

Indigenous Construction Workforce

A Snapshot 2023



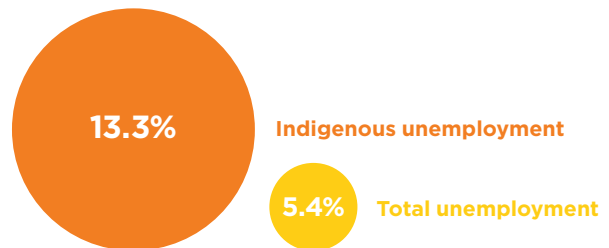
Construction remains a significant employer of Indigenous Queenslanders, playing an important role in closing the gap in Indigenous employment outcomes. This third paper shows a solid increase in training commencements however stubbornly high attrition rates remain a challenge.

The Indigenous employment gap persists

Substantial employment disparities remain between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Although the gap is shrinking in Queensland, the Indigenous unemployment rate is still 2.5 times higher than for the labour force as a whole.

Unemployment - A persistent issue

Unemployment rate 2021, Indigenous and total labour force, Queensland



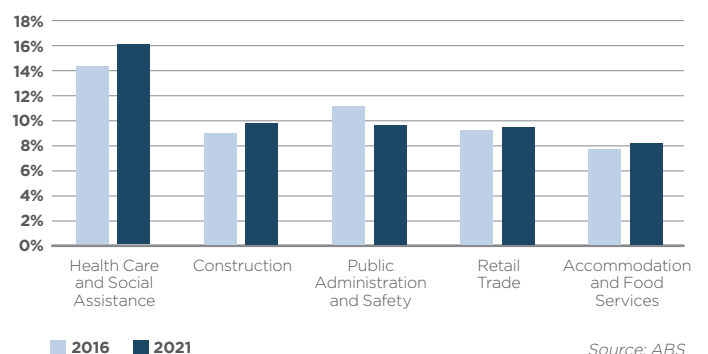
Source: ABS

Construction doing its part

Queensland's construction industry slipped to the second highest industry for Indigenous employment after a surge in Indigenous females employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry. In 2021, one-in-ten Indigenous workers were employed in the construction industry.

Construction the second highest employer of Indigenous people

Indigenous workforce by top five industries, Queensland



Source: ABS

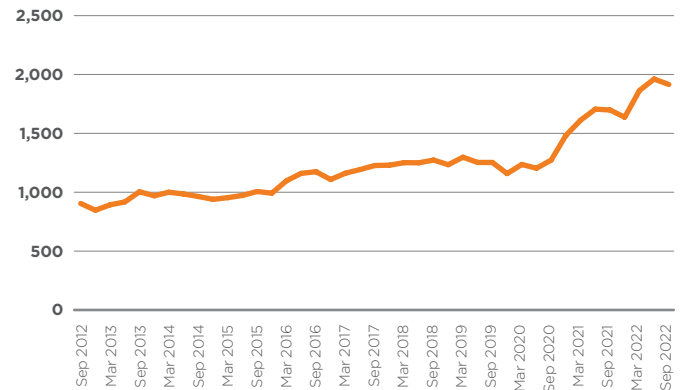
Training is the key to success

The number of Indigenous construction apprentices has more than doubled over the past decade, while the number of non-Indigenous apprentices increased by 1.5 times during that same period. In 2012, there were 900 Indigenous construction apprentices in the industry. This number reached 1,900 in 2022.

“Indigenous construction apprentices more than doubled over the past decade”

Increasing training a strong sign

Construction apprentices in-training, Queensland



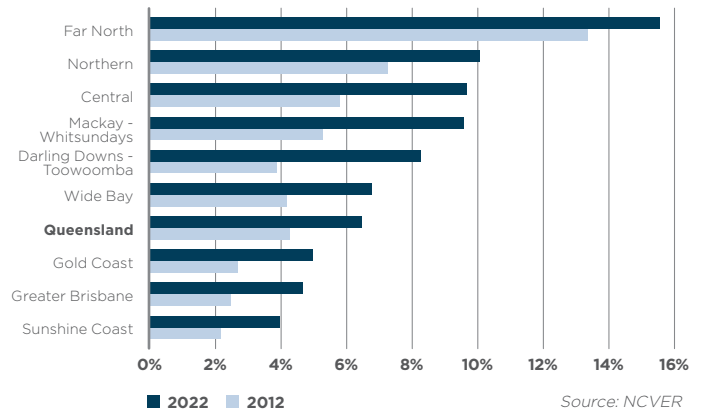
Source: NCVER

Regional Queensland leading the charge

Regional Queensland has outperformed the south-east corner in terms of Indigenous training participation. The numbers are particularly strong in Far North, Northern and Central Queensland. Given the strong links between construction apprenticeships and employment, these numbers bode well for closing the Indigenous employment gap in regional Queensland.

Indigenous participation in construction training has increased

% of construction apprentices that are Indigenous, Queensland



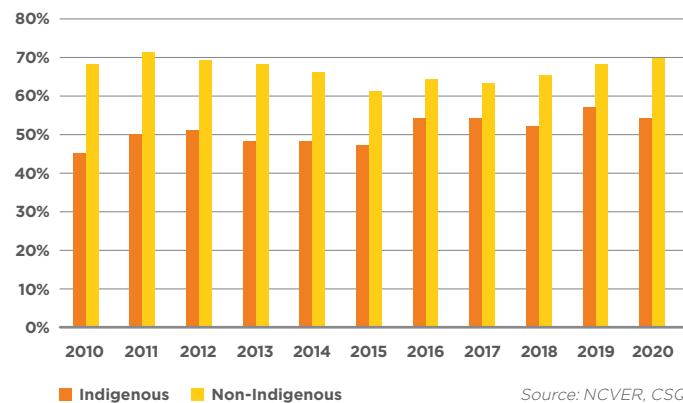
Source: NCVER

But still more work to be done

Major challenges remain. Indigenous construction apprentices complete apprenticeships at significantly lower rates than their non-Indigenous peers. We estimate that just over half of the 2020 Indigenous apprentice cohort will finish, compared to two-thirds of non-Indigenous apprentices. This is linked to stubbornly high first year attrition rates – with over 8% of Indigenous apprentices exiting in their first year. These disparities have become a persistent feature of the training environment that demands attention.

A training outcomes gap still exists in Queensland

Construction apprenticeship completion rates, Queensland



Source: NCVER, CSQ

CSQ’s interactive Indigenous Chartpack can be viewed at csq.org.au/knowledge-centre