



Government of Western Australia
Department of Training
and Workforce Development



**SKILLS
READY**
Boost your skills for the future



REPORT ON THE **REVIEW OF** SKILLS, TRAINING **and** WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

June 2020



jobsandskills.wa.gov.au/trainingreview

This report was prepared by the review team:

- Ms Anne Driscoll, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development;
- Ms Michelle Hoad, Managing Director, North Metropolitan TAFE; and
- Ms Terry Durant, Managing Director, South Metropolitan TAFE.

Contents

Executive summary	3
Observations and recommendations	4
Introduction	15
Approach	16
Recommendations and implementation.....	51
 APPENDICES	 55
Terms of reference	56
List of stakeholders consulted.....	58
Registered training organisations	63
Follow-up engagement on opportunities for partnerships and training programs identified during the review	65
How the training review recommendations will address the State Government's five recovery areas for the COVID-19 pandemic.....	66



Executive summary

Introduction

On Thursday 21 May 2020, Premier Mark McGowan and the Minister for Education and Training, Sue Ellery jointly announced the establishment of an urgent review of skills, training and workforce development (the Review) in response to COVID-19's impact on the workforce in Western Australia (WA).

The Review Team was asked to engage with industry and business to identify practical and responsive training solutions for the post COVID-19 recovery period; and over the review period met with over 238 stakeholders in 70 meetings.

Further, the Review Team participated in the Ministerial Roundtable on skills, training and workforce development, attended nine other Ministerial roundtables, met with relevant members of the State Recovery Advisory Group and engaged with the Directors General having responsibility for the five recovery areas (health, economic and infrastructure, social, industry and regions) to identify skills and training needs and appropriate responses.

The Review Team also received and considered 74 written submissions made in response to the Review and the Report of the State Recovery Advisory Group workshop.

The response from stakeholders has been overwhelmingly positive, with industry and business acknowledging the State Government's proactive handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and its recovery packages.

Stakeholders also indicated their appreciation in being able to participate in the Review and to work with Government to make the most of the opportunities that the COVID-19 situation has presented to enhance the training system and propose rapid responses to addressing the skill and workforce needs of the State.

The following outlines the observations and recommendations of the Review Team under five key themes:

- 1 New futures for Western Australians;
- 2 21st Century Apprenticeships;
- 3 Maximising skills from Government investment;
- 4 Live-learn-work in regional WA; and
- 5 Next generation training.

There is a total of 41 recommendations for consideration by the Government.

Observations and recommendations

1 New futures for Western Australians

In creating new futures for West Australians, these recommendations seek to shift displaced workers into new viable careers, increase diversity in the workforce, improve the employability of long term disadvantaged people, align with new employment opportunities for entry level workers, and invest in the pipeline of workers in areas of economic growth.

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement ¹
1.1	Many workers have already, or will in the future, lose their job due to a contraction in industries impacted by COVID-19. These workers often have highly transferable “soft skills”. By acquiring new skills in alternative occupational contexts they will be more competitive in seeking employment. In the event a job outcome doesn’t initially arise, the new skills obtained should link to a full qualification.	Provide fee-free skill sets for displaced workers, focusing on practical introductory skills and industry-specific skills to transition to new employment opportunities where there is jobs growth or demand.	Immediate
1.2	Businesses find that some jobseekers are not job ready and need support to overcome barriers to enter/re-join the work force. Work readiness, numeracy, literacy and digital skills were identified as important pre-entry requirements. Courses of this nature are more successful if they include, or link to, practical job related skills.	Provide fee-free skill sets for jobseekers including those who are unemployed, focusing on work readiness and employability, foundation digital, numeracy and literacy skills.	Immediate
1.3	COVID-19 highlighted that a number of small businesses need contemporary digital and resource management skills to be more agile and reposition their business activities.	Fee-free skill sets that include financial, resource management and digital skills be made available to support existing businesses and those businesses needing to reposition.	Immediate
1.4	Business has embraced the responsiveness of TAFEs in delivering blended modes of learning in response to COVID-19. They are keen to see these new forms of distanced delivery continue, improving accessibility, especially for people working and living remotely. For some people and circumstances remote learning is not available and/or appropriate.	New skill sets be delivered partly or fully online to enhance accessibility, while retaining necessary practical components of the training where required.	Immediate and ongoing

¹ See page 54 for definition of timeframes.

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement ¹
1.5	Apprenticeship data indicates that there has been an increase in the number of apprentices and trainees that have been suspended or terminated as a result of business disruption during COVID-19. This trend may worsen as changes are made to JobKeeper and other Commonwealth incentives cease.	Provide an incentive for employers to re-engage an apprentice or trainee whose training contract has been cancelled since 1 March 2020.	Immediate
1.6	Aboriginal stakeholders and businesses that successfully attract and retain Aboriginal staff consistently emphasised the importance of cultural competence in their businesses. Effective client services also require cultural competence.	Cultural competence training for business be funded, delivered by contracted Aboriginal organisations and promoted as an important platform to support the attraction, recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees.	Next steps
1.7	Aboriginal and community stakeholders identified a number of barriers that inhibit sustained employment for Aboriginal people. Cultural guidance for course design, practical outcomes for participants that increase employability and pastoral care by community leaders was seen as important.	<p>1.7.1: Develop in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders an employment enabling program for Aboriginal youth that includes wrap-around support, mentoring, independent living skills such as budgeting and nutrition and obtaining a Driver's License.</p> <p>1.7.2: Explore the development of a "caring for country – caring for self" program for Aboriginal youth to develop self-esteem, pride, and confidence that will lead to employability and job opportunities on country (e.g. tourism).</p>	Next steps
1.8	<p>Course costs are seen as a barrier to people participating in training and employers investing in apprenticeships. The 50% fee reductions for some courses introduced at the beginning of 2020 were viewed very positively. Stakeholders were of the view that more courses should have reduced fees, especially those important to economic recovery, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building and civil construction trades that have been subdued for some time and will have more work due to stimulus measures; • courses for people disproportionately impacted by COVID-19; women, youth, Aboriginal people and people with disabilities; • pre-apprenticeship courses to support entry into needed trades, and • skills needed in regions. 	Expand the <i>Lower Fees, Local Skills</i> initiative by adding additional courses which are aligned with the industry and social recovery needs of the WA economy.	Immediate

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement ¹
1.9	<p>There is a need to provide quality career advice and support services for the significant number of people that have lost employment, or whose job prospects have worsened as a result of COVID-19.</p> <p>The number of people needing assistance is expected to significantly grow post September as JobKeeper and JobSeeker arrangements are modified.</p>	<p>The capacity and coverage of the Jobs and Skills Centres (JSC) network be increased to ensure services are available to guide people on new career options and job application preparation. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing further products and services for the JSC network (career videos, webinars online resources, etc.); • providing a more comprehensive job matching services; and • lifting industry engagement; and <p>For a two-year period, additional resources are needed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish new JSCs in unemployment hot spots such as Midland and Armadale; • increase services to Aboriginal people; and, • address disproportionately low resources in some regions. 	Next steps
1.10	<p>Business and community stakeholders feel that the value of VET as a career option is not well understood or promoted to school students, parents, counsellors and teachers. They are of the view that TAFE and DTWD need to partner with the Department of Education and schools to better promote VET.</p> <p>Young ambassadors that students identify with, economic data to demonstrate the VET value proposition, as well as impactful promotion using multi digital channels should be used.</p> <p>Employers noted that job candidates don't often have the appropriate STEM skills to be successful, given the technical component of many VET qualifications.</p>	<p>1.10.1: Promote VET as a desirable post-secondary career pathway by joining with the Department of Education's <i>Career development is everybody's business</i> roadshow and partner with schools in career advice to students, parents and teachers.</p> <p>1.10.2: "Join-up" VET funding from the Department of Education and DTWD, so schools and TAFEs can collaboratively plan how funding will be best used to align VET programs with student needs and future workforce priorities and opportunities.</p> <p>1.10.3: Consider ways to maintain appropriately diverse career pathway selections by students, and specifically how to ensure that no one pathway is inadvertently incentivised over another.</p>	<p>1.10.1: Medium term</p> <p>1.10.2: Next steps</p> <p>1.10.3: Medium term</p>

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement ¹
1.11	Increasing skilled people in health and community services to meet demand is a priority. Course fees have been reduced to encourage more students but there is limited availability of required practical work experience places to supplement the training.	A work placement program for health and community services be implemented by DTWD, TAFEs and funded health training providers to address the barriers of securing student placements in the workplace.	Next steps

2 21st Century Apprenticeships

These recommendations aim to reform the apprenticeship and traineeship system in Western Australia to create contemporary trades for the future. *21st Century Apprenticeships* will maximise the ability of TAFE and RTOs to respond to changing job roles and technologies, align with individual career aspirations, and boost the supply of skilled workers for business growth and productivity, while maintaining the quality and integrity of qualifications in WA.

	Observations	Recommendation	Indicative commencement
2.1	<p>Many sectors including resource, agriculture, defence and civil construction are seeing the need for highly skilled individuals with skills crossing two or more traditional trades.</p> <p>It was observed that hybrid trades are needed as well as the up-skilling of existing tradespeople into related occupational areas of specialisation.</p> <p>Feedback also indicated core trades are constantly changing due to new technologies.</p>	<p>High-level sophisticated trade apprenticeships and skill sets for the future be developed.</p> <p>This recognises the evolution of technical, diagnostic and data skills, and the merging of these with the mechanical, electrical and IT skills needed to work on the complex equipment now common in industry.</p> <p>These new apprenticeships will prepare people for critical jobs that increase the productivity and competitiveness of the Western Australian economy.</p>	Medium term

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
2.2	Specific industries, such as transport, civil construction and resources, indicated they would like to establish new apprenticeships to address increasing complexity in job roles, and appropriately recognise the high level of training and skill required.	New apprenticeships be developed for occupations where there is increasing complexity, high risk and skills shortages, and which have been undergoing significant transformation of job roles and requirements. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • civil plant operations; • truck driving (linked to WA licensing structure and requirements); • rail and civil infrastructure; • operator and maintainer roles in big industry; and • maintenance of autonomous vehicles and equipment. 	Next steps and ongoing
2.3	A number of businesses were concerned that there will not be sufficient supply of skilled tradespeople to meet long term needs resulting in labour shortages with resultant poaching and excessive labour costs. While some employers were reluctant to modify existing apprenticeship models others wished to explore/pilot alternative approaches.	2.3.1: A review of the current apprenticeship model be undertaken in consultation with all key stakeholders to consider alternative models, including dual and combination trades, options for front-ending apprenticeships with a theory block, the “chunking of skills” over the apprenticeship, and utilising Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) more effectively. 2.3.2: In response to Government stimulus packages for residential housing, and in association with a major builder, pilot shortened apprenticeships in low risk, non-licensed trades that require speed to market and an increased pipeline of skills.	2.3.1: Medium term 2.3.2: Next steps
2.4	Engineering and electrical trades are in high demand across many WA industries. There is concern that apprenticeship intake will not be sufficient to both support existing activity and grow capacity in new industries such as defence and advanced manufacturing. Strategies are needed to ensure defence industry businesses invest in training in anticipation of new work and other industry sectors are incentivised to shore up their own future supply.	Implement initiatives over a 12-month period to protect and grow the pool of engineering and electrical trades that support the defence industry, manufacturing, resources and associated supply chains.	Next steps

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
2.5	<p>Employment data shows that young people and women have been most impacted by COVID-19, with youth unemployment rising sharply from 12% to 16.3% between February and May 2020.</p> <p>Other disadvantaged groups, predominantly in part-time and casual work were more likely to be stood down or had their employment terminated from March 2020. Employers of apprentices repeatedly, and unprompted, indicated they would like to take young adults on as apprentices but there was a significant barrier due to adult apprenticeship wages being very high relative to the skill level of people early in their apprenticeship.</p> <p>Employers value women in their workforces, including in non-traditional trades. Incentives are viewed by employers as a significant factor in the decision to take on an apprentice or trainee.</p>	Provide a significant increase to the loadings on employer incentives for apprentices and trainees who are mature aged youth (20-30 yo), women, Aboriginal, long term unemployed and people with a disability.	Medium term
2.6	Small to medium business are confused by the array of incentives available to support the employment of an apprentice or trainee. They also find the claim process time consuming. They need better digital and one-on-one support to guide them.	Simplify processes for employers to access and claim the various employer incentives available.	Next steps
2.7	Businesses greatly value pre-apprenticeships as a preparation for entry into an apprenticeship. Work placements during training often provide critical connections that lead to employment.	Increase access to pre-apprenticeships by decreasing costs and increasing available training places to grow the pipeline of trades in regional and metropolitan WA.	Immediate

3 Maximising skills from Government investment

These recommendations aim to lift the number of apprentices and trainees employed as a result of Government stimulus spending.

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
3.1	<p>People that have not had a job for some time will have particular difficulty in moving to employment.</p> <p>Agencies and employers will need to work collaboratively to support people in their job readiness and provide links to employment.</p>	Pilot an entry-level (pre-employment program) that applies to selected Government projects obliging contractors to be involved in a collaborative approach to train jobseekers upfront with a view to employment.	Next steps

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
3.2	The short term nature of Government procurement contracts is a significant barrier to the employment of apprentices. A smoothing of stimulus projects, particularly in the regions would ensure that employers had certainty of work to support the engagement apprentices and trainees.	Where possible, procuring agencies sequence construction stimulus projects, bundle projects or utilise group training organisations to provide sufficient certainty for business to commit to apprentices and trainees.	Next steps
3.3	<p>Unlike Government works and infrastructure procurement contracts, Government purchasing of community support services in some cases may not currently entail a commitment to training or employment outcomes. Government expenditure in the care economy could be more effectively leveraged for jobs and skills.</p> <p>The attainment of transferrable qualifications in the health and community care is important both in assuring quality services as well as enabling people, often women, to have transferable skills.</p>	Clear training obligations should be embedded contractually when government purchases services in the care economy.	Next steps

4 Live-learn-work in regional WA

Live-Learn-Work in regional WA recommendations are intended to both train locals and attract more skilled workers to the regions to meet jobs demand, create vibrant regions and foster employment opportunities. It will also ensure the building of regional training capability relevant to local economic and business activity and the needs of local residents and communities.

