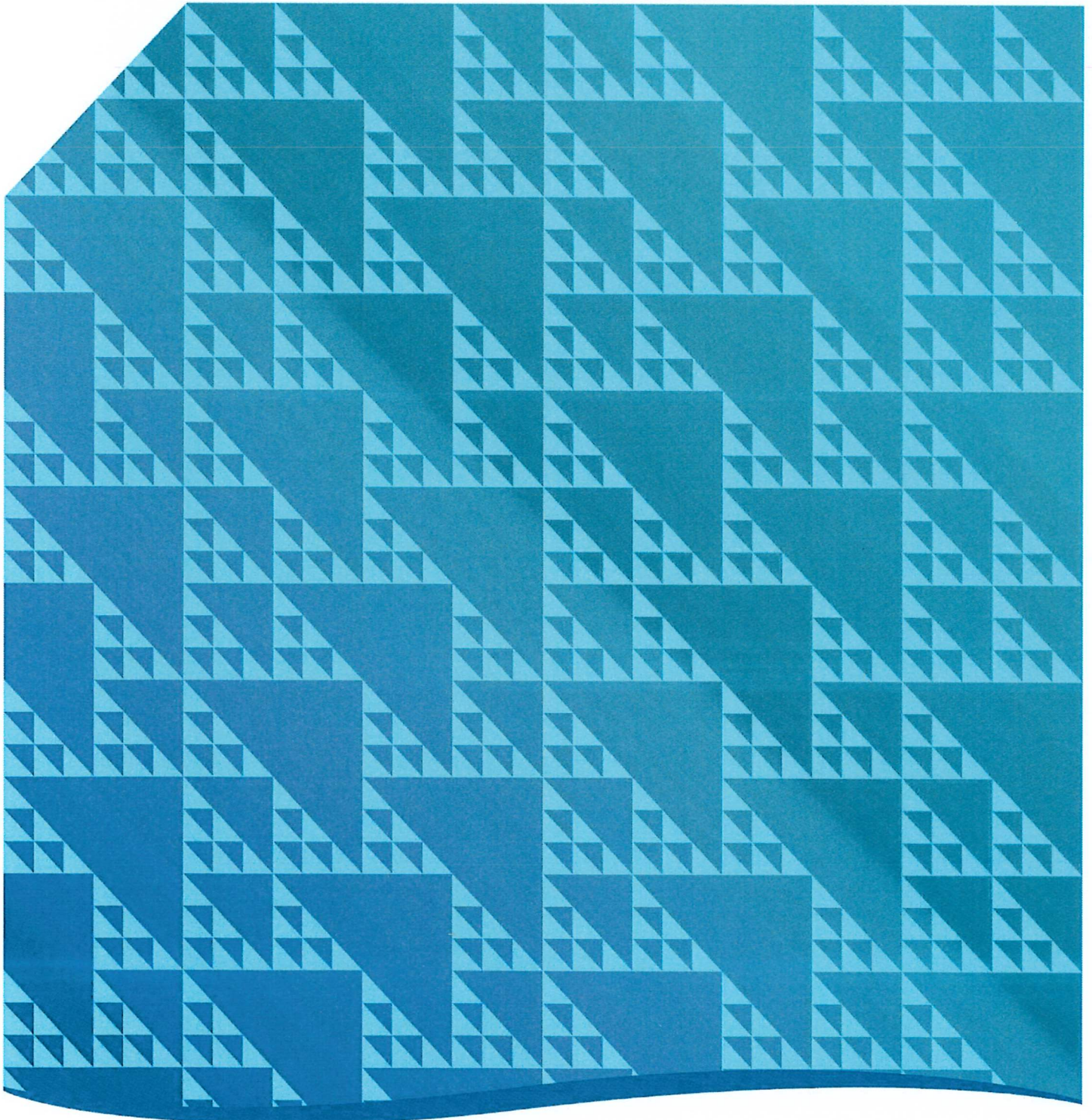


Industry Skills Compact

Early Childhood Education & Care



Industry Skills Compact – Early Childhood Education & Care

Date

This *Industry Skills Compact* is dated 9 November 2023.

