

2026/27 Pre-Budget Submission

February 2026



Introduction

Australia faces a convergence of structural challenges, including slowing productivity growth, sustained cost of living pressures, persistent skills shortages, accelerating digital transformation, and heightened geopolitical and energy security risks. At the same time, the nation must meet its emissions reduction commitments while ensuring energy remains reliable, affordable, and secure for households, businesses, and critical infrastructure.

Notwithstanding these pressures, Australia is well positioned to act. Unemployment remains comparatively low, inflation has moderated, and Australia retains strong institutional capacity to invest in long term economic and infrastructure reform. To secure sustainable growth through to 2035 and beyond, policy settings must prioritise productivity enhancing infrastructure, innovation, regulatory efficiency, and, critically, the development and retention of a skilled workforce.

The electrotechnology industry sits at the centre of this national task.

Employing more than 240,000 people across over 56,000 businesses, the industry spans electrical contracting, electricity networks, communications, and advanced digital technologies. It underpins Australia's energy systems, construction activity, transport networks, telecommunications infrastructure, and the emerging digital economy.

Electrotechnology businesses and workers are essential to delivering national priorities, including the expansion of renewable energy generation and storage, the strengthening of energy security and grid resilience, the electrification of transport and buildings, the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, the delivery of data centres and advanced telecommunications networks, and the construction of climate resilient and future ready infrastructure.

Summary of recommendations

Macro-Economic Reform

1. Reduce the corporate tax rate to 25 per cent for all businesses, commencing with extending eligibility to enterprises with turnover up to \$250 million.
2. Reduce red tape and administrative burden across all levels of government, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises.
3. Increase the instant asset write-off threshold to \$50,000 and lift the turnover eligibility threshold to \$50 million.
4. Introduce a 20 per cent investment allowance for plant and equipment valued over \$100,000 to support productivity-enhancing investment.
5. Commit to lifting national research and development investment to 2.5 per cent of GDP.

Construction and Electrotechnology Industry Reform

6. Drive nationwide consistency in licensing, regulation and compliance frameworks.
7. Introduce a national occupational licensing regime for the Electrotechnology industry.
8. Reinstate strong, independent oversight of the building and construction sector.
9. Strengthen enforcement against illegal phoenix activity.
10. Implement outstanding recommendations from the Building Confidence Report.
11. Reform unfair contract terms and security of payment frameworks.
12. Review Distribution Ring-Fencing Guidelines to promote competition and innovation.
13. Ensure evidence-based, nationally consistent WHS regulation.
14. Fully implement the Security of Payment and contracting reforms contained in the Building Confidence recommendations of Mr John Murray AO, including nationally consistent payment timeframes, the prohibition of unfair contract terms, strengthened adjudication enforcement, and the adoption of statutory trust or project bank account models.

Small Business Support

15. Require all policy proposals to include a dedicated small business impact assessment.
16. Reinstate and make permanent the Small Business Technology Investment Boost and Skills Training Boost programs or similar.
17. Provide grants and resources to support the transition to payday superannuation for small to medium businesses.

18. Support ACCC and RBA oversight of merchant card payment costs and surcharging practices.
19. Mandate least-cost routing and strengthen enforcement against anti-competitive behaviour.
20. Reduce merchant card payment costs and surcharging pressure.
21. Reduce merchant card payment costs and surcharging pressure.

Workplace Relations Reform

22. Establish a small business division within the Fair Work Commission.
23. Enable fast-tracked relief for third-party businesses impacted by industrial action.
24. Empower the Fair Work Ombudsman to provide binding advice.
25. Allocate adequate funding to assess regulatory impacts prior to implementation.
26. Harmonise state and Commonwealth portable long service leave

Energy Security and Transition

27. Increase energy generation, transmission and storage capacity to meet growing demand.
28. Fast-track approvals for energy and infrastructure projects.
29. Include rise and fall provisions in long-term federal contracts.
30. Invest in emerging energy technologies and associated workforce skills.
31. Adopt market-based mechanisms to support the transition to net zero.
32. Improve coordination and transparency in national energy policy.