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
4.1	<p>Major resource sector organisations are committed to recruiting and developing staff that are local to the Pilbara. A genuine commitment and valuing of Aboriginal people and women is evident. Many companies indicated they want their training in situ in the Pilbara, by the local TAFE.</p> <p>Resource companies indicated a preparedness to support this in kind with equipment, lecturer development, and provision of expertise. Staff retention of skilled lecturers in the Pilbara is a problem due to high salaries offered by resource companies. Some resource companies favour metropolitan based training for their staff.</p>	A Pilbara Specialist Centre be established in partnership with the resources sector to improve access to trade training and support. Focussed on North Regional TAFE, this centre would be supported by the metropolitan TAFEs.	Next steps and ongoing

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
4.2	<p>Heavy diesel mechanics continue to be in short supply across all relevant sectors.</p> <p>Members of the agricultural industry perceive that dedicated agricultural equipment training is not sufficiently resourced and are strongly of the view that a dedicated centre of excellence is needed. Their preferred site is Muresk Institute.</p>	An Agricultural Machinery Training Centre be established at Muresk Institute to support the agricultural industry and its supply chain.	Next steps and ongoing
4.3	<p>The availability and high level of maritime training available at Fremantle TAFE campus and other regional campuses is not well known in some sectors. Further direct contact with industry to communicate capacity and arrange training responses has commenced.</p> <p>North Metropolitan TAFE has been working with the resources sector to meet its rail training needs, and these were further clarified in discussions.</p>	Metropolitan TAFE colleges work with regional TAFEs to build rail and maritime capability in WA to meet resource and agricultural industry needs.	Next steps
4.4	<p>Regional stakeholders wish to see a greater connection between employers and TAFE to ensure training is aligned to local needs. Latest local labour market data is needed to inform these discussions.</p>	TAFE regional colleges are employing new Regional Industry Engagement managers whose role will be to ascertain local training and workforce development needs. These staff will liaise with key regional stakeholders, and interrogate current labour market information, so as to identify local skills and employment needs, and inform training priorities and pathways for the needs of industry and the community.	Next steps and ongoing
4.5	<p>There is a mismatch of willing and available workers around WA. Kalgoorlie employers in particular consider that there are many work opportunities in the Goldfields if people were incentivised to relocate. This was a view expressed by others in the agricultural sector also.</p>	Government work with the Commonwealth and local governments to consider options to potentially incentivise workers and their families to relocate from a region with high unemployment to one that requires workers.	Medium term
4.6	<p>The tourism and agricultural sectors are concerned that the absence of Working Holiday Visa travellers will result in staff shortages at critical times such as seasonal fruit picking, harvest and small windows of high season tourism.</p>	The WA Government approach the Commonwealth Government to extend Working Holiday visas for workers already in Australia, and TAFE work with industry to support skilling of people seeking to work in the regions.	Next steps

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
4.7	The regions are increasingly dependent on on-line technologies for business and personal use. At the same time connectivity and availability of digital resources is not available to all – so different channels are important. Training is needed for business and the community to ensure that digital channels are optimised.	Specific digital skills training be developed and delivered by TAFE to assist regional communities.	Medium term

5 Next generation training

Next generation training recommendations are intended to reposition the TAFE sector to be more engaged with industry, streamline product development and speed to market, increase lecturer and delivery capability and reflect a contemporary training approach to serve the needs of the Western Australian economy and community.

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
5.1	Skill sets were consistently favoured by employers and community stakeholders as a means to progressive and agile skills attainment. It is important that skills build to a visible and transferrable record of attainment.	Increase the agility and responsiveness of the training sector to meet industry needs and individual career aspirations, through the timely development and delivery of skill sets. Skill sets should be designed and, where necessary, accredited in WA for local conditions, and aim to provide a pathway to a full qualification.	Immediate and ongoing
5.2	Aged and disability care sector representatives were strongly supportive of the Enterprise Training Program in enabling just in time, tailored responses for its workforces. It was noted that while it has not been fully embraced by all businesses in the sector yet, it is highly regarded and will grow in take-up. Other sectors have sought to be included in the program.	Use the Enterprise Training Program model beyond the allied health and community services sector as a mechanism to address the skill needs of enterprises, where there is significant market growth or skill gap issues.	Medium term
5.3	Industry feedback indicated that skills are often acquired over time, jobs and places. An accessible and trusted record of skills attainment is needed as a progressive record of achievement for sharing with potential employers.	Work with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research and the Commonwealth Government to further evolve the creation of a skills passport concept so that students can access their school, accredited training and higher education history from one system (preferably an online portal), and as functionality increases, this be promoted and made available to prospective employers as a trusted and comprehensive information source.	Medium term

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
5.4	On-line training and remote learning is efficient for business, and makes training more accessible to a wider number of people, including those in the regions. On-line capability needs to grow. At the same time, face to face learning has an important place and not all people have digital equipment and accessibility.	<p>5.4.1: Enhance the capability of the training sector to develop and deploy online content and remote learning to students no matter where they live, recognising the need to address some practical components of the curriculum through face-to-face or blended delivery modes</p> <p>5.4.2: Invest in the application of new technologies to simulated work and training environments, including for remote assessment and delivery in-the-field and onsite.</p>	<p>5.4.1: Immediate and ongoing</p> <p>5.4.2: Next steps and ongoing</p>
5.5	Some businesses indicated a preparedness for in-kind support and provision of equipment to ensure training is contemporary.	Capitalise on, and encourage further industry support and provision of contemporary equipment and expertise to complement TAFE resources.	Next steps
5.6	The direct engagement of senior TAFE and DTWD staff with business leaders has been invaluable. There are many direct actions that flow from initial consultations.	TAFE to follow up with businesses and industry representatives on the opportunities for partnerships, return-to-industry, training programs and skill sets identified during the Review (see Appendix 3).	Immediate and ongoing
5.7	COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of new technologies and diversification. DTWD in concert with TAFE needs to undertake skills gaps analysis and training for key industry sectors. Work to mobilise capacity in the Defence sector is an example of VET resources positioning to support Government priorities.	<p>Position TAFE capability to support major government industry development priorities to diversify the State's economy, and to meet the needs of infrastructure projects that will be brought forward, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defence; • Advanced manufacturing/METS; • Resources including critical minerals; • Energy, LNG and renewable hydrogen; • Precision agriculture and agri-foods; and • METRONET and rail. 	Next steps
5.8	Training quality and relevance requires lecturers with current knowledge of workplace practice and equipment. Aboriginal lecturers are needed to provide authentic cultural training as well as course delivery in all industry sectors.	<p>Improve the diversity and currency of the VET workforce by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing Aboriginal lecturers, particularly to deliver culturally relevant units; • Utilising return-to-industry options in partnership with business; and • Developing new teaching modes and technologies. 	Immediate and ongoing

	Observations	Recommendation/s	Indicative commencement
5.9	The VET value proposition is not well understood. Impactful and multi-level messaging is needed to demonstrate the importance, diversity and income returns possible in the VET sector.	The Government undertake a broader and more concerted promotion of the value of VET and TAFE through a marketing campaign that effectively engages the community (emphasising the career and training opportunities through TAFE).	Next steps
5.10	Feedback from business and community stakeholders was that the consultation process was highly useful in developing relationships, understanding issues and establishing lines for direct contact when needed.	Building on relationships developed through the Review process, TAFE and DTWD executives continue to meet business and community leaders to ensure ongoing industry engagement.	Immediate and ongoing
5.11	VET courses need to be easier to find, understand and enrol in.	Digitally enhance the navigation to training and course information for prospective students, employers, career advisors.	Immediate and ongoing
5.12	Businesses were unclear about the best way to contact TAFE to solve their training needs.	Promote the first point of contact as the local TAFE, which will guide an appropriate response, including drawing from the combined TAFE network capability when required.	Immediate and ongoing
5.13	The economic and labour market is dynamic and multiple sources and perspectives are needed to bring it together in a meaningful way that is current.	DTWD and TAFEs continue to focus on real-time data to inform the skills development of Western Australians and training priorities for the State, including partnering with other agencies on Government initiatives and economic directions.	Immediate and ongoing

Introduction

The McGowan Government has established an urgent review of skills, training and workforce development in response to COVID-19's impact on the workforce in Western Australia. The review aims to identify practical and responsive training solutions for the post-COVID-19 recovery period.

The review follows the significant impact that the pandemic's restrictions have had on the workforce with many people losing their jobs or employment opportunities being reduced significantly.

The review team has been led by Ms Anne Driscoll, Director General of the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Ms Michelle Hoad, Managing Director, North Metropolitan TAFE and Ms Terry Durant, Managing Director, South Metropolitan TAFE. The Managing Directors of South, Central and North Regional TAFEs have also played a key part in the review process.

The review team has directly engaged with industry and business to identify training needs and develop specific proposals that respond to these needs.

In line with the terms of reference, the review has focussed on the resources sector, health and care economy, hospitality and tourism, defence, manufacturing, transport and construction. The review team has also consulted with lead Directors General for each of the recovery areas, members of the State Recovery Advisory Group and attended 10 Ministerial Round tables to gather views on specific occupations, skills, needs and training courses required to respond to local needs across WA.

This report, outlining key opportunities,

- industry needs, and ensure maximum opportunities for Western Australians to benefit from employment, skills, training and workforce development during this period of economic recovery;
- ensure a coordinated, effective and efficient means for business to navigate the training system and deliver outcomes for the state on an ongoing basis;
- establish a direct pathway for business to discuss and implement training solutions with the primary state provider, TAFE;
- consider opportunities for training to be reframed to be more responsive, quicker in skilling people and more accessible in reach and cost; and
- identify options so that people are able to stay engaged through training and reposition their skills for new work directions.

The Terms of reference for the review are attached at Appendix 1.

Approach

The Review Team consisted of Ms Anne Driscoll, Director General of the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Ms Michelle Hoad, Managing Director, North Metropolitan TAFE and Ms Terry Durant, Managing Director, South Metropolitan TAFE and was supported by staff from the Department of Training and Workforce Development and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

The Review Team undertook an extensive consultation process with State business and industry stakeholders over a period of five weeks in May and June 2020. The team conducted 70 stakeholder meetings both virtually and face to face with over 238 stakeholders, including two regional visits in the Goldfields and the Pilbara.

The meetings included a broad range of stakeholder groups including industry peak bodies, regional chambers, businesses, Unions, Registered Training Organisations, Local Governments and State Government agencies.

The stakeholders represented a range of industries including Agriculture, Resources (mining and energy), Transport and Logistics, Tourism and Hospitality, Manufacturing, Construction, Health and Care Economy, Education and Training (see Appendix 2 for the list of stakeholders).

The Review Team provided stakeholders with a list of questions that were aligned to the Terms of Reference and focused participants on identifying training issues, opportunities and solutions for the post-COVID-19 recovery period. The Review Team was able to test proposed solutions with selected stakeholders during this consultation process.

Meeting notes were recorded for each meeting and a number of stakeholders provided further information in writing following attendance at meetings. In addition, the Review Team received and considered 74 written submissions made in response to the Review.

The Review Team has also consulted with the State Recovery Coordinator, members of the State Recovery Advisory Group and the five Directors General leading the COVID-19 Recovery for the WA Government. The Review Team also attended 10 of the State Government's COVID-19 Recovery Ministerial Roundtables held in June 2020.

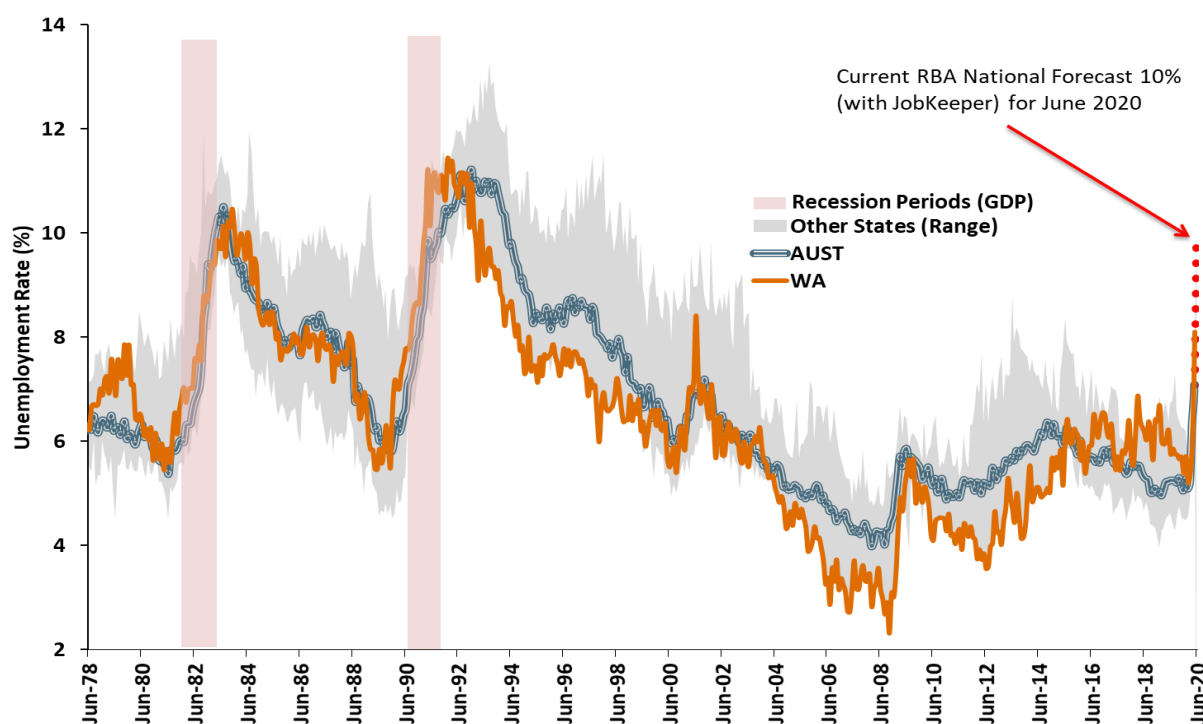
Throughout the consultation process, the Review Team has had regular consultation and involvement of the Managing Directors of the Northern Regional, Central Regional and Southern Regional TAFEs.

Impact of COVID-19 on the WA labour market

The WA economy has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a shock disruption in economic activity resulting in a significant deterioration to the State's labour market. WA has seen reduced income and increased unemployment arising from significant job losses and also a large decline in the number of hours worked. The impact has varied across gender, age, industries, regions and occupations, with youth and women being the people most impacted.

Since the start of the pandemic period the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates that employment in the State declined by 104,100 workers (from February 2020), representing 7.6% of all employed workers. The unemployment rate increased sharply from 5.2% to 8.1% with 112,000 Western Australians now being unemployed. The Reserve Bank of Australia ((RBA)² expects the national unemployment rate (currently 7.1%) to rise to 10% in June 2020.