Parties

This *Industry Skills Compact* is made between the following Parties, as members of the Tasmanian Early Education and Care industry:

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) – Tasmania Branch

Tasmanian Government

Purpose

This *Industry Skills Compact* sets out a framework for the Parties to work collaboratively to deliver a sustainable and highly skilled current and future workforce in Tasmania.

Context

The Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth has Ministerial Priorities which provide the strategic guidance for the training and workforce development system. They align with the object (section 3) of the *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013* and support the Tasmanian Government's vision for a high-quality training and workforce development system that is accessible, job-focussed and responsive to the needs of industry, employers, training providers and learners.

The Industry Skills Compacts will deliver on the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council (PESRAC) recommendation that industry bodies (associations and employer representatives) should enter into 'industry compacts' that include 'step-up' commitments. These include support for a re-established TasTAFE, clear and specific advice on current and future industry-wide training requirements, supporting more people from industry working as trainers and sharing infrastructure to enable students to train on modern technology.

The Industry Skills Compacts bring a refreshed approach to industry engagement in Tasmania and will focus on supporting stronger collaborative partnerships between participants in the training and workforce development system, while recognising that both Government and industry have areas of strength and responsibility for the system.

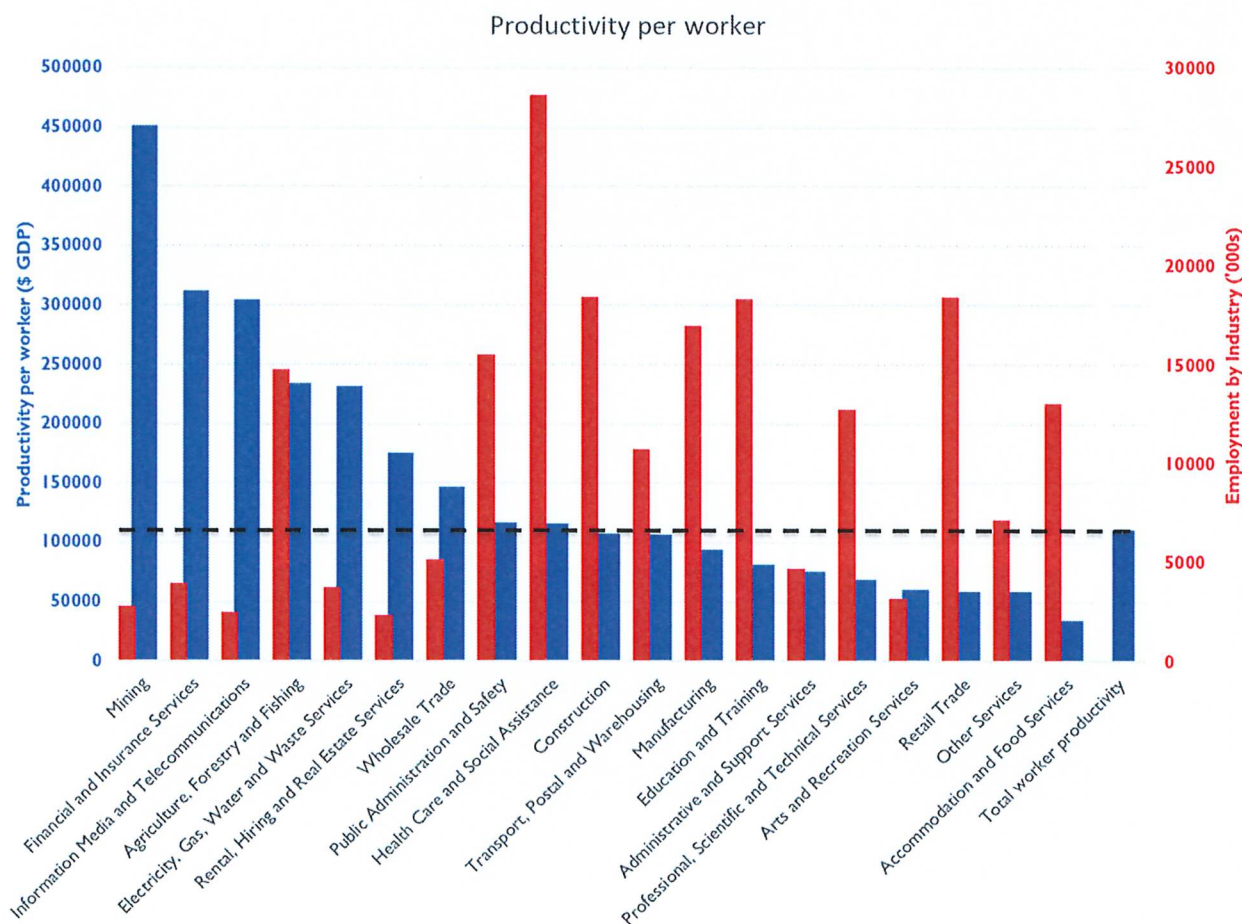
This *Industry Skills Compact* is a statement of commitment by the signatories, the Tasmanian Government and Early Childhood Australia (ECA) – Tasmania Branch, to actively deliver on our respective areas of strength and responsibility.