Nation-Building and Workforce Development

33. Invest in apprenticeships, including mature-age support particularly for Female apprenticeships.
34. Streamline approvals for infrastructure projects.
35. Introduce workforce retention incentives.
36. Promote workforce diversity and inclusion
37. Introduce targeted Commonwealth funding to subsidise compliant female amenities on construction sites,
38. Ensure work health and safety legislation and regulations clearly mandate the provision of adequate, gender appropriate facilities as a core safety requirement

across all jurisdictions.

39. Provide free access to all Australian Standards that are mandated by law

Digital Economy and Infrastructure

40. Prioritise energy infrastructure to support data centres.

41. Improve industrial relations stability.

42. Upskill workers in AI, automation and energy-efficient technologies.

43. Encourage domestic data centre investment.

Skills and Training Reform

44. Increase investment in industry-led VET providers and training programs..

45. Introduce a Mature Apprentice Subsidy Scheme.

46. Promote workforce diversity, including increased participation by women and Indigenous Australians.

47. Implement a Trades Passport program.

48. Establish a national CPD framework.

49. Support regional training infrastructure.

50. Support workforce retention through training grants and incentives.



About NECA

The National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) is Australia's leading industry body for the electrical and communications sectors. With branches in every state and territory, NECA represents more than 6,500 businesses operating across construction, mining, manufacturing, air conditioning and refrigeration, communications, energy networks and renewable energy.

NECA members specialise in the design, installation and maintenance of electrical systems and electronic equipment that power Australia's homes, businesses and critical infrastructure.

Collectively, they employ more than 240,000 Australians and play a vital role in economic growth, energy security and technological advancement.

For more than 100 years, NECA has advocated on behalf of the Electrotechnology industry, championing safety, skills development, productivity and regulatory compliance. The Association represents the sector at all levels of government and across key industry forums, providing practical, evidence-based policy advice informed by the real-world experience of its members.

NECA is also a major provider of education and training through NECA Training, delivering pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, post-trade and specialist programs nationally. NECA-led Registered Training Organisations and Group Training Organisations consistently achieve apprentice completion rates exceeding 90 per cent—well above national averages.

NECA is committed to building a skilled, diverse and future-ready workforce, including promoting opportunities for women, Indigenous Australians, mature-age workers and people from diverse backgrounds to enter and succeed in the Electrotechnology industry.

Through advocacy, training and industry leadership, NECA is shaping Australia's future with a skilled workforce, sustainable businesses and innovative infrastructure.

Macro-Economic Policy

A Strong Macro-Economic Framework for Productivity and Growth

Tax Reform for Small Business

The Australian tax system is complex and costly to administer, placing a heavy burden particularly for small and medium-sized businesses in the Electrotechnology industry. With skill shortages, particularly among qualified electricians, time spent on administration removes workers from productive activity and worsens the national skills gap.

NECA advocates for tax reform that reduces red tape, improves efficiency and supports sustainable business growth, while aligning with Commonwealth, state and territory fiscal responsibilities.

Australia's corporate tax rate remains among the highest in the OECD. NECA supports gradually lowering the corporate tax rate to 25 per cent, beginning with extending eligibility to businesses with turnover under \$250 million.

Deregulation and Regulatory Reform

Regulatory burden significantly impacts productivity and competitiveness, particularly for small and medium-sized businesses in the Electrotechnology industry.

NECA supports a user-centric, outcome-focused regulatory system developed in close consultation with industry, employees and the community.

Reducing duplication across jurisdictions and streamlining approval processes would significantly improve efficiency and project delivery, and reduce overhead costs, especially for large scale national projects. With the current focus on nation-building infrastructure projects this would have a significant positive impact.

Business Investment

Business investment is essential for productivity growth, innovation and technological advancement.

The instant asset write-off scheme has proven effective but uncertainty over its future undermines its impact. NECA supports making the instant asset write-off permanent.

Raising the asset threshold to \$50,000 and increasing eligibility to businesses with turnover up to \$50 million would also encourage larger, productivity-enhancing investments.

