

High-Vis Army Working Group

Meeting 8 – Communiqué 17 February 2026

Attendees:

Members: Andrew Winch (CCF), Angela Bennett (MPAT), Benjamin Price (HIA), Jenna Cairney (MBT), Bridget Hiller (Keystone Tasmania), Peta Sugden Skills Tasmania (Chair), Andrew Harris (Skills Tasmania).

Guests: Skills Tasmania staff: Sarah Patterson, Rachael French, Narelle Punshon, Renee Woodhouse.

Apologies: Ben Shaw (NECA)

Overview

The High-Vis Army Program Working Group meets biannually. The priority for this working group is to collaborate with each other over training and workforce development.

High-Vis Army project updates

Master Plumbers Association Tasmania (MPAT)

- TasTAFE and MPAT have collaborated to co-design an industry-led program aimed at directly addressing the job-ready capability gaps identified by plumbing employers.
- Development has commenced on a targeted mental health and wellbeing campaign for the plumbing and broader building and construction sector, supported through Keystone funding.
- MPAT's Industry Expert pilot project, which aims to support employers access industry trainers hasn't gained traction to date.
- A new industry engagement officer will be joining MPAT in March.

Master Builders Tasmania (MBT)

- MBT are currently confirming all programs for the rest of the financial year, including the second round of their Deadly People in Construction program, which supports First Nation peoples into meaningful construction careers.
- NextGen program in 2025 successfully placed 5 of the 12 participants in industry.
- Working towards increase numbers of apprenticeships via their GTO particularly in the Northwest.

Housing Industry Australia (HIA)

- HIA have closed out their High-Vis Army Round 1 project and work is now progressing with Round 2 initiatives.
- Access to the Jordan River Trade Training Centre has now been finalised and recruitment has commenced for a project officer.
- HIA's youthBuild project commences shortly, with 10 schools already engaged.

Civil Contractors Federation (CCF)

- CCF advised that work commences on the Earth Works Academy at Quercus Park this week.
- Initial Round 2 job ready programs have been completed with future programs scheduled for Hobart, Launceston and Burnie.
- Youth programs have been scheduled in the Huon and Devonport regions; traffic management programs have all been confirmed.
- Planning is underway for career awareness activities in schools in partnership with the other members of the High-Vis Army working group.

Keystone Tasmania

- Keystone are hosting a workshop in May for stakeholders to develop a consolidated process for engaging with schools, given the number of providers wanting to interact directly with schools.
- As part of a focus on workforce retention, they will be funding leadership and management training including the transition from Tradie to Team Leader, both accredited and non-accredited courses will form part of the funding.
- They are currently working on the training plan for FY26/27.

Further group discussions

- The benefits and impact of working collectively at large events across Tasmania were discussed, with Agfest, college career expos and Building and Construction Careers Expo identified as key opportunities where there has been effective collaborative efforts.
- Skills Tasmania highlighted upcoming funding opportunities for the sector, and the proposed changes to the Tasmanian Government's Building and Construction Training Policy and asked for feedback from the group on the proposed changes.
- An update on the establishment of the Tasmania First Taskforce and the Macquarie Point Stadium were discussed broadly, including workforce opportunities and impact.
- Skills Tasmania's Regional Employment Projections Dashboard 2024-2027, is being updated to include projections through until 2035. The next High-Vis Army Working Group meeting will be held to coincide with a presentation on these new projections.

The next meeting date to be confirmed based on the roll out of the updated Regional Employment Projections Dashboard.