Tasmania's Labour Market

The labour market is a vital component of the state's economy, ensuring that industry has the workers and skills needed to remain strong and resilient. The estimated unemployment rate in Tasmania was 3.8 per cent in December 2022 (in trend terms), down 0.1 of a percentage point from the previous month, and 0.2 of a percentage point below the level of one year earlier. This is a historically low level for Tasmania. There were 12,000 unemployed Tasmanians and 284,600 employed Tasmanians. This has been rebased since the release of the 2021 Census data by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The participation rate, reflecting the proportion of the working-aged population that is currently employed, was 62.7 per cent in December 2022 (in trend terms). Tasmania has a lower participation rate than other jurisdictions due to its older population, however the participation rate has improved over the last 5 years (61.0 per cent in December 2017). Increasing participation is critical to maintaining workforce growth.

Tasmania's economy is made up of diverse industry sectors with different workforce requirements for skills and training. Each industry contributes differently to the Tasmanian economy.



The 19 industry sectors (as identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics) vary widely in their relative productivity as measured by the output per worker. Higher output per worker is generally associated with capital intensive sectors, such as Mining and Electricity.

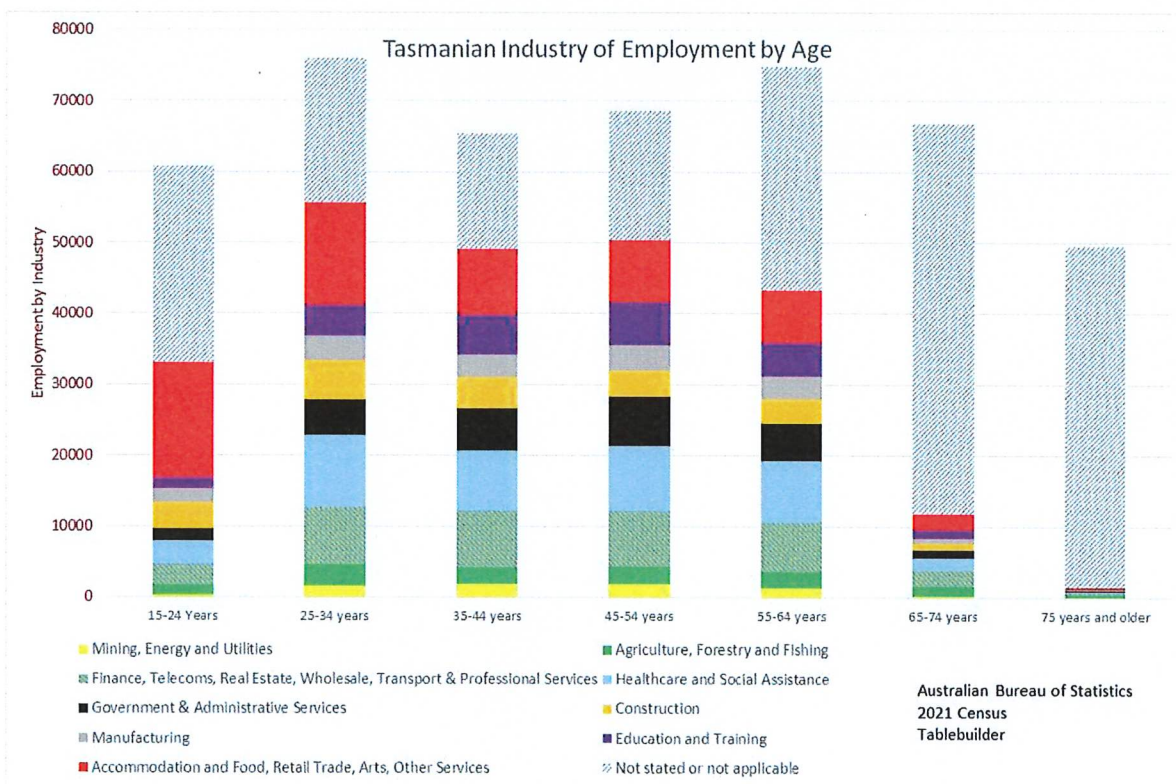
In Tasmania, the higher productivity per worker sectors represent a relatively small proportion of the overall workforce, the exception being the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector (including Aquaculture) which employs relatively high numbers of Tasmanians and has an above average productivity per worker. This reflects Tasmania's relative economic advantage.