Figure 1: Unemployment rate, WA and Australia



Source: ABS, 6202.0, Labour Force, Australia, May 2020

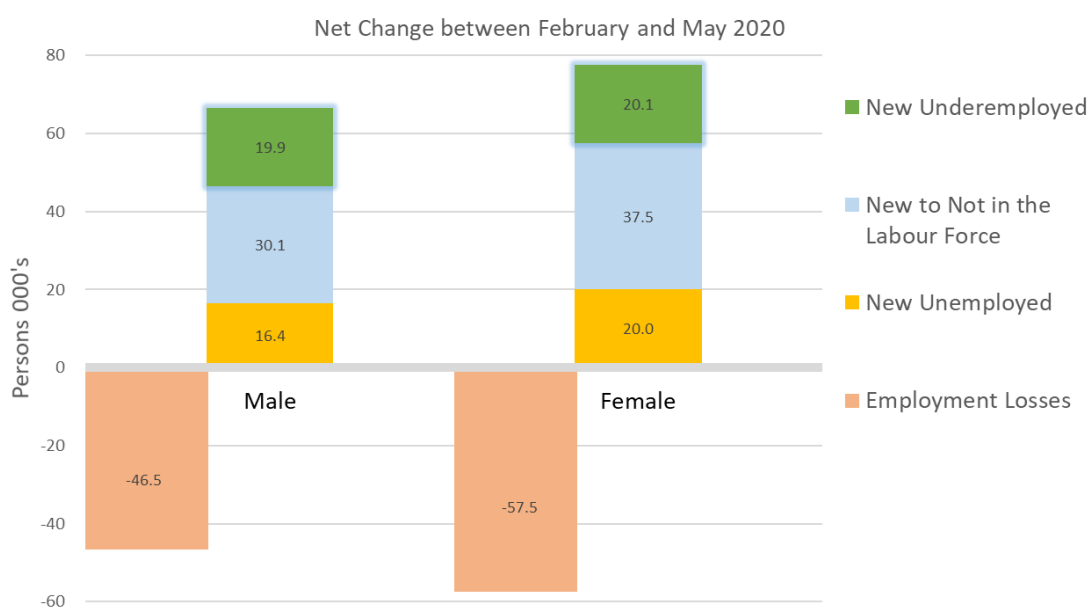
The youth unemployment rate for WA has risen sharply from 12% to 16.3% over the pandemic period, comprising 32,300 young people and representing 29% of all unemployed people in the State. The proportion of youth aged 15 to 24 years of age in WA who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) has increased from 10.3% to 13.7% or 43,900 young people.

² Reserve Bank of Australia, Statement on Monetary Policy, May 2020. [rba.gov.au/publications/smp/2020/may/economic-outlook.html](https://www.rba.gov.au/publications/smp/2020/may/economic-outlook.html)

Economic downturns tend to have a disproportionately negative impact on labour market opportunities for young people possibly due to employer preferences for retaining older workers with greater levels of skills / experience, meaning newer entrants to the labour market find it harder to gain employment³. There is a major concern that an increasing number of young people will have a precarious relationship in the labour market, moving between joblessness, training and working in temporary or insecure employment⁴.

Women have been impacted more adversely in the WA labour market than males. This is reflected in the chart below which shows greater numbers of women experiencing job losses, becoming unemployed, being underemployed and not participating in the labour force. In particular there has been a larger decline in employment for women (-57,500) compared to men (-46,500) since the start of the pandemic period.

Figure 2: Labour market changes by gender, WA



Source: ABS, 6202.0, Labour Force, Australia, May 2020

Over the same period part time employment decreased by 75,300 workers, while full time employment declined by 28,800 employees.

Participation in the State's labour market also declined significantly from around 68% to 65%. Without this decrease in people actively being a part of the labour market, the State's unemployment rate would be around 12%.

The ABS Labour Force Survey figures currently mask the true picture of the State's labour force as there are a significant number of Western Australians also currently receiving *Job Keeper* payments and by definition they are considered to be employed.

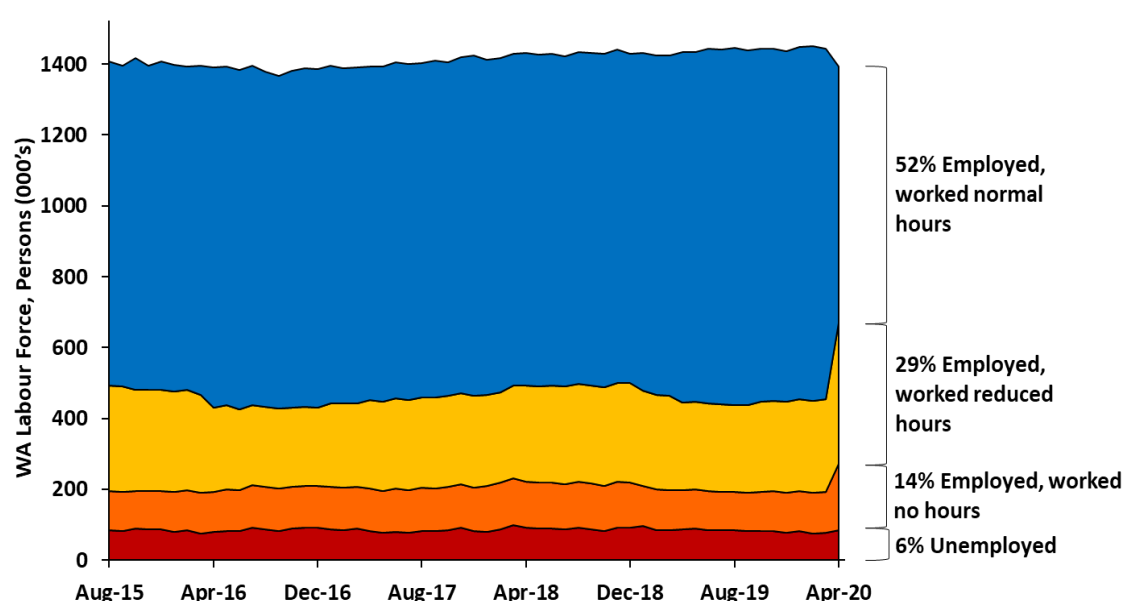
³ National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Briefing paper 23, Young people in an economic downturn, 2010.

⁴ Thomas and Vandenbroek, Parliament of Australia, Employment – Measuring and improving outcomes for young Australians, 2016.

Data is not available to provide the actual number of Western Australians on *Job Keeper*, however as an indicative measure the ABS reports there were 101,000 additional people (since the pandemic) who were employed but worked no hours. Further to this, there were an additional 263,000 people who worked fewer hours than prior to the pandemic. The proportion of the State's labour market that is currently underutilised is already higher than the peaks recorded during the 1990's recession.⁵

The following chart shows how the composition of the State's labour force has been impacted by the pandemic.

Figure 3: Labour Force composition by employment and hours actually worked, WA



Source: ABS, 6291.055.001, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – 12 month average of original to March 2020, then original data for April 2020.

While job losses and decreased hours for those still in work has reduced labour income, government support has provided a considerable offset. There are positive signs that parts of the WA economy are recovering as restrictions are being lifted, however there are concerns that when the JobKeeper payments end on 27 September 2020 there will be a significant increase in the number of people classed as being unemployed.

A number of key industry sectors have been disrupted by the necessary public health response and had significant supply chain issues.

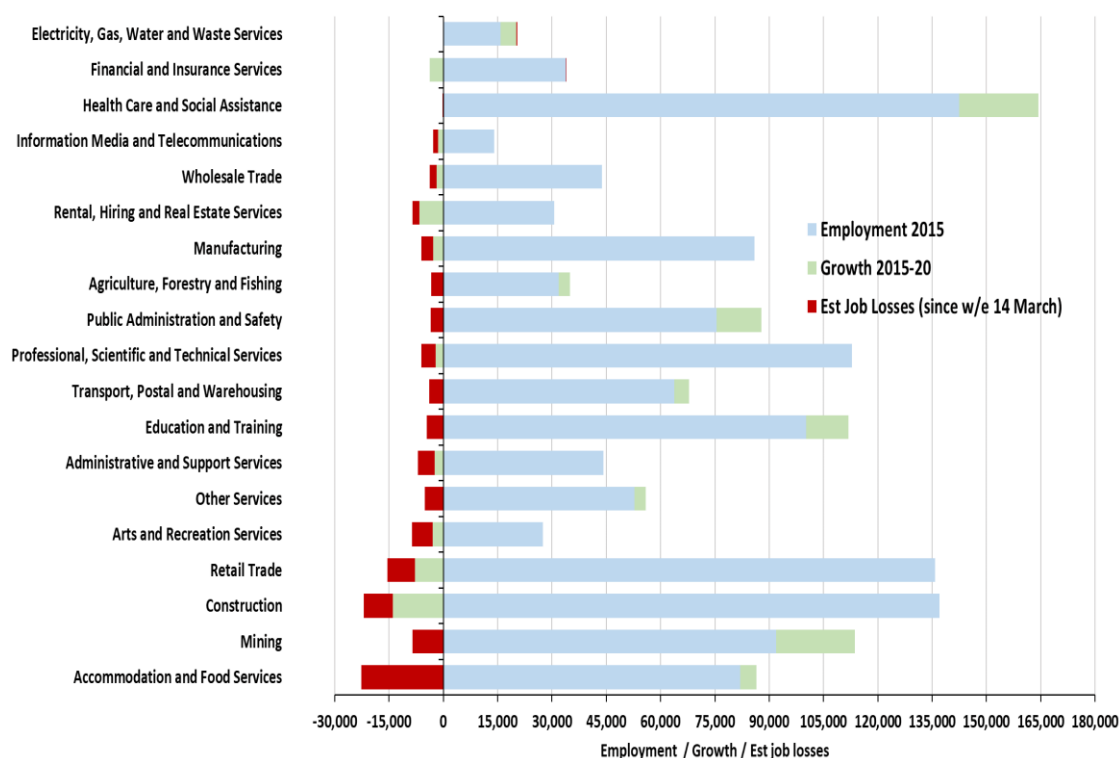
⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey, 6202.0, May 2020.

The sectors most impacted include:

- construction;
- international education;
- tourism, accommodation and food services;
- culture and the arts;
- sport and recreation;
- retail; and
- mining (rostering).

This is reflected in the chart below which shows an estimate of the employment impact of the job loss data from this COVID-19 period against historical labour results. Many industries were already experiencing reductions in employment over the five year period to February 2020. This would suggest there are long term factors outside of the short term COVID-19 impact which will need to be considered as part of any recovery planning.

Figure 4: Industry employment, growth and estimated job losses, WA



Source: ABS, 6160.0.55.001 - Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia, Week ending 30 May 2020; ABS, 6291.0.55.003 – Labour Force Australia, Detailed, Quarterly; DTWD Calculations

The regional impact has varied, with issues such as digital connectivity, infrastructure and the sensitivity of local industries to regional travel bans.

- Currently 87,160 (32%) regional jobs have been lost or put in hibernation⁶;
- Tourism related impacts across regional WA expected to result in up to 25,000 fewer jobs⁷; and
- Regional responses have supported remote Aboriginal communities

⁶ WA Government, COVID-19 coronavirus: Draft impact statement, 28 May 2020.

⁷ The Tourism Council WA estimates the pandemic has cost the tourism industry \$3.1 billion and the loss of 30,500 jobs.

The VET system

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is education and training that focuses on providing skills for work. VET provides the skills to help people to:

- join the workforce for the first time;
- re-join the workforce after a break;
- upgrade skills in their chosen field; and
- move into a different career.

Australia's vocational education and training (VET) system is competency-based. That is, it is based on occupational skills standards which are set out in units of competency within training packages and accredited courses. This distinguishes it from Australia's other education sectors (i.e. schools and higher education).

Australia's VET sector is based on a partnership between governments and industry. It is:

- **industry led**, with employers, unions and professional associations of an industry defining the outcomes that are required for training for individuals in the workplace through training packages and accredited courses;
- **a national system**, with nationally consistent and recognised qualifications. The system is jointly managed by the Australian and state and territory governments; and
- **regulated**, with national standards on quality and training organisations needing to be registered.

VET qualifications are provided by government institutions, called Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions, as well as private institutions.

Industry and employer groups contribute to training policies and priorities, and in developing qualifications that deliver skills to the workforce.

The Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) was established by the Australian governments (commonwealth, state and territory) to give industry a formal role in developing and approving national training packages. The AISC receives advice from industry-specific Industry Reference Committees (IRCs), which have representation from large and small businesses, and peak bodies and unions, to ensure that industry skill requirements are reflected in the national training system.

Australian governments (commonwealth, state and territory) provide funding, develop policies, and contribute to regulation and quality assurance of the sector.

The Commonwealth Government's Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business along with her Department has the primary responsibility for national VET policy and programs.

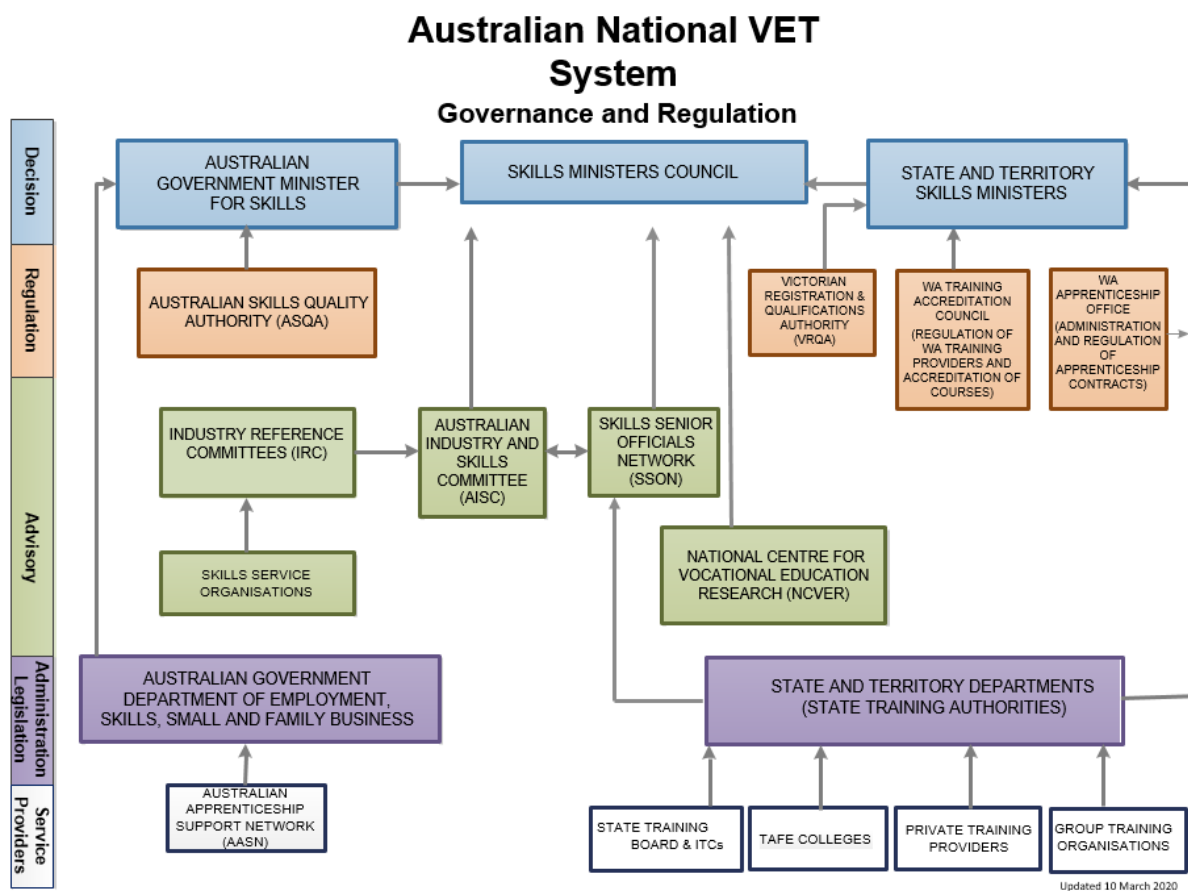
The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is the national regulator for Australia's VET sector, with responsibility for the registration of training providers and accreditation of courses. Providers who only offer courses in Victoria or Western Australia, and who do not intend to enrol overseas students, can register with their

relevant state regulator instead (the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and the Western Australian Training Accreditation Council).

