands-on, on-site learning experiences for high school students, including our popular VR program.

GATEWAY TO INDUSTRY SCHOOLS

> linking schools and industry

CSQ delivers the Gateway to Industry Schools program in partnership with the Queensland Government. The program helps students with future career choices and provides pathways and insight into paraprofessional roles in the building and construction industry.

EDUCATION INITIATIVES

> extending our reach through online collaboration

We partner with providers such as Year13 to empower young people to choose and prepare for a career in building and construction. Delivered in partnership with schools, CSQ facilitates free access to an online platform and a digital footprint to provide an engaging tool for high school students to test their compatibility for a career in construction.

PRE-TRADE \$1.5M

Programs to help potential workers achieve entry into the industry and/or a trade, and help keep our industry supplied with qualified staff.

GET READY

> job-ready candidates

We continue to respond to industry feedback on the importance of job-ready candidates. Working in partnership with RTOs, this 3-week program is trade specific and provides base level technical skills with a one-week structured work placement targeting 'wet' trades such as plastering, tiling and painting.

TRADE READY

> industry-ready candidates

Working with industry partners and principal contractors, Trade Ready gives aspiring tradies an opportunity to experience a worksite and undertake relevant training, helping to build trade and industry knowledge. Trade Ready is a five-week program aiming to secure an apprenticeship or traineeship outcome.

INFRASTRUCTURE READY

> civil foundation skills

A pilot program in partnership with selected preferred suppliers, to raise awareness of the civil construction industry by providing a safe, hands-on civil experience in a controlled environment.

Construction Pathways Partner Schools

CSQ has announced 122 Queensland schools as Construction Pathways Partner Schools, granting them exclusive access to industry experiences, resources, and employer connections.

The list of schools was announced in March '25, kicking off a **three-year working relationship under the Construction Pathways (Gateway to Industry Schools) banner**.

Marist College Ashgrove took the honours of the first school to receive its Construction Pathways Partner School 'gear' at a special assembly, where the principal received a trophy and commemorative construction hard hat.

While many of the schools have worked closely with CSQ over the years, the new Construction Pathways Partner School model creates new opportunities for the schools to promote the initiative.

Partner schools will be entitled to use the Construction Pathways Partner School logo to signal their achievement and will receive an ongoing flow of communications assets and resources.



Image: Marist College Ashgrove

Jaiden's Pre-Trade story

At 18, Jaiden was exploring career options while balancing part-time work at Domino's. Unsure of his next steps, he joined CSQ's **Civil Pre-Trade program**, delivered by DGT Employment & Training, where he gained hands-on experience with Golding. The fully funded program provided Jaiden a structured pathway to trial civil construction as a career.

He completed key industry certifications, including working at heights and confined spaces, while gaining valuable exposure to worksite safety. His placement at Harbour Shores on the Gold Coast confirmed his interest in civil construction.

Shortly after completing the program, Jaiden secured a formal job offer. His success highlights the role of CSQ's pre-trade programs in equipping job-ready workers with essential skills, qualifications, and industry connections.



"The training gave me the skills and confidence to step onto a real worksite" – Jaiden

BUILDING AND CIVIL

MAJOR CONTRACTORS \$8.1M

Training and services designed to meet the needs of major projects and their supply chain.

The Major Contractors program aims to keep projects moving on time and avoid skills shortages by identifying what the skill need is, when it is needed and how to fill the gap. Working directly with major building and civil contractors, this program has three primary streams:

- Funding for a range of workforce planning, and skills coordination activities, with a focus on social inclusion initiatives in 2025-26
- Subsidies for a range of building and construction training to address priority skill needs on Queensland's major projects
- Funding for tailored workforce initiatives developed in response to gaps, including subcontractor capability and industry-recognised microcredentials.

This program seeks to build skills throughout the supply network. The program also actively encourages and facilitates Construction Pathways programs on Major Projects.

BUILDING PROGRAMS \$19.85M

Tailored qualifications and services for residential and commercial builders, workers and subcontractors.

HIGHER QUALIFICATIONS \$6.25M

> specialist, management and post-trade qualifications

This program grants existing workers subsidised access to a range of targeted qualifications at Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma level to respond to industry demand for deeper skills and qualifications. Popular courses include Certificate IV in Building and Construction, Certificate IV in Hazardous Areas - Electrical, and Diploma of Project Management.

SHORT COURSES \$11M

> licences, tickets, new skills

The Building Short Courses program focuses on developing flexible competencies and skill sets to meet the needs of workers and businesses.