Healthcare and Social Assistance is the largest industry by employment in Tasmania. The size of the sector reflects Tasmania's demographics and relatively older population. Economic output, and therefore the relative productivity for public services, including health and education, is measured differently to the private sector (as there is generally no profit or return on capital) so the productivity per worker measure should not be considered meaningful for public services.

Construction and Manufacturing are both large private sector employers in Tasmania, and have productivity per worker that is close to the Tasmanian average. Accommodation and Food Services has a low productivity per worker (similar to other service industries) but is a significant employer and is a pathway into employment for many Tasmanians.

Where labour markets are constrained and there are limited workers available, economic pressures, but also economic optimisation will tend to drive workers from lower productivity sectors towards higher productivity sectors. This will be through wages and other conditions. This trend will increase the overall productivity of the Tasmanian economy, as people will be employed where they can add the most value. This also creates other opportunities for unemployed and under-employed Tasmanians.

Higher productivity sectors will also derive significant private benefit from their workers and have a high capacity to pay or invest in training, which will reduce the need for public subsidy.



Looking at employment across Tasmania's working age population, it is evident that Tasmania has a bimodal population distribution with higher numbers of younger workers aged 25-34 years (significantly increased by migration) and older workers aged 55-64 years.

This chart shows the challenges and opportunities for Tasmanian industry sectors as they attract, develop and retain their workforce. In particular it can be seen that the relatively lower productivity sectors of Accommodation and Food Services, Retail Trade and Arts employ a significant number of younger Tasmanians (although Construction is also an important employer of Tasmanians under 25).