In WA, the VET system is overseen by the Minister for Education and Training and administered by the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

The State has its own industry training advisory arrangements through the State Training Board (appointed by the Minister) and contracted industry Training Councils (ITCs).

A diagrammatic representation of the national VET system governance is shown below.



Issues, opportunities and proposed responses

Based on the consultation with industry and businesses, and concurrent analysis of data and other intelligence, the proposed practical and responsive training solutions for the post COVID-19 recovery period are grouped as follows.

- 1 New futures for Western Australians;
- 2 21st Century Apprenticeships;
- 3 Maximising skills from Government investment;
- 4 Live-learn-work in regional WA; and
- 5 Next generation training.

New futures for Western Australians

While the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted business and individuals over the past few months, the Review Team found a high level of resilience and determined optimism among many stakeholders canvassed during the Review.

This was reflected in the positive engagement on the issues of skills, training and workforce development, and in particular, the opportunities presented in building new futures for Western Australians.

Enabling new beginnings

COVID-19 has disrupted the State's economy, resulting in a displacement of workers from a number of key industry sectors. As restrictions were imposed, businesses experienced loss of revenue and were forced to reduce the hours of their employees, or worse, suspend or terminate employment. For displaced workers it has meant an uncertain future.

While the lifting of restrictions and careful restarting of the State's economy is expected to see some displaced workers return to work, there is still expected to be a significant number of people without employment.

There is an overwhelming call for action to assist individuals and business acquire new skills to take up the opportunities stemming from COVID-19 recovery measures and public investment. Many businesses indicated their need to gear up quickly for recovery. Stakeholders were unanimous that a quick response from the training sector was needed.

Skill sets are an important short form of training that serve a variety of purposes, including entry pathway to further training, address compliance and licensing requirements, meet a defined industry need or as a way to upskill for career change⁸.

⁸ Stanwick, John and Siekmann, Gitta, *Are skill sets booming? An analysis of training package skill sets*, NCVER, 7 November 2019

Many displaced workers have, or will need to turn to the training system to upskill or reskill to take up new job opportunities. Skill sets are a great way to quickly build on existing skills or retrain in a new area without having to commit to a full qualification.

In the event a job outcome doesn't initially arise, the new skills obtained should link to a full qualification. This would lessen any unintended consequence of students not having a training pathway to continue their studies, or restricting the capacity of workers to transition to new employment opportunities because of a limited skill base.

Recommendation 1.1

Provide fee-free skill sets for displaced workers, focusing on practical introductory skills and industry-specific skills to transition to new employment opportunities where there is jobs growth or demand.

COVID-19 has also highlighted the precariousness of employment for many vulnerable cohorts in the WA economy, including young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people with disability, older workers, women, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Young people particularly have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 with the youth unemployment rate climbing to 16.3% in May 2020. At the same time youth participation in the labour market has fallen to 61.9%⁹. Young people not engaged in employment, education or training (NEET) are more likely to transition to long term unemployment if not provided meaningful engagement opportunities.

Previous economic downturns have demonstrated that labour market opportunities are more difficult for new entrants, vulnerable cohorts and long term unemployed to gain employment. These cohorts will continue to be displaced from the labour market if they are not provided with meaningful training opportunities.

Businesses also indicated that some jobseekers are simply not job-ready and need support to overcome barriers to enter or re-join the workforce. Work readiness, numeracy, literacy and digital skills were identified as important pre-entry requirements. Research shows that courses of this nature are more successful when combined with practical job-related elements.

Recommendation 1.2

Provide fee-free skill sets for jobseekers including those who are unemployed, focusing on work readiness and employability, foundation digital, numeracy and literacy skills.

⁹ Source: ABS, 6291.055.001, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, May 2020; ABS, 6202, Labour Force, Australia, May 2020.

Small business

Small businesses have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, particularly those in hospitality, tourism, retail and in regional areas. Feedback from the Regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) and Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) indicated the small business operators would benefit from short courses/skill sets to improve their resilience and agility to respond to changing economic conditions.

A survey of regional small businesses conducted by the RCCI, and shared with the Review Team, identified immediate training needs for small business included business planning, IT training, team building and project management. The survey acknowledged that SBDC provide great training programs for start-up businesses but more training programs were needed for the next phase of small business development. Training would also assist small business operators to take up more government procurement opportunities.

Recommendation 1.3

Fee-free skill sets that include financial, resource management and digital skills be made available to support existing businesses and those businesses needing to reposition.

Online and flexible delivery

TAFE colleges responded to COVID-19 by demonstrating the sector's nimbleness in quickly moving to online delivery during the restrictions. Business and individuals embraced this responsiveness and are seeking ongoing forms of flexible delivery.

It is intended that the skill sets outlined above will be available online or partly online to increase the accessibility of training for a broader range of people.

TAFEs and the broader VET sector are also working collaboratively to develop training that will reduce the risk of new infections or outbreaks of COVID-19 through the development of infection control skill sets. The Western Australian Government has recently entered into a *Project Agreement for National Infection Control Training Fund* with the Commonwealth Government for the delivery of infection control training fee-free or at a very low fee. These infection control skill sets will cover a range of industry sectors including retail, food handling, transport and logistics and the care sector and be available to existing workers and job seekers. Where possible, these infection control skill sets will be delivered online and through blended learning opportunities.

Recommendation 1.4

New skill sets be delivered partly or fully online to enhance accessibility, while retaining necessary practical components of the training where required.

Providing a lifeline for displaced apprentices and trainees

Apprentices and trainees have also been negatively impacted by COVID-19. The Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD) has seen an increase in the number of apprentices and trainees having their training contract suspended or terminated by their employer as a result of business disruption.

It is possible that employers will reinstate their suspended apprentices and trainees as restrictions ease and work is available. The concern is that the situation may worsen when the Commonwealth Government's *Job Keeper* and apprentice wage subsidies are modified post-September 2020.

If not addressed, the loss of these apprentices and trainees from the skills pipeline may lead to future skill shortages and a lost opportunity for many young people. In order for the apprentices and trainees to complete their apprenticeship or traineeship they will require a new employer to employ them for the remainder of their training contract. Financial support for employers encouraging them to invest in displaced apprentices and trainees, and assisting with transition costs, will ease the risk of skills loss.

Recommendation 1.5

Provide an incentive for employers to re-engage an apprentice or trainee whose training contract has been cancelled since 1 March 2020.

Aboriginal employment and training

Aboriginal and community stakeholders identified a number of barriers that inhibit sustained employment for Aboriginal people. Cultural guidance for course design, practical outcomes for participants that increase employability and pastoral care by community leaders was seen as important.

Employer incentives alone have not been enough to lift the participation rate of Aboriginal people in employment. Feedback to the Review Team highlighted the importance of wrap-around services, mentoring, case management, the cultural competence of employers and community engagement, accompanied by appropriate resourcing.

Flexible working hours that accommodate family and cultural responsibilities were highlighted as key desirables for women and Aboriginal jobseekers. Many recruiters and employers don't fully appreciate these requirements when placing Aboriginal people in employment.

It was also suggested by stakeholders that employers and their workforces often don't know how to successfully engage with Aboriginal employees, with the cultural needs of Aboriginal employees being misunderstood, not accommodated in the workplace/roster or discouraged. Indigenous cultural competence for organisations and supervisors of Aboriginal employees was seen as highly desirable by many employer and community stakeholders in the Review.

Businesses that successfully attract and retain Aboriginal staff, consistently emphasised the importance of cultural competence in their businesses. Effective client services also require cultural competence.

Recommendation 1.6

Cultural competence training for business be funded, delivered by contracted Aboriginal organisations and promoted as an important platform to support the attraction, recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees.

Recommendation 1.7

1.7.1: Develop in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders an employment enabling program for Aboriginal youth that includes wrap-around support, mentoring, independent living skills such as budgeting and nutrition and obtaining a Driver's License.

1.7.2: Explore the development of a “caring for country – caring for self” program for Aboriginal youth to develop self-esteem, pride and confidence that will lead to employability and job opportunities on country (eg tourism).

Reducing the cost of training in priority areas

Fee relief and targeted incentives were deemed vitally important to encourage more employment and training in a range of industry sectors and occupations. This is over and above existing fee relief and incentive arrangements provided by the State and Commonwealth governments, which are mainly targeted at full qualifications.

The price-sensitive nature of VET has been reinforced by stakeholders during the Review. Stakeholders held a strong view that courses should have reduced fees, especially those important to the economic recovery, including:

- building and civil construction trades that have been subdued for some time and will have more work due to stimulus measures;
- courses for people disproportionately impacted by COVID-19; women, youth, Aboriginal people and people with disabilities;
- pre-apprenticeship courses to support entry into needed trades, and
- skills needed in regions.

Industry and businesses indicated during the Review process the importance of, and its appreciation for, the State Government's current *Lower Fees, Local Skills* (LFLS) initiative and the employer incentives through the DTWD and the Construction Training Fund (CTF). In particular, the LFLS half-fee initiative has been well received, with the preliminary data showing a 20% increase in the uptake of those courses in scope from 2019 to 2020.

COVID-19 has changed the landscape. Many more people are or will become unemployed and will need new skills to match job opportunities. There is a need to increase the number and scope of VET courses with fee reductions.

Recommendation 1.8

Expand the *Lower Fees, Local Skills* initiative by adding additional courses which are aligned with the industry and social recovery needs of the WA economy.

Quality career and training support services

There is a need to provide quality career advice and support services for the significant number of people that have lost employment, or whose job prospects have worsened as a result of COVID-19.

COVID-19 has demonstrated that skill requirements can vary throughout a person's working life and that formal training through TAFE and RTOs should never be 'set and forget'. People will need reliable, up-to-date information about the employment opportunities in Western Australia through the Jobs and Skills Centres (JSCs).

Displaced workers and those looking to transition into new career opportunities will require comprehensive information to decide on the best course or pathway to take to retrain, reskill/upskill or take an alternative employment pathway, within a reasonable timeframe.

The number of people needing assistance is expected to significantly grow post September as JobKeeper and JobSeeker arrangements are modified. The resourcing and capacity of the JSCs will be extremely important as part of the recovery framework. Areas not currently serviced by JSCs but have experienced significant increases in unemployment such as Midland and Armadale will benefit access to a local JSC.

Recommendation 1.9

The capacity and coverage of the JSC network be increased to ensure services are available to guide people on new career options and job application preparation. This includes:

- developing further products and services for the JSC network (career videos, webinars online resources, etc.);
- providing a more comprehensive job matching services; and
- lifting industry engagement; and

For a two year period, additional resources are needed to:

- establish new JSCs in unemployment hot spots such as Midland and Armadale;
- increase services to Aboriginal people; and
- address disproportionately low resources in some regions.

Quality career advice and the VET value proposition

There was a view by employers that the VET sector is misunderstood, highly complex to navigate and appears to be undervalued by the Western Australian community and schools. Stakeholders felt that trades have lost their value within society and young people were no longer encouraged to pursue them from school.

Business and community stakeholders thought that the value of VET as a career option could be better promoted to school students, parents, counsellors and teachers. A common perception expressed was that schools value ATAR¹⁰ over VET. Employers noted that job candidates don't often have the appropriate STEM skills to be successful, given the technical component of many VET qualifications.

Department of Education (DoE) enrolment data is not fully consistent with this view in that VET enrolment has significantly increased in recent years compared to ATAR subjects. However, it is also the case that the number of school students transitioning to university has been increasing, which is not the case for VET. Some ATAR students choose to do VET subjects as adjunct to their long term career goal or to support part-time work aspirations while in higher education studies.

DoE with support of DTWD is proposing to step up promotion of the full range of careers to parents, students, and teachers (this was deferred from 2020 due to COVID-19). This would include using young ambassadors that students identify with, and sharing economic and labour market data to demonstrate the VET value proposition.

Good career guidance, linked with the labour market information and appropriate pathways, helps young people make informed decisions about further education and training. Young people need information about the world of work, the skills needed in the modern workplace and the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them, including both the academic and vocational pathways, and whether learning should be done in schools, colleges, universities or in the workplace.

Recommendation 1.10

1.10.1: Promote VET as a desirable post-secondary career pathway by joining with the Department of Education's "Career development is everybody's business" roadshow and partner with schools in career advice to students, parents and teachers.

1.10.2 "Join-up" VET funding from the Department of Education and DTWD, so schools and TAFEs can collaboratively plan how funding will be best used to align VET programs with student needs and future workforce priorities and opportunities.

1.10.3: Consider ways to maintain appropriately diverse career pathway selections by students, and specifically how to ensure that no one pathway is inadvertently incentivised over another.

¹⁰ The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is a number between 0.00 and 99.95 that indicates a student's position relative to all the students in their age group. It is used for university entry in Australia.

Work placements

The issue of work placements, which is a requirement for the completion of many courses (and likely to be for some skill sets), has been raised as part of the Review. The resources required for training providers to arrange work placements and the cost to students (out-of-pocket expenses) and business (in time and supervision) sometimes acts as a barrier to the required work placements occurring and puts a cap on the number of people that can access a course, particularly in clinical environments such as health. There were some suggestions that simulated work environments should be offered as an alternative if it is safe and practical to do so.

Recommendation 1.11

A work placement program for health and community services be implemented by DTWD, TAFEs and funded health training providers to address the barriers of securing student placements in the workplace.

2 21st Century Apprenticeships

The Review found that the trades and traineeships are central to almost all industry sectors, including their supply chains.

An apprenticeship or traineeship is a formalised training pathway that involves:

- a training contract between an employer and an apprentice/trainee; and
- both on-the-job and off-the job training.

The nature, scope and conditions associated with each apprenticeship and traineeship are determined by the Minister for Education and Training based on a process of industry consultation set out under the State's *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*.

An apprenticeship or traineeship can take between six months and four years to complete depending on its training requirements. Apprentices and trainees can be employed either directly or through a Group Training Organisation (GTO). GTO's serve an important function in arranging the placement of an apprentice or trainee with a host employer.

Reforming apprenticeships

Many stakeholders raised concerns about the inflexible nature of the current apprenticeship model.

It was felt that the scope of the job role and skills relating to some apprenticeships are too narrow and don't reflect the requirements of current and future work processes and practices, including the ever changing application of technology to work and the need for innovation and adaption.

Feedback indicated that core trades are constantly changing due to new technologies. New opportunities in advanced manufacturing rely on traditional trades such as plumbing, welding, electrical, mechanical and sheet metal combined with new skills in automation, robotics, hydraulics, 3D printing, computer design and drafting. Many industries including resource, agriculture, defence and civil construction are seeing the need for highly skilled individuals with skills crossing two or more traditional trades.