Research and Development

Australia's investment in research and development remains below the OECD average. NECA supports a national target to lift R&D investment to 2.5 per cent of GDP to foster innovation, commercialisation and global competitiveness. Further taxation concessions may also need to be considered to encourage this increase in investment.

Recommendations

1. Reduce the corporate tax rate to 25 per cent for all businesses, commencing with extending eligibility to enterprises with turnover up to \$250 million.
2. Reduce red tape and administrative burden across all levels of government, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises.
3. Increase the instant asset write-off threshold to \$50,000 and lift the turnover eligibility threshold to \$50 million.
4. Introduce a 20 per cent investment allowance for plant and equipment valued over \$100,000 to support productivity-enhancing investment.
5. Commit to lifting national research and development investment to 2.5 per cent of GDP.



Construction and Electrotechnology Industry Reform

Nationwide Consistency

Inconsistent regulations across state and territory borders create significant challenges for Electrotechnology businesses, and all professional trades roles.

Differences in licensing, industrial relations settings, and compliance requirements increase costs, delay projects, and restrict workforce mobility. This results in inefficiencies in labour and capital utilisation and is a significant barrier to growth.

The Commonwealth Government must take a leadership role in coordinating nationwide reforms to standardise licensing, reporting, and compliance requirements.

Security of payment reform

Security of payment reform remains one of the most critical unresolved issues facing electrical and communications contractors across Australia. Despite the existence of Security of Payment legislation in every jurisdiction, systemic failures in enforcement, contract practices, and adjudication outcomes continue to expose subcontractors to unacceptable financial risk. Electrical contractors, who typically operate at the end of long and complex contractual chains, are routinely subjected to delayed payments, extended retention periods, unfair set off provisions, and insolvency contagion when head contractors fail.

These failures undermine business viability, constrain workforce investment, suppress productivity, and ultimately increase project costs borne by taxpayers and consumers. NECA's experience across legal, technical, and business advisory services demonstrates that without stronger and nationally consistent protections, Security of Payment laws will continue to fall short of their core purpose.

Improved Workplace Health and Safety Regulation

Businesses face increasing regulatory burdens due to inconsistent and impractical implementation of WHS regulations across different state and federal jurisdictions, including silica exposure controls.

NECA supports greater business consultation and evidence-based decision-making through Safe Work Australia.

National consistency in electrical safety incident reporting is essential to support workforce mobility and licensing reform.

Reinstating the ABCC

Fairness, transparency and enforcement of workplace relations laws are critical to productivity and business confidence in the construction sector.

NECA strongly supports reinstating the Australian Building and Construction Commission to ensure lawful conduct and fair competition.

The ABCC played a vital role in assisting subcontractors, enforcing Security of Payment laws and investigating industrial law breaches.

National Occupational Licensing

To deliver critical nation-building infrastructure, electricians must be able to work seamlessly across jurisdictions.

NECA supports the introduction of a national occupational licensing regime that maintains rigorous safety and competency standards.

A nationally recognised, driver-licence-style electrical licence would significantly improve workforce mobility.

Combating Illegal Phoenix Activity

Illegal phoenix activity undermines market integrity, harms legitimate businesses and deprives workers of entitlements.

NECA supports the establishment of a dedicated investigative and prosecutorial unit focused on the construction sector and would be willing to assist in the development and establishment of this authority.

Stronger enforcement and accountability mechanisms are required to protect subcontractors and small businesses which ultimately benefits us all.

Recommendations

1. Drive nationwide consistency in licensing, regulation and compliance frameworks.
2. Introduce a national occupational licensing regime for the Electrotechnology industry.
3. Reinstate strong, independent oversight of the building and construction sector.
4. Strengthen enforcement against illegal phoenix activity.
5. Implement outstanding recommendations from the Building Confidence Report.
6. Reform unfair contract terms and security of payment frameworks.
7. Review Distribution Ring-Fencing Guidelines to promote competition and innovation.
8. Ensure evidence-based, nationally consistent WHS regulation.
9. Fully implement the Security of Payment and contracting reforms contained in the Building Confidence recommendations of Mr John Murray AO, including nationally consistent payment timeframes, the prohibition of unfair contract terms, strengthened adjudication enforcement, and the adoption of statutory trust or project bank account models.