- Targeted skills needs | A suite of courses including 15+ business and environmental sustainability courses, 20+ high risk work licences, 15+ plumbing, gas fitting and fire protection courses and 30+ electrical courses.
- Safety | 25+ short courses focused on awareness, education and prevention on issues such as silica, asbestos, high risk equipment and legionella management along with electrical awareness and workplace health and safety programs.

SKILLS ASSESSMENT AND GAP TRAINING \$2.6M

> an alternate pathway to a trade qualification

Funding is offered to support existing workers gain a Certificate III in a range of trades through skills assessment and targeted training.



Image: SEE Civil

CIVIL PROGRAMS \$13.15M

Training and services designed to meet the needs of civil workers and businesses.

HIGHER QUALIFICATIONS \$1.5M

> specialist, management and post-trade qualifications

Linked to industry demand for deeper skills and qualifications, this program allows existing workers subsidised access to the following qualifications:

- Certificate IV in Civil Construction
- Diploma of Civil Construction Management
- Advanced Diploma of Civil Construction.

SHORT COURSES \$9.5M

> licences, tickets, new skills

Civil Short Courses delivers flexible competencies and skill sets to meet worker and business needs with a focus on targeted skills needs, plant tickets and safety.

- Targeted skills needs | 25+ short courses to assist civil companies and workers stay current and meet workplace demands.
- Safety | helping to meet the industry safety requirements and associated requirements of licensing and regulatory authorities such as Workplace Health and Safety Queensland and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission.

CIVIL SKILLS ASSESSMENT AND GAP TRAINING \$1.7M

> an alternate pathway to a trade qualification

Funding to support workers and new entrants to gain a Certificate III in:

- Civil Plant Operations
- Civil Construction.

This program is designed for workers with strong experience and high skill levels in a trade who require some minor gap training to gain a qualification.

WORKFORCE INITIATIVES \$450K

> targeted responses to emerging skills requirements

Funding is prioritised to support a range of industry responses, including the Civil Skills Pathway pilot program, focused on recognising the skills of civil workers and enabling an alternative pathway to a qualification.

BUSINESS CAPABILITY AND WELLBEING

INDUSTRY WELLBEING \$2.75M

> supporting a safe work environment

In 2025-26, we will continue our programs supporting healthy workers and a safe work environment across the two focus areas of Mental health & wellbeing and Social inclusion, ensuring that programs and funding are allocated to the areas of most need.

Mental health & wellbeing

- Mental health awareness and support services
- Partnering with charities and not-for-profits
- Wellbeing initiatives including domestic violence prevention and sun exposure.

Social inclusion

- Working with industry partners, charities and not-for profits to develop and deliver diversity projects
- Priority projects include increased support for women in the industry and in trade roles, and a strong focus on Indigenous participation and pathways.

SME CAPABILITY \$450K

> helping sole traders and SMEs prosper

This targeted program encourages accessible and user-friendly knowledge and skills targeted to SMEs. Business owners and staff can benefit from a range of training and education to enhance their business capability. In 2025-26, we will support targeted small business services to complement a range of Government programs and ensure Queensland small and medium construction businesses can access the support they need to succeed.



Image: CPB Contractors



Image: Hutchinson Builders



APPRENTICE SUPPORT \$1.25M

> enhancing participation in and completion of apprenticeships and traineeships

We are committed to supporting apprentices to fully participate, engage with and complete their qualifications. Apprentice Support providers deliver targeted support services across mentoring, life skills, networking and future occupational opportunities. Reducing the likelihood of non-completion is a focus, with planned intervention points to help apprentices succeed.

INDUSTRY SKILLS COORDINATION \$1.1M

> enabling skills through remote, regional and state-wide industry engagement

Industry Skills Coordination Grants help Queensland building and construction industry associations at regional, remote and state-wide levels engage with and support skills issues, and develop tailored industry led responses.

The skills sector can be complex and these grants help associations build a deeper understanding of the systems and policies that link to skills development. This includes targets for social inclusion under major government funded projects, linkages between the skills system and industrial awards, licensing and regulation and differing requirements by project stage and by project type.

A collaborative element to this program generates a shared understanding of best practice improvements in workforce planning, safety, productivity and innovation. It also helps us to improve access to training and business capability programs, and support Construction Pathways initiatives.

Visit: **[csq.org.au](https://www.csq.org.au)**

Call: **1800 798 488**

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2025-26