New apprenticeships that combine electrical and mechanical skills would be useful in teaching apprentices new skills in hydraulics, diagnostics, immersive technologies and automation. It is observed that hybrid trades would provide greater flexibility for employers, boost productivity and increase employment opportunities for dual-qualified tradespersons.

Examples provided where skills are crossing two or more traditional trades include:

- Welder and Fitter (Mechanical);
- Light and heavy (diesel) motor mechanics;
- Electrical and instrumentation;
- Diesel mechanic and automation technician; and
- CNC Operator and Programmer.

Recommendation 2.1

High-level sophisticated trade apprenticeships for the future be developed. These recognise the evolution of technical, diagnostic and data skills, and the merging of these with the mechanical, electrical and IT skills needed to work on the complex equipment now common in industry. These new apprenticeships will prepare people for critical jobs that increase the productivity and competitiveness of the Western Australian economy.

Specific industries, such as transport, civil construction and resources, indicated they would like to establish new apprenticeships to address increasing complexity in job roles, and appropriately recognise the high level of training and skill required.

Recommendation 2.2

New apprenticeships be developed for occupations where there is increasing complexity, high risk and skills shortages, and which have been undergoing significant transformation of job roles and requirements. These include:

- civil plant operations;
- truck driving (linked to WA licensing structure and requirements);
- rail and civil infrastructure;
- operator and maintainer roles in big industry; and
- maintenance of autonomous vehicles and equipment.

Further, some stakeholders stated that the structure of current apprenticeships was too rigid, with the traditional off-the-job and on-the-job models of training and yearly progressions of the apprenticeship locking in employers and apprentices to inflexible approaches which do not meet the needs of contemporary and emerging workplaces.

It was suggested that this may be overcome through a “phasing” approach to apprenticeships including the “chunking of skills”, which would allow more customisation of the apprenticeship pathway (that is; using more of a skills set or “lego-brick” approach).

A number of businesses were concerned that COVID-19 would exacerbate concerns about the limited skilled worker pipeline, resulting in labour shortages with resultant poaching and excessive labour costs. While some employers were reluctant to modify existing apprenticeship models, others wished to explore/pilot alternative approaches, including reducing the apprenticeship term for some residential trades.

While the above suggestions are not new, they represent substantial changes to the current apprenticeship model which is highly regulated. Any proposals for change will require careful and considered investigation and consultation with industry and unions.

Recommendation 2.3

2.3.1: A review of the current apprenticeship model be undertaken in consultation with all key stakeholders to consider alternative models, including dual and combo trades, options for front-ending apprenticeships with a theory block, the “chunking of skills” over the apprenticeship, and utilising Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) more effectively; and

2.3.2: In response to Government stimulus packages for residential housing, and in association with a major builder, pilot shortened apprenticeships in low risk, non-licensed trades that require speed to market and an increased pipeline of skills.

Engineering and electrical trades

Engineering and electrical trades are in high demand across many WA industries. There is concern that apprenticeship intake will not be sufficient to both support existing activity and grow capacity in new industries such as defence and advanced manufacturing. This accords with the analysis of DTWD, with these trades categorised as State priority occupations.

The pool of these trades needs to be increased as a matter of priority, which will require an immediate boost to the number of apprenticeship commencements to build the necessary pipeline for the future.

Without an immediate injection to the pipeline of apprentices, government stimulus projects and key industry areas of defence, oil and gas, resources and advanced manufacturing will not reach their full potential.

It generally takes four years to fully train the trade workers referred to above, through an apprenticeship.

There is a range of existing incentives provided by the State and Commonwealth governments to encourage the take-up of apprentices in all of these trades, including the following State Government programs:

- Half-fees for students (or employers) under the *Lower Fees Local Skills* initiative; and
- An employer incentive under the *Jobs and Skills WA Employer Incentive* or grants provided by the CTF for employers of building and construction apprentices.

Notwithstanding this, stakeholders have indicated strategies are needed to ensure defence industry businesses invest in training in anticipation of new work and other industry sectors are incentivised to shore up their own future supply.

Recommendation 2.4

Implement initiatives over a 12-month period to protect and grow the pool of engineering and electrical trades that support the defence industry, manufacturing, resources and associated supply chains.

Underrepresented groups in apprenticeships and traineeships

Employment data shows that young people and women have been most impacted by COVID-19. Between March and May 2020 there has been a larger decline in employment for women (-57,500) compared to men (-46,500).

Youth unemployment has reached 16.3% in May 2020 with 32,300 young people currently out of work, representing 29% of all unemployed people in the State. More concerning is the drop in participation rate for young people to a low 61.9%.

It has been noted that the continued fall in participation rates is masking the severity of job losses. A net number of 19,100 males and 18,800 females aged between 15 and 24 have left the labour force since February 2020. Had these people continued to look for work and remained in the labour force, the youth unemployment rate would be 28.7% for males and 30.7% for females in WA.

Employers of apprentices repeatedly, and unprompted, indicated they would like to take mature young adults on as apprentices but there was a significant barrier due to adult apprenticeship wages being very high given the low skill level of people early in their apprenticeship.

The Review also found that employers value women in their workforces, including in non-traditional trades. Heavy haulage companies in the Pilbara indicated that women were highly sought after, especially women aged 22-28 years and over 35 years.

Incentives are viewed by employers as a significant factor in the decision to take on an apprentice or trainee, and would like to see them retained.

The Review noted that the current employer incentives for under-represented groups have not been sufficient to drive change in employer behaviour in employing these cohorts.

Recommendation 2.5

Provide a significant increase to the loadings on employer incentives for apprentices and trainees who are mature aged youth (20—30 yo) women, Aboriginal, long term unemployed and people with a disability

Support for business in navigating incentives

The consultations have also revealed that some employers are not aware of the incentives available and can find this space very confusing and complicated.

This is particularly the case for small to medium business, which are confused by the array of incentives available to support the employment of an apprentice or trainee. They also find the claim process time consuming, and are looking for better digital and one-on-one support to guide them.

Recommendation 2.6

Simplify processes for employers to access and claim the various employer incentives available.

Pre-apprenticeships

The Review found that industry greatly value pre-apprenticeships as a preparation for entry into an apprenticeship.

Pre-apprenticeships provide theory and practical skills to students as a precursor to a full apprenticeship. It also provides the student with an understanding of the trade before committing to this career path, and because of the work placement requirement of most pre-apprenticeships, provides employers with a pool of potential apprentices to choose from who have some exposure to the trade, thereby facilitating critical connections that often lead to employment.

The number of training places for pre-apprenticeships has been capped in WA.

Recommendation 2.7

Increase the accessibility to pre-apprenticeships by decreasing costs and increasing available training places, to grow the pipeline of trades in regional and metropolitan WA.

3 Maximising skills from Government investment

Industry and community stakeholders saw it as important that the Government continue to bring forward projects to stimulate economic activity, employment and training. Further, there was a call for training requirements and initiatives to be embedded in the procurement for government projects and other stimulus measures (including community services) to “grow our own” and boost the pipeline of apprentices and trainees.

Examples included maximising the opportunities from the pipeline of defence-related work coming to WA, METRONET, the significant number of building and construction projects being brought forward, and the growth of the care economy, which is predominantly government funded.

Pathways to employment

People that have not had a job for some time will have particular difficulty in moving to employment, given they will be competing with proven job ready people recently displaced. Agencies and employers will need to work collaboratively to support people in their job readiness and provide links to employment.

It was suggested that an entry level (pre-employment) program be incorporated in selected Government projects which provides for the lead contractor(s) and their sub-contractors to be involved in a collaborative approach to train unemployed or displaced workers (in particular under-represented groups).

This program would involve pre-employment skills and basic pre-apprenticeship, building and/or civil construction, para-professional and administrative skills. The contractors would be required to provide work placements for the participants, on-the-job training, and access to an interview for any job openings for the project.

This program (and the contractors) would be supported by TAFE and wrap-around services of a JSC, Commonwealth *jobactive* provider(s) and other service providers as required. There is potential that the Commonwealth Government could also partner in such a proposal.

Recommendation 3.1

Pilot an entry-level (pre-employment program) that applies to selected Government projects obliging contractors to be involved in a collaborative approach to train jobseekers upfront with a view to employment.

Enabling the employment of apprentices

It generally takes three to four years to complete an apprenticeship. The short term nature of many Government procurement contracts is seen as a significant barrier to the employment of apprentices and trainees.

A smoothing of stimulus projects and/or bundling of projects (where possible) in the regions, would ensure that employers had certainty of work to support the engagement apprentices and trainees.

Group training organisations (GTOs) can assist employers where they are uncertain they will have sufficient work for the life of apprenticeship or traineeship. GTOs directly employ apprentices and trainees and host them out to employers. If an employer loses ongoing work or a major contract comes to an end, the GTO takes back the trainee and seeks to have them hosted by another employer.

Recommendation 3.2

Where possible, procuring agencies sequence construction stimulus projects, bundle projects or utilise group training organisations to provide sufficient certainty for business to commit to apprentices and trainees.

Supporting training in the care economy

Unlike Government works and infrastructure procurement contracts, Government purchasing of community support services may not entail the same obligation on providers to commit to training or employment outcomes.

Government expenditure in the care economy may be more effectively leveraged for jobs and skills.

The attainment of transferrable qualifications in the health and community care sectors is important both in assuring quality services as well as enabling people, often women, to have transferable skills.

It has been suggested that an initiative similar to the Government's *Priority Start* obligations be established when agencies procure health care services.

The current *Priority Start* aims to ensure a sustainable construction trades workforce for WA by increasing the overall numbers of apprentices and trainees in the building and construction industry.

It is relevant to note that there continues to be questions from unions, business and community stakeholders about what is the best way of ensuring government investment maximises training and employment outcomes. Concerns from business is that there is excessive red-tape in having to document trainee numbers, often across many subcontractors. On the other hand there is a view that employers are not being held sufficiently to account and that monitoring of contracted parties' training commitments by agencies should be improved, with consequences for businesses that fail to deliver.

Recommendation 3.3

Clear training obligations should be embedded contractually when government purchases services in the care economy.

4 Live-learn-work in regional WA

Regional WA hosts a significant proportion of the industry sectors that underpin economic activity and export based revenue for the State. Access to a capable workforce is a key driver of productivity in these sectors. Stakeholders highlighted the unique challenges in regional WA including low population numbers from which to draw staff, the challenge in attracting and retaining skilled workers from elsewhere, and the appreciated but limited capacity of smaller regional TAFEs to provide the full spectrum of training given their scale. Issues were also raised about the prevalence of substance abuse particularly in young people preventing their job readiness and the importance of cultural competency training for employees.

The training needs of the resources sector in the Pilbara and Goldfields received a high level of attention during the Review, as did the needs for the agricultural sector, particularly in the Wheatbelt.

Pilbara region

Major resource sector organisations were acutely aware of their impact on regional towns with proximity to operations, and the opportunities this presented for local employment and residency. Investing in the recruitment and development of staff that are local to the Pilbara was a key element of their retention strategies, the importance of which was highlighted during border closures for COVID-19. A genuine commitment to, and valuing of the recruitment of Aboriginal people and women was also evident.

Many companies indicated a strong preference that their training be provided by the local TAFE, and conducted in-situ in the Pilbara. Some resource companies indicated that they prefer metropolitan based training for their staff, or a mix of options.

While Port Hedland is a hub for a number of iron ore miners, Karratha and Dampier are the main port for miners west of Great Northern Highway and for oil and gas companies.

The existing capacity and capability of training infrastructure in the Pilbara, particularly as it relates to the trades, was seen to be constraining the training of local workers. To this end, a partnership approach has been proposed between organisations with operations in the Pilbara and TAFE.

Some resource companies are prepared to offer equipment to TAFEs to ensure the campus training environment reflects the range and standard of operating equipment used on a contemporary mine site. There were also offers to provide equipment specialists to participate in training sessions and for lecturers to spend time on site to become familiar with up-to-date mine practices.

Recruitment and retention of skilled lecturers in the Pilbara was noted as an ongoing challenge, exacerbated by the comparatively high salaries offered by resource companies. Companies acknowledged that they had recruited staff from TAFE, resulting in lecturer shortages. Some companies indicated a willingness to contribute to some form of retention allowance to ensure quality lecturers are not enticed to other jobs.

It is proposed that North Regional TAFE work with metropolitan TAFEs and resource companies, through the Chamber of Minerals and Energy (CME) to establish comprehensive training services in the Pilbara with an initial focus on Port Hedland.

The Review team wish to acknowledge the CME in facilitating meetings with senior resource industry members to assist in gathering information for the Review.

Recommendation 4.1

A Pilbara Specialist Centre be established in partnership with the resources sector to improve access to trade training and support. Focussed on North Regional TAFE, this centre would be supported by the metropolitan TAFEs.

The Wheatbelt

In the Wheatbelt, the importance of manufacturing and maintaining agricultural machinery was highlighted and seen as fundamental to the local economy. Agribusinesses consulted indicated that local tradespeople, and in particular heavy diesel mechanics continue to be in short supply across relevant sectors.

While acknowledging the successful partnership of Central Regional TAFE (CRT) with AGFRI Equipment at Moora, members of the agricultural industry perceive that dedicated agricultural equipment training is not sufficiently resourced. There is also a view that training should be sufficiently “non-denominational” to ensure tradespeople are fundamentally skilled across all brands of equipment.

Agricultural representatives are strongly supportive of the Muresk Institute model and consider a dedicated centre of excellence in agricultural equipment is needed at Muresk.

The provision of training at Muresk will contribute to building a local workforce that maintains the productivity, efficiency and safety of broad acre farming and protects against reliance on overseas workers.

Such a centre would complement the training that already occurs in operating farm equipment and farm monitoring technologies operating out of Muresk.

Concerns about the supply of sufficient seasonal workers for seeding and harvesting might also be alleviated with more equipment and short courses operating out of Muresk (refer recommendation 4.6).

Recommendation 4.2

An Agricultural Machinery Training Centre be established at Muresk Institute to support the agricultural industry and its supply chain.

Rail and maritime training capability

Concern had been expressed to Government that training in rail and maritime operations for the resource sector is inadequate given the limited supply of skilled operators and the critical nature of these roles in delivering product to market. Consultations with each of the major resource companies have therefore sought to clarify training needs.

In relation to rail it is evident that track machine operator/maintainer, train driver and rail signalling training is required. North Metropolitan TAFE is leading work to respond to both METRONET and resource sector training needs in these occupational areas. While core training can be provided in all three of these areas (in the case of train driving, in association with the Perth Transport Authority), some higher level skills will be particular to business systems and unviable for TAFE to deliver.

In developing responses for rail in the resources sector it will also be important to integrate the needs, and offer training to the agricultural sector who also use rail transport.

Maritime training needs include marine pilots, tug operators and stevedores. In the case of marine pilots, these are the most senior of maritime vessel operators and require extensive training followed by 10-15 years' experience as a vessel officer and then ship master. While initial training is available in WA, assisted by simulators able to replicate international ports, it was reported that people usually complete advanced training in Amsterdam, Hamburg or Hong Kong to become a ship's captain.