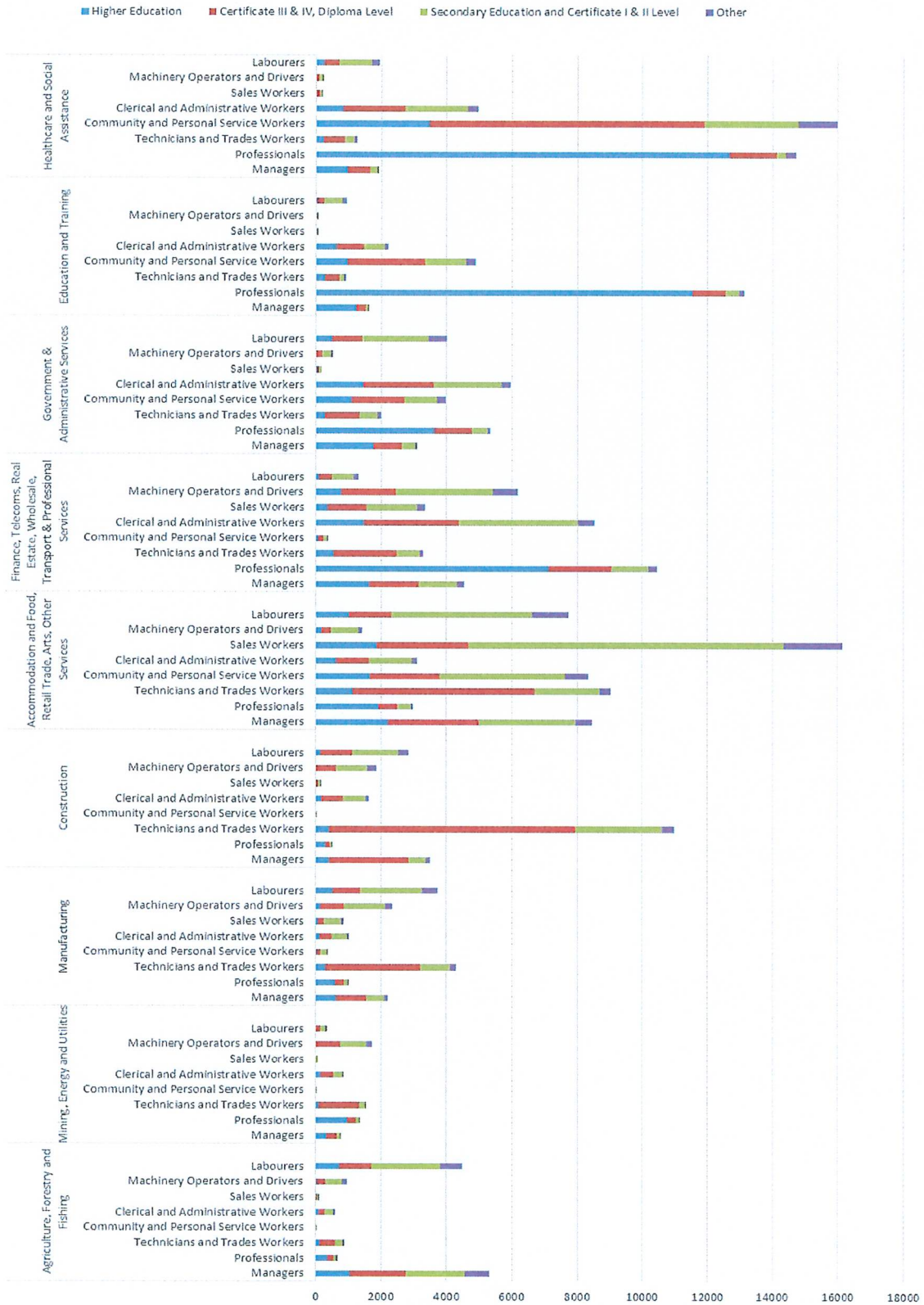
The population identified as 'not applicable' includes those that are studying and not working, retirees and carers that are not engaged in the workforce, as well as the unemployed. There is therefore continued potential to increase the workforce by increasing participation for older workers, ensuring employment is compatible with caring and supporting carers back into the workforce, and opportunities for young people to combine work and study, such as traineeships, apprenticeships and cadetships.

Noting the relative size of the retiring population cohort of 55-64 years (around 75,000), and the workforce entering cohort aged 15-24 years (almost 61,000), it can be expected that the overall workforce will decline without continued migration and/or continued effort to increase participation and retain older workers. This includes helping potential workers of all ages to overcome barriers to employment, including work fitness, numeracy and literacy, and discrimination.

Each of Tasmania's industries and industry groupings has a distinct mix of occupations, which in turn drives training and workforce development requirements and is reflected in the public investment in training. Industries that employ large numbers of professionals, such as Education and Training, and Health and Social Assistance, have a high proportion of their workers qualified with Higher Education (bachelor degree or higher).

Construction, conversely, has a high proportion of technicians and trades workers, of which many require or hold a Certificate III, IV or Diploma through the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system. This is also true for Mining, Energy and Utilities, and Manufacturing, although the workforce in this occupation group is smaller. Many community and service workers (which are a significant part of the Health and Social Assistance workforce) also require a Certificate III, IV or Diploma, including the Certificate III in Individual Support (the largest qualification delivered in Tasmania by number of enrolments). Most qualifications in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector are at Certificate III and Diploma level.

Tasmanian Industry by Occupation and Education level



Principles

Under this Industry Skills Compact, the Parties agree to be guided by the following principles.