Training of tug operators is available at Fremantle and Broome TAFE campuses. The level of training possible will be enhanced by proposed updated simulation equipment. This training appears to be equivalent to that offered in Tasmania. South Metropolitan and North Regional TAFE will work with the resources sector and ports authorities to inform capacity and offer training solutions. One Port Authority indicated interest in engaging cadets to invest in the pipeline of future operators and was prepared to promote this concept to other WA ports.

Recommendation 4.3

Metropolitan TAFE colleges work with regional TAFEs to build rail and maritime capability in WA to meet resource and agricultural industry needs.

Addressing regional needs

Regional businesses and not-for-profit organisations, local governments, the Regional Development Commissions and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development have emphasised that approaches to training will vary from region to region depending on location, industry profile, population size and composition, and the availability of public infrastructure and services. The message was – don't make solutions with a "one-size fits all" approach; ensure decisions are based on data and a sound evidence base, using analysis of data at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Regional stakeholders wish to see a greater connection between employers and TAFE to ensure training is aligned to local needs.

Recommendation 4.4

TAFE regional colleges are employing new Regional Industry Engagement managers whose role will be to ascertain local training and workforce development needs. These staff will liaise with key regional stakeholders, and interrogate current labour market information, so as to identify local skills and employment needs, and inform training priorities and pathways for the needs of industry and the community.

Encouraging workers to the regions

A reoccurring issue raised during the Review was the need for a mechanism to incentivise and support workers and their families to move from the metropolitan area to regional areas experiencing ongoing skills and labour shortages.

Several regions believe there is a mismatch of willing and available workers around WA. For example, Kalgoorlie employers consider that there are many work opportunities in the Goldfields and that if people were incentivised to relocate from another region or the metropolitan area, unfilled job vacancies would be addressed.

This was a view also expressed by the agricultural sector.

Recommendation 4.5

Government work with the Commonwealth and local governments to consider options to potentially incentivise workers and their families to relocate from a region with high unemployment to one that requires workers.

Seasonal work

The seasonal and cyclical nature of economic activity in regions, particularly as it relates to the agriculture, forestry and fishing, tourism and hospitality sectors and their supporting industries, result in lumpy workforce demand patterns, with rapid turnaround times for gearing up and training, and a traditional reliance on seasonal workers such as backpackers.

Many businesses are subject to significant technological change, with the requirement for precision agriculture, automated mining, and digital platforms for doing business, whether they are a small or large business firm.

A move to more skill sets training was identified by almost all stakeholders as a way to respond to both immediate and longer term skill needs in regional WA, and in particular those that are impacted by technology. Recommendations relating to skill sets are contained in Sections 1 (New futures for Western Australians) and 5 (Next generation training).

The tourism and agricultural sectors are concerned that the absence of Working Holiday Visa travellers and the inability of workers from the Eastern States to travel will result in critical staff shortages at times such as seasonal fruit picking, shearing, harvest, and the small windows of high season tourism.

It is noted that Working Holiday visas (subclass 417) are provided for short periods of six months. There will be some seasonal workers already in WA who are due to return home. Short term extensions beyond the standard visa period by the Commonwealth Government may alleviate the labour supply concern. This issue was raised in a submission by the Association of Mining and Explorations Companies (AMEC) in relation to retaining temporary workers in minerals exploration work.

Industry representatives felt that the notion of Western Australian's taking a gap year, or working holiday in their backyard should be promoted. The tourism industry in particular felt that perhaps a "gap year" could be promoted to young Western Australians whereby they work in hospitality roles in the north and south of WA at desirable coastal sites, at peak times over a year.

It is noted that seasonal work, particularly in the agricultural sector, can have poor remuneration and working conditions, often with payment on a piecemeal basis.

It was observed that DPIRD's agricultural jobs board may be a vehicle to support promotion of seasonal work.

Recommendation 4.6

The WA Government approach the Commonwealth Government to extend Working Holiday visas for workers already in Australia, and TAFE work with industry to support skilling of people seeking to work in the regions.

Digital skills

The regions are increasingly dependent on on-line technologies for business and personal use. This has been exacerbated during COVID-19 with social distancing and regional boundary restrictions, preventing the movement of people and face to face transactions.

At the same time connectivity and availability of digital resources is not available to all – so different channels are important. Training is needed for business and the community to ensure that digital channels are optimised.

Recommendation 4.7

Specific training relating to digital skills be developed and delivered by TAFE to assist regional communities.

5 Next generation training

There was strong recognition of the importance of the vocational education and training (VET) sector as a critical career pathway during consultations. There was a much repeated view that the value of VET, its diversity of courses, the technical and complex nature of some courses, and the attractive remuneration in some pathways, is not well known.

Review stakeholders were united in the view that VET careers and courses should be better promoted to business and the community.

In better positioning the status of VET there was also a view that courses could be better profiled and more accessible to assist in identifying the right course for specific needs. There was also a strong preference for a greater emphasis on short courses that “hit the spot” for business and individuals, rather than wasting time and money on unnecessary or irrelevant units.

In some cases there were observations that TAFE equipment and lecturer knowledge may be out of sync with current industry standards.

There was a desire for a step-change in the way in which the training system responds to the needs of industry and students.

Skill sets

The use of “skill sets” was the most common solution proposed by stakeholders across all industry areas to address their immediate skill needs during the State’s COVID-19 recovery phase. The value of skill sets as a means to quick skills attainment and work readiness was also raised at a number of ministerial roundtables.

Many businesses indicated their need to gear up quickly for recovery, including in skills development of existing and returning staff, and in providing new entrants (unemployed, school leavers and career changers) with the necessary base skills to be considered for jobs as they open up, or where there are current vacancies.

Skill sets are normally delivered as a cluster of related skills to address a specific part of a job or work task. While skill sets are currently used as part of training offerings in WA, they form only a small percentage of overall training delivery and are nowhere near as prevalent as full qualifications (estimated at under 6% of total enrolments¹¹).

Training by skill sets provides flexibility to employers and students, allowing delivery in bite-sized chunks, with the skill set itself either being a generic set of skills across a range of job functions, or customised to the specific needs of a job or task. Skill sets provide the means to up-skill, re-skill and “retro-fit” existing workers. They are also a meaningful way to skill displaced workers, school leavers and people wishing to access employment or further training who are unemployed. By providing skills set training in the practical elements of a new occupation, displaced workers with well-developed transferable soft skills can be quickly trained for other industry and job contexts.

There was general agreement throughout the consultation process that skill sets should be also designed to pathway into further training and ultimately to a full nationally recognised qualification if required or desired. This is important if people are not initially successful in finding a job and wish to continue study and ensure training is more broadly transferrable.

Industry confirmed they require quick turnaround in the identification, development and deployment of skill sets. To achieve this, it was deemed imperative that skill sets be created locally rather than through the national Training Package process, which industry and many RTOs deem too slow, unresponsive and not necessarily suited to WA conditions.

It was noted that in formalising new qualifications and skill sets, WA’s Training Accreditation Council (TAC) will play an important role.

¹¹ Non-validated DTWD data May 2020

Recommendation 5.1

Increase the agility and responsiveness of the training sector to meet industry needs and individual career aspirations, through the timely development and delivery of skill sets. Skill sets should be designed and, where necessary, accredited in WA for local conditions, and aim to provide a pathway to a full qualification.

Enterprise Training Program

Aged and Disability care sector representatives were strongly supportive of the Government's Enterprise Training Program in enabling just-in-time, tailored responses for its workforces. The scheme was introduced in this sector due to the high demand for training as a consequence of the NDIS roll-out, the increasing need for aged care associated with our ageing population and emerging demand in other related industries such as mental health. It is anticipated that Royal Commissions in both the aged and disability sectors will also lead to increased requirements for qualified carers.

The Enterprise Training Program is designed to address skills priorities for existing workers in these industries, supporting businesses and ensuring that workers have the skills and knowledge to meet the current and future needs of the organisation and industry. The program enables individual organisations (or a consortium of organisations) to identify skill gaps and work with a registered training organisation to develop training to suit and meet their organisation's needs, and apply for funding of up to \$200,000 for single enterprises and \$300,000 for consortiums to support that training.

It was noted by industry that while it has not been fully embraced by all businesses in the sector yet, it is highly regarded and will grow in take-up. During the Review, other sectors have sought to be included in the program.

Recommendation 5.2

Explore the expansion of the Enterprise Training Program model beyond the allied health and community services sector as a mechanism to address the skill needs of enterprises, where there is significant market growth or skill gap issues.

Skills passports

During the Review, it was suggested that "skills passports" be developed so that the overall progress of a person's training, including skill sets, could be captured and tracked over time, allowing presentation of the passport to employers and education and training institutions to demonstrate a person's skills and qualifications.

Those industry areas which expressed an interest in this concept were hospitality, building and construction, agriculture and the care economy (disability and aged care).

Some industries have implemented documents that enable course participation to be manually added to a passport-like booklet or paper record. The limitations on this approach is that the record is not universally known and accepted, does not track attainment across one's lifetime and in different occupational contexts, may include courses that are unverified in content and quality, and holds a risk that a course has been fraudulently added.

There is already capacity for all VET students to log on to a national data base using their Unique Student Identifier (USI)¹² to obtain a record of their VET attainment. The difficulty is that records are not current; and in some cases there is a lag of one year before data is available. Additionally it is not in a form that can be digitally accessed by third party prospective employers. Further, it is not a complete education record as it doesn't include school and higher education (university) achievement.

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments are currently progressing work on all of these fronts.

As an interim measure, it is evident that the greater transparency of this data source may be useful, if students download their transcript for employers to view, so they can see a record of VET achievement across Australia, including individual units (if the qualification was attained more than a year ago).

Recommendation 5.3

Work with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research and the Commonwealth Government to further evolve the creation of a skills passport concept so that students can access their school, accredited training and higher education history from one system (preferably an online portal), and as functionality increases, this be promoted and made available to prospective employers as a trusted and comprehensive information source.

Online delivery

The Review identified that significant progress had been made by TAFE and other training providers during the COVID-19 crisis to deliver programs online or through “blended” approaches (combination of online, interactive distanced and face to face).

Business was complimentary about this shift, with TAFE Managing Directors indicating that college staff in the main had embraced this approach and were keen to embed it in their normal delivery practices.

¹² A USI - Unique Student Identifier is a reference number that creates an online record of a person's training and qualifications attained in Australia. USI account holders (students) can use their USI to access their nationally recognised Vocational Education and Training (VET) record online in the form of a 'USI Transcript'. USI Transcripts collate training outcomes completed from 1 January 2015 onwards from different training organisations, across different states and territories and different years in a single record.

It was clear from business that not only should this continue, but it needs to be expanded, particularly for the delivery of short courses and skill sets. Online content and remote learning is seen as efficient for business, and makes training more accessible to a wider number of people, including those in the regions.

In addition, enhancing the level of sophistication in terms of learning processes and platforms was recommended, along with improving the quality of content and the ability to undertake training assessment virtually or remotely. It was noted that new technologies, often supporting remote operations, mean that cameras are readily available to monitor/guide individual work practices making remote practical training and course assessments possible by lecturers distant from the worksite.

While remote training is attractive in many instances, it was acknowledged that face to face learning has an important place and not all people have digital equipment and accessibility.

Mention was also made by a small number of people of students wanting to be able to do face-to-face delivery after normal business hours (sometimes referred to as night school). It was noted that when this has been attempted by TAFE in recent times, it was not sustainable due to small numbers or there was little or no demand at all. If the demand is demonstrated, after hours training can be provided.

Recommendation 5.4

5.4.1: Enhance the capability of the training sector to develop and deploy online content and remote learning to students no matter where they live, recognising the need to address some practical components of the curriculum through face-to-face or blended delivery modes.

5.4.2: Invest in the application of new technologies to simulated work and training environments, including for remote assessment and delivery in-the-field and onsite.

Partnerships

It was suggested during the Review that the capability and capacity of TAFE training facilities, equipment and technology could be supplemented by partnership arrangements with industry. The importance of partnerships was highlighted by the success of the following examples.

- The oil and gas industry's involvement with South Metropolitan TAFE's ACEPT facility in Munster
- AFGRI Equipment apprentice training for John Deere agricultural machinery and equipment with Central Regional TAFE in Moora
- Rio Tinto's automation training project with South Metropolitan TAFE

- Matchbox Pictures partnering with North Metropolitan TAFE film and television training in the ABC production of The Heights
- Control centre technology software for oil and gas processing provided by Honeywell and Emerson

Some businesses indicated during the Review a preparedness for in-kind support and provision of equipment and expertise to ensure training is contemporary.

Recommendation 5.5

Capitalise on, and encourage further industry support and access to contemporary equipment and expertise to compliment TAFE resources.

The Review identified a significant number of opportunities for new or revamped training programs and partnerships between businesses and TAFE, with a commitment by both parties to follow these up post the Review.

This direct engagement of senior TAFE and DTWD staff with business leaders has been invaluable. There are many direct actions that flow from initial consultations.

Recommendation 5.6

TAFE follow up with businesses and industry representatives on the opportunities for partnerships, return-to-industry, training programs and skill sets identified during the Review (see Appendix 3).

Supporting State industry development priorities

COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of new technologies, and the need for TAFE to support government's industry development priorities to diversify the State's economy. DTWD in concert with TAFE needs to undertake skills gaps analysis and training for key industry sectors.

Success in such an approach has been demonstrated in the work of South Metropolitan TAFE to increase its capability to support the growing defence industries sector. This has included establishment of the new \$2.4 million South Metropolitan TAFE Naval Base Campus, strategically located adjacent to the Australian Marine Complex in Henderson and further funding for training infrastructure, including welding simulators to ensure students have access to real training scenarios and real time feedback.

Recommendation 5.7

Position TAFE capability to support major government industry development priorities to diversify the State's economy, and to meet the needs of infrastructure projects that will be brought forward including:

- Defence;
- Advanced manufacturing/METS;
- Resources including critical minerals;
- Energy, LNG and renewable hydrogen;
- Precision agriculture and agri-foods; and
- METRONET and rail.

VET workforce

Another capability issue raised by industry was the need to retain or improve the industry expertise and currency of TAFE lecturers. While TAFE colleges have some "return to industry" programs for staff, these have contracted in recent times due, in some cases, to the lack of opportunities provided by industry, in addition to difficulties experienced by TAFE in attempting to back-fill with relevant expertise.

There was some commitment made by several companies during the Review to support TAFE colleges in this regard by providing opportunities for return-to-industry placements, subsidising the retention of key lecturers and the provision of guest company lecturers to TAFE colleges.

Further to above, it was identified that there was under-representation of Aboriginal lecturers important for authentic cultural training as well as course delivery in all industry sectors.

Recommendation 5.8

Improve the diversity and currency of the VET workforce by:

- increasing Aboriginal lecturers, particularly to deliver culturally relevant units;
- utilising return-to-industry options in partnership with business; and
- developing new teaching modes and technologies.

Promotion of VET and TAFE

The Review highlighted that the VET value proposition is not well understood. Impactful and multi-level messaging is needed to demonstrate the importance, diversity and income returns that are possible from the VET sector.

Industry and business encouraged Government to promote the value of training (VET) as a way to getting worthwhile jobs that are vitally important to the WA economy and that have potential for sustainable employment in that they support future growth. Industry and businesses also suggested that any promotional activities should emphasise the important role that TAFE colleges have in training Western Australians.

Recommendation 5.9

The Government undertake a broader and more concerted promotion of the value of VET and TAFE through a marketing campaign that effectively engages the community (emphasising the career and training opportunities through TAFE).

Ongoing industry engagement

Stakeholders indicated their appreciation of the opportunity to connect directly with the Government through the Review Team to discuss their training needs and possible solutions. Feedback from business and community stakeholders was that the consultation process was highly useful in developing relationships, understanding issues and establishing lines for direct contact and training responses when needed.

Recommendation 5.10

Building on relationships developed through the Review process, TAFE and DTWD executives continue to meet business and community leaders to ensure ongoing industry engagement.

A desire was expressed by a number of stakeholders for a more coordinated means for industry, employers, career advisors and prospective students to navigate the systems which provide information on TAFE courses. VET courses need to be easier to find, understand and enrol in.

Recommendation 5.11

Digitally enhance the navigation to training and course information for prospective students, employers and career advisors.

Further, it was asked on several occasions about the best way to establish contact with the TAFE system and discuss issues and opportunities that may be applicable to more than one TAFE college. Equally, there was a consistent message that business wanted to deal with its local TAFE.

The Managing Directors of all five TAFE colleges are committed to supporting business as a network, with an agreement that the first point of call should be the local TAFE.

It is proposed that processes be further refined through the contacted TAFE college to link businesses with another TAFE if appropriate, or elevate an issue where the combined TAFE network capability is required. Of course, if business has a clear contact point about a particular course with an alternative TAFE or wants to specifically deal with another TAFE, it will do so.

Recommendation 5.12

Promote the first point of contact as the local TAFE, which will guide an appropriate response, including drawing from the combined TAFE network capability when required.

Data capability

The need for real-time data at the occupational and regional level to inform skills development, training priorities and workforce development initiatives was identified during the conduct of the Review.

The economic and labour market is dynamic and multiple sources and perspectives are needed to bring information together in a meaningful way that is current.

DTWD is now accessing “big data”, and in partnership with the Department of Treasury, new data sources to enhance labour market analysis. Further, a range of data sharing between Government agencies is being pursued as part of its COVID-19 response and recovery process, including with the Departments of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI); Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD); the Premier and Cabinet (DPC); and Transport.

DTWD is proposing to share the relevant analysis of this data with the TAFE colleges and Jobs and Skills Centres (JSC) as a matter of course, and with industry as required.

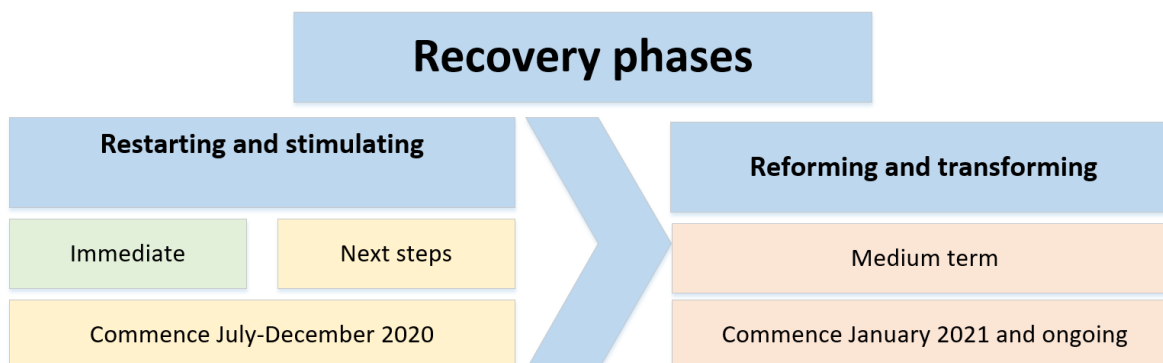
Recommendation 5.13

DTWD and TAFEs continue to focus on real-time data to inform the skills development of Western Australians and training priorities for the State, including partnering with other agencies such as the Department of Treasury, DJTSI, and DPIRD, DPC and Transport.

Recommendations and implementation

Set out below are the recommendations and an indicative implementation plan.

The proposed implementation of the recommendations have been framed, time-wise, to align with the Government's three phase recovery plan.



Commencement may represent the start of consultations with stakeholders, or design of an initiative or program.

A more detailed implementation plan will be prepared in consultation with stakeholders over the next eight weeks. This includes further engagement with other State Government agencies to ensure alignment with whole-of-government recovery planning.

It is noted that the Ministerial Skills, Training, Workforce and International Education State Recovery Roundtable agreed that the recovery was likely to be from two to five years. This means that a number of initiatives are necessarily likely to run into the longer term, particularly those identified in the Reforming and transforming phase.

The table below shows the indicative commencement of recommendations from immediate to medium term.

Immediate
1.1: Provide fee-free skill sets for displaced workers, focusing on practical introductory skills and industry-specific skills to transition to new employment opportunities where there is jobs growth or demand.
1.2: Provide fee-free skill sets for jobseekers including those who are unemployed, focusing on work readiness and employability, foundation digital, numeracy and literacy skills.
1.3: Fee-free skill sets that include financial, resource management and digital skills be made available to support existing businesses and those businesses needing to reposition.
1.5: Provide an incentive for employers to re-engage an apprentice or trainee whose training contract has been cancelled since 1 March 2020.
1.8: Expand the <i>Lower Fees, Local Skills</i> initiative by adding additional courses which are aligned with the industry and social recovery needs of the WA economy.
2.7: Increase access to pre-apprenticeships by decreasing costs and increasing available training places to grow the pipeline of trades in regional and metropolitan WA.

Immediate and ongoing
1.4: New skill sets be delivered partly or fully online to enhance accessibility, while retaining necessary practical components of the training where required.
5.1: Increase the agility and responsiveness of the training sector to meet industry needs and individual career aspirations, through the timely development and delivery of skill sets. Skill sets should be designed and, where necessary, accredited in WA for local conditions, and aim to provide a pathway to a full qualification.
5.4.1: Enhance the capability of the training sector to develop and deploy online content and remote learning to students no matter where they live, recognising the need to address some practical components of the curriculum through face-to-face or blended delivery modes.
5.6: TAFE to follow up with businesses and industry representatives on the opportunities for partnerships, return-to-industry, training programs and skill sets identified during the Review (see Appendix 3).
5.8: Improve the diversity and currency of the VET workforce by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increasing Aboriginal lecturers, particularly to deliver culturally relevant units; ○ Utilising return-to-industry options in partnership with business; and ○ Developing new teaching modes and technologies.
5.10: Building on relationships developed through the Review process, TAFE and DTWD executives continue to meet business and community leaders to ensure ongoing industry engagement.
5.11: Digitally enhance the navigation to training and course information for prospective students, employers, career advisors.
5.12: Promote the first point of contact as the local TAFE, which will guide an appropriate response, including drawing from the combined TAFE network capability when required.
5.13: DTWD and TAFEs continue to focus on real-time data to inform the skills development of Western Australians and training priorities for the State, including partnering with other agencies on Government initiatives and economic directions.

Next steps
1.6: Cultural competence training for business be funded, delivered by contracted Aboriginal organisations and promoted as an important platform to support the attraction, recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees.
1.7.1: Develop in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders an employment enabling program for Aboriginal youth that includes wrap-around support, mentoring, independent living skills such as budgeting and nutrition and obtaining a Driver's License.
1.7.2: Explore the development of a "caring for country – caring for self" program for Aboriginal youth to develop self-esteem, pride and confidence that will lead to employability and job opportunities on country (eg tourism).
1.9: The capacity and coverage of the JSC network be increased to ensure services are available to guide people on new career options and job application preparation. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ developing further products and services for the JSC network (career videos, webinars online resources, etc.); ○ providing a more comprehensive job matching services; and ○ lifting industry engagement; and For a two year period, additional resources are needed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ establish new JSCs in unemployment hot spots such as Midland and Armadale; ○ increase services to Aboriginal people; and, ○ address disproportionately low resources in some regions.
1.10.2: "Join-up" VET funding from the Department of Education and DTWD, so schools and TAFEs can collaboratively plan how funding will be best used to align VET programs with student needs and future workforce priorities and opportunities.

Next steps
1.11: A work placement program for health and community services be implemented by DTWD, TAFEs and funded health training providers to address the barriers of securing student placements in the workplace.
2.3.2: In response to Government stimulus packages for residential housing, and in association with a major builder, pilot shortened apprenticeships in low risk, non-licensed trades that require speed to market and an increased pipeline of skills.
2.4: Implement initiatives over a 12-month period to protect and grow the pool of engineering and electrical trades that support the defence industry, manufacturing, resources and associated supply chains.
2.6: Simplify processes for employers to access and claim the various employer incentives available.
3.1: Pilot an entry-level (pre-employment program) that applies to selected Government projects obliging contractors to be involved in a collaborative approach to train jobseekers upfront with a view to employment.
3.2: Where possible, procuring agencies sequence construction stimulus projects, bundle projects or utilise group training organisations to provide sufficient certainty for business to commit to apprentices and trainees.
3.3: Clear training obligations should be embedded contractually when government purchases services in the care economy.
4.3: Metropolitan TAFE colleges work with regional TAFEs to build rail and maritime capability in WA to meet resource and agricultural industry needs.
4.6: The WA Government approach the Commonwealth Government to extend Working Holiday visas for workers already in Australia, and TAFE work with industry to support skilling of people seeking to work in the regions.
5.5: Capitalise on, and encourage further industry support and provision of contemporary equipment and expertise to complement TAFE resources.
5.7: Position TAFE capability to support major government industry development priorities to diversify the State's economy, and to meet the needs of infrastructure projects that will be brought forward, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Defence; ○ Advanced manufacturing/METS; ○ Resources including critical minerals; ○ Energy, LNG and renewable hydrogen ○ Precision agriculture and agri-foods; and ○ METRONET and rail.
5.9: The Government undertake a broader and more concerted promotion of the value of VET and TAFE through a marketing campaign that effectively engages the community (emphasising the career and training opportunities through TAFE).

Next steps and ongoing
2.2: New apprenticeships be developed for occupations where there is increasing complexity, high risk and skills shortages, and which have been undergoing significant transformation of job roles and requirements. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil plant operations; • Truck driving (linked to WA licensing structure and requirements); • Rail and civil infrastructure; • Operator and maintainer roles in big industry; and • Maintenance of autonomous vehicles and equipment.
4.1: A Pilbara Specialist Centre be established in partnership with the resources sector to improve access to trade training and support. Focussed on North Regional TAFE, this centre would be supported by the metropolitan TAFEs.

Next steps and ongoing
4.2: An Agricultural Machinery Training Centre be established at Muresk Institute to support the agricultural industry and its supply chain.
4.4: TAFE regional colleges are employing new Regional Industry Engagement managers whose role will be to ascertain local training and workforce development needs. These staff will liaise with key regional stakeholders, and interrogate current labour market information, so as to identify local skills and employment needs, and inform training priorities and pathways for the needs of industry and the community.
5.4.2: Invest in the application of new technologies to simulated work and training environments, including for remote assessment and delivery in-the-field and onsite.

Medium term
1.10.1: Promote VET as a desirable post-secondary career pathway by joining with the Department of Education's Career development is everybody's business roadshow and partner with schools in career advice to students, parents and teachers.
1.10.3: Consider ways to maintain appropriately diverse career pathway selections by students, specifically how to ensure that no one pathway is inadvertently incentivised over another.
2.1: High-level sophisticated trade apprenticeships and skill sets for the future be developed. This recognises the evolution of technical, diagnostic and data skills, and the merging of these with the mechanical, electrical and IT skills needed to work on the complex equipment now common in industry. These new apprenticeships will prepare people for critical jobs that increase the productivity and competitiveness of the Western Australian economy.
2.3.1: A review of the current apprenticeship model be undertaken in consultation with all key stakeholders to consider alternative models, including dual and combination trades, options for front-ending apprenticeships with a theory block, the "chunking of skills" over the apprenticeship, and utilising Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) more effectively.
2.5: Provide a significant increase to the loadings on employer incentives for apprentices and trainees who are mature aged youth (20-30yo), women, Aboriginal, long term unemployed and people with a disability.
4.5: Government work with the Commonwealth and local governments to consider options to potentially incentivise workers and their families to relocate from a region with high unemployment to one that requires workers.
4.7: Specific digital skills training be developed and delivered by TAFE to assist regional communities.
5.2: Use the Enterprise Training Program model beyond the allied health and community services sector as a mechanism to address the skill needs of enterprises, where there is significant market growth or skill gap issues.
5.3: Work with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research and the Commonwealth Government to further evolve the creation of a skills passport concept so that students can access their school, accredited training and higher education history from one system (preferably an online portal), and as functionality increases, this be promoted and made available to prospective employers as a trusted and comprehensive information source.

The recommendations have been mapped to the State Government's five recovery areas for the COVID-19 pandemic, being Health, Social, Economic and Infrastructure, Industry and Regions. This is presented in Appendix 4.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Terms of reference

Appendix 2 – List of stakeholders consulted

Appendix 3 – Follow-up engagement on opportunities for partnerships and training programs identified during the Review

Appendix 4 – How the Training Review recommendations will address the State Government's five recovery areas for the COVID-19 pandemic

Terms of reference

Scope

The Review Team will consider the following scope of industries:

- The resources sector which through projects, sustain a pipeline of trades fundamental to growth in other areas such as manufacturing , defence and infrastructure works;
- Other sectors such as health and the care economy, transport, construction, hospitality and tourism; and,
- Opportunities to explore the needs of emerging industries arising from COVID-19 including digital and logistics.

The review team will also consider training options for people most impacted by industry downturn and significantly at risk due to elongated recovery:

- Young people, including those in late 20s;
- Women;
- Aboriginal people;
- Older workers; and,
- Those previously employed in sectors most impacted.

Objectives

The Review team will:

- Identify practical training solutions in response to COVID-19 to meet industry needs, and ensure maximum opportunities for Western Australians to benefit from employment, skills, training and workforce development during this period of economic recovery
- Ensure a coordinated, effective and efficient means for business to navigate the training system and deliver outcomes for the state on an ongoing basis
- Establish a direct pathway for business to discuss and implement training solutions with the primary state provider, TAFE;
- Consider opportunities for training to be reframed to be more responsive, quicker in skilling people and more accessible in reach and cost.
- Identify options so that people are able to stay engaged through training and reposition their skills for new work directions

Engagement

The Review Team will:

- Engage with industry and business to identify training needs and develop specific proposals that response to these needs;
- Consult with the Managing Directors of Central Regional, South Regional and North Regional TAFEs to ensure state-wide solutions are developed;
- Engage with the State Recovery Advisory Group to understand the specific occupations, skills needs and training courses required to respond to local needs across WA;
- Participate in the Ministerial Roundtable on skills, training and workforce development to understand directly from key stakeholders the impacts of COVID-19, and challenges and opportunities for skills, training and workforce development during recovery;
- Engage with the lead Directors General from the five recovery areas to identify training opportunities and skills gaps in their areas of focus.