- a) *Shared responsibility* - Both industry and government have collective responsibility for building the workforce development and training system that Tasmania wants and needs.
- b) *Collaboration* - will create value, identify opportunities, support innovation, and deliver better outcomes for all of Tasmania. Each of the signatories will make genuine effort to meet their respective roles and responsibilities under this Compact
- c) *Accountability* - Each of the signatories agrees to the publication of this Compact and any reported actions under the Compact.

Commitments

The Parties agree to work collaboratively to:

- a) continue to build and maintain a skilled workforce that will support productivity and employment growth across our key industry sectors by increasing sustainability, resilience, quality and efficiency;
- b) raise capacity, capability and career opportunities across both the industry and government sector through increased skills development, and support for diversity;
- c) actively deliver on our respective areas of strength and responsibility for training and workforce development.

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) – Tasmania Branch, on behalf of the Early Childhood Education & Care industry, commits to:

1. Inform government investment decisions:

- a) Provide, on an annual basis, clear and specific advice on current and emerging industry-wide skills and training needs to inform training delivery, workforce development activity and the Skills Tasmania program framework.
- b) Support the collection of relevant industry data, including workforce, occupations and the verification of skills and labour shortages.
- c) Identify and support innovative responses to workforce challenges including engagement with regional jobs hubs and support for emerging sub-sectors.
- d) Encourage member organisations to co-invest in training alongside government, particularly where training benefits the employing business.

2. Engage with the training system:

- a) Ensure that employers, particularly small businesses, are aware of relevant training providers and apprenticeship network organisations and are assisted to access support for training.
- b) Actively work with training providers, including TasTAFE, to ensure training delivery meets the needs of industry and employers.
- c) Where possible, enable access to the latest industry equipment and technology to support the delivery of training.
- d) Provide industry input into development of VET training products through participating in the national training package development system and working with Skills Tasmania.
- e) Support strategies that will increase the delivery of nationally accredited training and improve completion rates including promoting the use of GTOs where appropriate.

3. Promote training and workforce development:

- a) Work collaboratively with all industry stakeholders on a state-wide approach for the promotion of VET that reinforces the value, opportunity and visibility of the VET system for individuals, employers and industry.
- b) Promote the industry to prospective learners, noting that prospective learners might come from schools, adults who are transitioning to new careers, and non-traditional cohorts.
- c) Actively engage with employers to foster a learning environment that encourages and values VET and supports skills development for individuals over their working life, including opportunities to become supervisors and trainers.
- d) Work alongside Government to promote modern apprenticeships and best practice within the industry, to support apprentice/trainee and employer outcomes
- e) Work with Government to provide age-appropriate opportunities for school-aged learners.
- f) Encourage membership to celebrate excellence and diversity in our training and workforce development system through recognition events, including the Tasmanian Training Awards and the Employer of Choice program.

4. Collaborate on skills and workforce development matters:

- a) Participate in the Australian Government's Jobs and Skills Council and advocate to the Australian Government for sustainable funding allocation to meet local needs.
- b) Participate in and promote industry engagement meetings to ensure the effectiveness of this Industry Skills Compact.
- c) Continue to work with Government, industry stakeholders and training providers to deliver the Early Childhood Education & Care Industry Priority Action Plan attached to this compact at Schedule 1.

The Tasmanian Government commits to:

1. **Invest in training and workforce development:**
 - a) Deliver an accessible pipeline of funding opportunities for skills and training aligned with industry priorities and workforce needs, including a strengthened apprenticeship and traineeship system and a target towards unemployed and underemployed Tasmanians.
 - b) Provide evidence-based research and data to industry, to ensure we have a shared knowledge base that supports industry's workforce planning, enables decisions that address emerging industry VET needs, and maximises opportunities for employment and industry growth.
 - c) Listen to and consider information and advice provided by industry when making decisions about policy, programs and investments, and report back on how this input has been considered or used.
2. **Enable employment:**
 - a) Support Migration Tasmania to connect with industry, to identify and access information regarding Australian Government migration programs and services, and deliver advice in relation to Tasmania's Skilled Migration State Nomination Program.
 - b) Support Jobs Tasmania to work with governments, communities and businesses to increase employment outcomes, workforce participation and re-engagement with work or training for all Tasmanians.
 - c) Implement the Small Business Growth Strategy 2026 that identifies priorities for a thriving business sector and complements the work of the industry support teams within the Department of State Growth.
3. **Support the training system:**
 - a) Assist industry peaks and relevant organisations in understanding and navigating the national training system and associated government processes.
 - b) Continue to support training providers, including TasTAFE, to become future-focused, market-aligned and responsive to the needs and expectations of Tasmanian learners, employers and industries.
 - c) Establish clear guidelines for industry in providing age-appropriate training for school-aged learners.
 - d) Work collaboratively (DECYP and Education Authorities) to ensure learning through Years 9 to 12 is aligned with industry workforce needs, while placing learners at the centre.
 - e) Ensure industry is provided with knowledge and advice on the national training package development system to enable effective engagement in the product review process.
 - f) Engage with employers, industry, training providers and other community experts to build capability in the training system to support greater participation by diverse cohorts and Tasmanians facing disadvantage.
 - g) Work collaboratively with all industry stakeholders on a state-wide approach for the promotion of VET that reinforces the value, opportunity and visibility of the VET system for individuals, employers and industry.
4. **Collaborate on skills and workforce development matters:**
 - a) Work with the Australian Government to advocate for Tasmanian training and workforce development priorities and assist Tasmanian industry input into national training package development processes.
 - b) Work with industry bodies to support the implementation of Industry Skills Compacts and associated Industry Priority Action Plans.

Implementation/ Governance

- a) The Tasmanian Government will establish a refreshed approach to industry engagement and will focus on supporting stronger, more collaborative partnerships between system participants. Better engagement with industry also means improving the flow of information and insights from industry through to the policy, programs and projects funded by Skills Tasmania. This ensures that the decisions being made have had appropriate industry and sector input.
- b) The Parties will share information and advice on matters relating to workforce development, training and training pathways in the Early Childhood Education & Care industry in Tasmania, consistent with the commitments outlined in this Compact.
- c) The Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) is the key agency responsible for oversight of the Government's commitments under this Compact and will report through the Secretary to the Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth.
- d) The Parties will address the actions as nominated in the attached Priority Action Plan and report annually on the progress of the Industry Compact's implementation.

This *Industry Skills Compact* does not, and is not intended to, create legally enforceable obligations on the part of the Parties.

This *Industry Skills Compact* is a statement of intent and does not seek to limit the operational independence of the Parties.

Funding

Unless otherwise agreed by the Parties, anything a Party will do under this *Industry Skills Compact* will be done at that Party's cost.

Term and review of the Industry Skills Compact

This *Industry Skills Compact* will commence on the date of execution and will be reviewed annually or as otherwise agreed between the Parties.

Contact officers

The contact officers for this *Industry Skills Compact* will be the Director Workforce Policy and Strategic Relations of Skills Tasmania on behalf of the Tasmanian Government, and the nominated Executive of other Parties.

Early Childhood Education & Care Industry Skills Compact Priority Action Plan

Introduction

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) – Tasmania Branch is a peak body for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) governed by a volunteer executive committee. The vision, *Every Young Child is Thriving and Learning*, underpins work and drives the workforce agenda as for children to thrive, we need our educators thriving.

This commitment to the ECEC workforce continues through the development and implementation of the *Early Years & School Age Care (EYSAC) Workforce Strategy – Tasmania, 2021 & Beyond*. All actions outlined below align with this Industry Plan.

The EYSAC workforce plays an integral role as enablers and contributors to the social and economic wellbeing of the whole Tasmanian community. As of the June 2023 quarter there were 264 services (not including Family Day Care small business, In Home Care). The total number of services is based on approvals, and it should be noted that services may have Before School Care, After School Care, Vacation Care and Long Day Care on one approval; therefore, in reality there are many more individual service types in operation across the state.

This action plan has been developed against a backdrop of a number of significant reviews being undertaken relating to the education and care sector and/or aligned to the sector, together with state-based policy areas including the Universal Access for 3 year olds which need to be considered in any workforce strategy.

As of the June 2023 quarter there were 23,560 children accessing education and care services and 16,680 families enabled to attend work, study and other activities.

ECA - Tasmania Branch commits to the following actions and will petition for ongoing funding for the EYSAC Project Manager and discrete projects to ensure the strategy is a living document and continues to achieve outcomes. EYSAC provides a conduit and driver role within the sector and without this, there is a risk of increasing education and care (childcare) deserts across Tasmania which has a direct impact on the economic future of Tasmania.

Early Childhood Education & Care Industry Skills Compact Priority Action Plan

Category	Action	Key Party
Professional and activated workforce (Advocacy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in early childhood policy through consultations and submissions. • Garner support from stakeholders to commit to efforts to improve value, pay and conditions of the workforce. • Continue to engage with the ANZSCO review – Data and Metadata Management specialist, ANZSCO Review Program – Statistical Infrastructure Branch (S. Wilkinson). • Leverage on existing campaigns to both promote the sector as a valuable career pathway (recruitment) and a professional enabler of the broader Tasmanian economy (status). • Work towards changing the narrative and raising the value and understanding of the contemporary role of early years and school age care educators to the Tasmanian community through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ promotion of good news stories using digital media and an online presence e.g. EYSAC HUB website and other social media and online platforms. 	ECA Tasmania Branch Committee EYSAC Relevant sector stakeholders
Communication and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote use of online channels including the website being a repository of workforce resources. • Review the website functionality. • Coordinate and deliver two innovation meetings and promote to diverse range of stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showcasing relevant workforce information and activity - Co-design of workforce projects 	ECA Tasmania Branch Committee, EYSAC, Relevant sector stakeholders
Workforce planning, recruitment and retention (Pipelines and Pathways)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years & School Age Care (EYSAC) will continue to act as a conduit for services to connect to relevant stakeholders and funding opportunities to build their workforce planning and development capacity. • Support national work on the Education and Care National Workforce Plan and reflect the Tasmanian context. • Continue to connect with and explore regional and place-based workforce solutions with Jobs Hubs. • Continue to support connections between services and Workforce Australia Providers. • Complete the Education and Care (E&C) 'good fit' tool. • Develop an implementation plan for the 'good fit tool' and source funding to support implementation. • Actively promote E&C career pathways through various communication modes. • Re-connect with DECYP Years 9-12 year project. • Design strategies and collaboration points for Certificate III educators to progress to Diploma qualification. • Look for opportunities to raise cultural awareness within workforce strategies. • Develop and source funding for specific workforce projects aligned to the EYSAC Workforce Strategy. 	ECA Tasmania Branch Committee EYSAC Employers Workforce Australia Job Hubs Relevant sector stakeholders

Early Childhood Education & Care Industry Skills Compact Priority Action Plan

<p>Skills, knowledge, training and assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with Department of Justice to disseminate information and support the sector in relation to the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 new Child Safety Framework, including sourcing relevant training. • Continue to engage and partner with RTOs through sector mechanisms e.g. Innovative Network Meetings to influence training and assessment strategies that meet the sector's current and emerging needs. • Support collaboration between RTOs to create a shared understanding of on-the-job component of a traineeship. • Promote traineeships as a workforce planning and development strategy. • Actively engage in the Workforce Coordination TAE Project. • Actively promote EYSAC's position and knowledge of the Tasmanian context to the HumanAbility Jobs and Skills Council. 	<p>ECA Tasmania Branch Committee</p> <p>EYSAC</p> <p>Employers</p> <p>RTOs</p> <p>Skills Tasmania</p> <p>Relevant sector stakeholders</p>
<p>Research & Evidence (Data)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise research and evidence (data) to drive and inform workforce initiatives. • Support workforce data collection and promotion. 	<p>ECA Tasmania Branch Committee, EYSAC, Relevant sector stakeholders</p>

Signatures

SIGNED for and on behalf of the Crown in right)
of Tasmania by The Hon Felix Ellis MP)
Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce)
Growth)



SIGNED for and on behalf of Early Childhood)
Australia (ECA) – Tasmania Branch by)
Annette Barwick, Branch President)



SIGNED for and on behalf of Early Childhood)
Australia (ECA) – Tasmania Branch by)
Kellie Watson, EYSAC Workforce Strategy)
Project Manager)





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