Deliverables

The Review team will:

- Provide a report on key opportunities, practical actions and proposed TAFE implementation responses to the State Recovery Controller by 30 June 2020;
- Ensure key opportunities and practical actions feed into the development of the five sub recovery plans and overall recovery plan due to be complete by early July 2020.

In the event that the Review team identifies opportunities for immediate action, the team may provide an interim report to the State Recovery Controller and Minister for consideration.

List of stakeholders consulted

Business and industry body

ABN Group
Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia
Ace+
AFGRI JD dealership
Agrarian Management
Albany Chamber of Commerce & Industry Inc
Albemarle
Alcoa
ALH Group WA
Alliance Builders Pty Ltd
Alltype Engineering
Anglicare WA
Arc Infrastructure
ARK Group Enterprises
AtWork Australia
Australian Childcare Alliance WA
Australian Computer Society WA
Australian Hotels Association WA
Australian Information Industry Association
Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
Australian Retailers Association
Australian Steel Institute
Autism Association of Western Australia
Automark Aust Pty Ltd
Automasters
Avila
Avivo
B&J Catalano
BHP
Blackbox Control
Bloodwood Tree Association
Boekman Machinery
Broadspectrum
Building 51
Bunbury-Geographe Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Bush Consulting
CalEnergy Resources
CEDA
Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA
Chevron
Child Australia
Chorus
Civil Contractors Federation WA

Civmec
Coles
Collie Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc
Colonial Leisure Group
Communicare Employment Services
Community Services WA
Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU)
Coolabaroo
CPSU / CSA
Cropline
Crothers Construction
Crown Perth
Curtin University
DBM Vircon
Derby Chamber of Commerce
Diploma Plumbing
Disability Providers in Western Australia
Diversity South Inc
DK Kaartdijin Pty Ltd
Doral Mineral Sands
Downer Group
Dunsborough-Yallingup Chamber of Commerce and Industry
East Kimberley Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Edith Cowan University
Electrical Group Training
EMCO Building
Empired
Empowering People in Communities (EPIC)
Encon
EPIC Inc
Ernst & Young
Ertech
Esperance Chamber of Commerce & Industries
Farm Machinery & Industry Association of WA
Fendt and Massey Ferguson
Fini Group
First Class Automotives
Food, Fibre and Timber Training Industries Council (WA)
Fortescue Metals Group Limited
FutureNow Creative & Leisure Industries Training Council
Georgiou
GJK Indigenous Solutions
Goodstart
Griffin Coal
Harvey Water
Hexion

Horizon Power
Housing Industry Association
Hyatt Regency Perth
IBM
Iluka Resources
Inspired Homes
InterContinental Hotels Group
InterContinental Perth City Centre
Jackson McDonald
Jay's Door Centre
John Deere (Aust/NZ) QLD
Juniper
Kailis Group
Kalgoorlie-Boulder Chamber of Commerce & Industry Inc
Kellys Hot Water, Gas & Air
KPMG
LGM Industries
Linfox
Linkwest
Master Builders Association WA
Master Plumbers and Gasfitters Association WA
Matera Foundation
Matic Transport
McDonald's Australia
McGarry Associates
McMahon Services Australia
Mechanical and Automotive Service Centre (MASC)
Medicar Automotive Solutions
Microsoft
Mindarie Workshop
Minderoo Foundation
Mission Australia
MLG Oz
Molycop
Mondo Exclusive Homes
Monodelphous
Mosaic
Motor Trades Association
MPA Skills (Painting and Plumbing)
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Western Australia
Multiplex
Murray Engineering
MZI Resources
Newmont Corporation
Newmont Goldcorp
Ngala

Nindila Training Centre, Bega Garnbirringu Health Service
Noongar Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Nulsen Group
Oaks Civil Construction Pty Ltd
Optimi Digital
Optus Stadium
Outside School House Care WA (OSHC WA)
Pacific Industrial Company
Pawsey Supercomputing Centre
Pemberton Chamber of Commerce & Industry (Inc)
Perkins Builders
Pilbara Heavy Haulage Girls
Pilbara Inland Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Planfarm
Port Hedland Chamber of Commerce
Premier Coal
Prendiville Group
Programmed
Project Fast Track (Muresk)
Qube Holdings
R.J. Vincent & Co.
RAC
RAC Arena
Regional Chamber of Commerce WA (RCCIWA)
Regional Early Education and Development Inc (REED WA)
Richmond Wellbeing
Richmond Wellbeing
Rio Tinto
Riverstone Custom Home Builders
Rivet Mining Service Pty Ltd
Rob Carr
Rocky Bay
Roy Hill
SafeFarms WA
Saracen Mineral Holdings Limited
Shelter WA
Simcoa
SMYL Community Services
South West Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.
South West Regional Council - Chamber of Minerals and Energy
South32 Worsley
Southern River College
Spadaccini Homes Pty Ltd
St Bartholomew's House
St Patrick's Community Support Centre
St Vincent de Paul WA

State School Teachers Union of WA
Stramit
Success Transport Pty Ltd
Talison Lithium
Telethon Kids Institute
The Prime Group
The Westin Perth
Thiess Mining
Toll Group
Tourism Council WA
Tronox — Mining
Tronox — Pigments
Tyrepower
Unions WA
Uniting WA
Utilities, Engineering, Electrical and Automotive Training Council
WA Blue Sky
WA Indigenous Tourism Operators Council
Wade Fleet Maintenance
Wesfarmers
Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH)
Western Australian Council of Social Service
Western Roads Federation
Westrac
Westrans Services
Wheatbelt Business Network
Woodside
Woolworths Group
Wormall Civil Pty Ltd
YMCA WA
Youth Involvement Council
Zonta House Refuge Association

Government

City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Department of Communities
Department of Finance
Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation
Department of Justice
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
Department of Primary Resources and Industry Development
Department of the Premier and Cabinet
Department of Treasury
Gascoyne Development Commission
Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission
Great Southern Development Commission

Kimberley Development Commission
Main Roads WA
Mid West Development Commission
Office of Minister for Education and Training
Peel Development Commission
Pilbara Development Commission
Pilbara Ports Authority
Regional Council of Development Commissions
Shire of Coolgardie
Shire of Tammin
Small Business Development Corporation
South West Development Commission
State Recovery Controller, Public Sector Commissioner
WA Country Health
WA Health
WA Local Government Association
WA Regional Development Alliance (WARDA)
Wheatbelt Development Commission

Registered training organisations

AB Music
Advanced Mine Performance Training Service
AIWT
Alzheimer's WA
Amana Living
Applied Education
Arrow Training Services
Aspire Performance Training
Australian Childcare Career Options (ACCO)
Australian Retail College
Australian Training
Babel International College
Broadspectrum Training Services
Centacare Employment and Training
CERT Training
Combined Team Services
Consolidated Training Services
CTAS Education
DNA Kingston Training and Employment and Success Training Academy
Dynamic Learning Services
Electrical and Communications Association WA
Empyrean Education Institute
Energy Skills Solutions
Fire Industry Training
Flexible Training Solution
Gold Star Childcare Training

Institute of Health and Nursing Australia
Interlink Training
Keolis Downer
Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Limited (KAMS)
LearnED Training
Learning Partners
Nationwide Training
Open Colleges School of Health
Outside School Hours Care WA (OSHCWA)
Skills Strategies
Taylorweir
Tech Skills Australia
The Apprentice and Traineeship Company
The Management Edge (TME)
The Pivot Institute
Trade Academy
Training Alliance Group
Vocational Training Services
William Angliss Institute
Wirraka Maya Health Service
Worklink WA

Follow-up engagement on opportunities for partnerships and training programs identified during the review

ABN Group
Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
Australian Hotels Association WA
Australian Steel Institute
BHP
Bloodwood Tree Association
Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU)
Chevron
City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Disability Providers in Western Australia
Fortescue Metals Group Limited
Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission
Housing Industry Association
Main Roads WA
Matera Foundation
Master Builders Association WA
McDonald's Australia
McMahon Services Australia
MLG Oz
Motor Trades Association
Programmed
Regional Chamber of Commerce WA
Regional Council of Development Commissions
Rio Tinto
Rivet Mining Services
Roy Hill
Shire of Coolgardie
South West Regional Council - Chamber of Minerals and Energy
State School Teachers Union of WA
Thiess Mining
WA Health and WA Country Health
Western Australian Council of Social Service
WA Local Government Association
Wesfarmers
Western Roads Federation
Westrac
Woodside
Woolworths Group

How the training review recommendations will address the State Government's five recovery areas for the COVID-19 pandemic

Health

- Deliver infection control skill sets to prevent infection and reduce likelihood of further outbreaks.
- Expand the *Lower Fees, Local Skills* to include key health-related occupations.

Social

- Provide fee-free skill sets for displaced workers, young people, jobseekers, underemployed and unemployed to help acquire new skills and be more competitive for job opportunities.
- New skill sets be delivered partly or fully online to enhance accessibility.
- Cultural competence training for employers to support the attraction, recruitment, and retention of Aboriginal employees.
- Develop in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders an employment enabling program for Aboriginal youth.
- Explore the development of a “caring for country – caring for self” program for Aboriginal youth to develop self-esteem, pride, and confidence that will lead to employability and job opportunities on country.
- Increase the capacity and coverage of the Jobs and Skills Centre network to ensure services are available to guide people on new career options and job application preparation
- Promote VET as a desirable post-secondary career pathway by joining with the Department of Education's *Career development is everybody's business* roadshow and partner with schools in career advice to students, parents and teachers.
- Consider ways to maintain appropriately diverse career pathway selections by students, and specifically how to ensure that no one pathway is inadvertently incentivised over another.
- Provide a significant increase to the loadings on employer incentives for apprentices and trainees who are mature aged youth (20-30yo), women, Aboriginal, long term unemployed and people with a disability.
- Clear training obligations should be embedded contractually when government purchases services in the care economy.
- Work with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research and the Commonwealth Government to further evolve the creation of a skills passport concept so that students can access their school, accredited training and higher education history from one system (preferably an online portal), and as functionality increases, this be promoted and made available to prospective employers as a trusted and comprehensive information source.

Social

- Improve the diversity and currency of the VET workforce by:
 - Increasing Aboriginal lecturers, particularly to deliver culturally relevant units;
 - Utilising return-to-industry options in partnership with business; and
 - Developing new teaching modes and technologies.

Economic and infrastructure

- Position TAFE capability to support major government industry development priorities to diversify the State's economy, and to meet the needs of infrastructure projects that will be brought forward, including:
 - Defence;
 - Advanced manufacturing/METS;
 - Resources including critical minerals;
 - Energy, LNG and renewable hydrogen;
 - Precision agriculture and agri-foods; and
 - METRONET and rail.
- Implement initiatives over a 12-month period to protect and grow the pool of engineering and electrical trades that support the defence industry, manufacturing, resources and associated supply chains.
- Department of Training and Workforce Development and TAFEs continue to focus on real-time data to inform the skills development of Western Australians and training priorities for the State, including partnering with other agencies on Government initiatives and economic directions.
- Expand the *Lower Fees, Local Skills* initiative by adding additional courses which are aligned with the industry and social recovery needs of the WA economy.
- "Join-up" VET funding from the Departments of Education and Training and Workforce Development, so schools and TAFEs can collaboratively plan how funding will be best used to align VET programs with student needs and future workforce priorities and opportunities.
- In response to Government stimulus packages for residential housing, and in association with a major builder, pilot shortened apprenticeships in low risk, non-licensed trades that require speed to market and an increased pipeline of skills.
- Increase access to pre-apprenticeships by decreasing costs and increasing available training places to grow the pipeline of trades in regional and metropolitan WA.
- Pilot an entry-level (pre-employment program) that applies to selected Government projects obliging contractors to be involved in a collaborative approach to train jobseekers upfront with a view to employment.
- Where possible, procuring agencies sequence construction stimulus projects, bundle projects or utilise group training organisations to provide sufficient certainty for business to commit to apprentices and trainees.

Economic and infrastructure

- Enhance the capability of the training sector to develop and deploy online content and remote learning to students no matter where they live, recognising the need to address some practical components of the curriculum through face- to-face or blended delivery modes
- Invest in the application of new technologies to simulated work and training environments, including for remote assessment and delivery in-the-field and onsite.
- Capitalise on, and encourage further industry support and provision of contemporary equipment and expertise to complement TAFE resources.

Industry

- Fee-free skill sets that include financial, resource management and digital skills for small business
- Provide an incentive for employers to re-engage an apprentice or trainee whose training contract has been cancelled since 1 March 2020.
- Simplify processes for employers to access and claim the various employer incentives available.
- A work placement program for health and community services be implemented by DTWD, TAFEs and funded health training providers to address the barriers of securing student placements in the workplace.
- High-level sophisticated trade apprenticeships and skill sets for the future be developed.
- New apprenticeships be developed for occupations where there is increasing complexity, high risk and skills shortages, and which have been undergoing significant transformation of job roles and requirements.
- A review of the current apprenticeship model be undertaken in consultation with all key stakeholders to consider alternative models, including dual and combo trades, options for front-ending apprenticeships with a theory block, the “chunking of skills” over the apprenticeship, and utilising Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) more effectively.
- Increase the agility and responsiveness of the training sector to meet industry needs and individual career aspirations, through the timely development and delivery of skill sets. Skill sets should be designed and, where necessary, accredited in WA for local conditions, and aim to provide a pathway to a full qualification.
- Use the Enterprise Training Program model beyond the allied health and community services sector as a mechanism to address the skill needs of enterprises, where there is significant market growth or skill gap issues.
- The Government undertake a broader and more concerted promotion of the value of VET and TAFE through a marketing campaign that effectively engages the community (emphasising the career and training opportunities through TAFE).
- Building on relationships developed through the Review process, TAFE and DTWD executives continue to meet business and community leaders to ensure ongoing industry engagement.

Industry

- Promote the first point of contact as the local TAFE, which will guide an appropriate response, including drawing from the combined TAFE network capability when required.

Regions

- A Pilbara Specialist Centre be established in partnership with the resources sector to improve access to trade training and support. Focussed on North Regional TAFE, this centre would be supported by the metropolitan TAFEs.
- An Agricultural Machinery Training Centre be established at Muresk Institute to support the agricultural industry and its supply chain.
- Metropolitan TAFE colleges work with regional TAFEs to build rail and maritime capability in WA to meet resource and agricultural industry needs.
- TAFE regional colleges are employing new Regional Industry Engagement managers whose role will be to ascertain local training and workforce development needs. These staff will liaise with key regional stakeholders, and interrogate current labour market information, so as to identify local skills and employment needs, and inform training priorities and pathways for the needs of industry and the community.
- Government work with the Commonwealth and local governments to consider options to potentially incentivise workers and their families to relocate from a region with high unemployment to one that requires workers.
- The WA Government approach the Commonwealth Government to extend Working Holiday visas for workers already in Australia, and TAFE work with industry to support skilling of people seeking to work in the regions.
- Specific digital skills training be developed and delivered by TAFE to assist regional communities.