Small Business and Workplace Reform

Role of Small Business in the Economy

Small and family businesses are the backbone of the Australian economy, representing more than 98 per cent of all businesses and employing around 70 per cent of the workforce.

Electrotechnology businesses are overwhelmingly small and medium-sized enterprises, and policy settings must reflect their scale, capacity, and regulatory burden.

NECA supports stronger consideration of small business impacts in all legislative and regulatory decision-making.

Policy Impact and Regulatory Assessment

NECA calls for all proposed legislation and regulation to include a clear assessment of impacts on small businesses, including the anticipated additional administrative burden.

Dedicated resourcing for the Office of Impact Analysis, the Office of Parliamentary Counsel and departmental drafting teams is essential to ensure high-quality outcomes.

Small Business Technology and Skills Investment

The Small Business Technology Investment Boost and Skills Training Boost programs were positive initiatives but were short-lived.

Many small businesses continue to lag in digital capability and access to training.

NECA supports reinstating and making these, or similar, programs permanent to drive productivity and resilience.

Payday Superannuation Transition

The introduction of payday superannuation will create new compliance and administrative burdens especially for small to medium businesses.

The closure of the ATO Small Business Superannuation Clearing House will further compound these challenges.

Targeted grants, education, and transitional assistance will be required to support small businesses.

Merchant Card Payment Costs

High merchant fees and opaque surcharging arrangements place pressure on small businesses.

NECA supports reforms that improve transparency, competition and regulatory oversight in the card payments system.

Recommendations

- Require all policy proposals to include a dedicated small business impact assessment.
- Reinstate and make permanent the Small Business Technology Investment Boost and Skills Training Boost programs or similar.
- Provide grants and resources to support the transition to payday superannuation for small to medium businesses.
- Support ACCC and RBA oversight of merchant card payment costs and surcharging practices.
- Mandate least-cost routing and strengthen enforcement against anti-competitive behaviour.
- Reduce merchant card payment costs and surcharging pressure.



Industrial Relations Framework

Recent changes to Australia's industrial relations framework have introduced significant complexity and compliance obligations for businesses.

Small and medium-sized Electrotechnology businesses face particular challenges navigating these changes, often without dedicated human resources or industrial relations capacity.

NECA supports reforms that provide clarity, proportionality, and practical support for employers.

Impact of Industrial Action

Industrial action in the construction and energy sectors has resulted in significant project delays and unrecoverable costs for businesses.

Third-party businesses often bear the financial consequences of disputes to which they are not a party.

NECA supports reforms that enable fast-tracked relief for businesses adversely affected by industrial action.

Fair Work Commission and Ombudsman

NECA supports the establishment of a dedicated small business division within the Fair Work Commission.

Providing timely, proportionate decisions would improve certainty and reduce compliance risk.

Empowering the Fair Work Ombudsman to provide binding advice would protect small businesses from retrospective claims and remove their uncertainty regarding advice provided.

Portable Long Service Leave

Portable long service leave schemes vary significantly across jurisdictions and exclude Commonwealth sites.

This inconsistency creates inequity for workers and administrative burden for employers.

NECA supports harmonisation of state and Commonwealth long service leave arrangements.

Recommendations

- Establish a small business division within the Fair Work Commission.
- Enable fast-tracked relief for third-party businesses impacted by industrial action.
- Empower the Fair Work Ombudsman to provide binding advice.
- Allocate adequate funding to assess regulatory impacts prior to implementation.
- Harmonise state and Commonwealth portable long service leave arrangements.



Energy Security and Transition

Distributed Energy Resources and Integration

Electrotechnology businesses are at the forefront of the design and installation of distributed energy resources and Clean Energy Regulator technologies across residential, commercial and public infrastructure.

NECA supports improved national coordination, standards and compliance mechanisms to ensure safe, reliable integration of distributed energy resources with electricity networks.

Greater collaboration between the Commonwealth, states, territories and network service providers is essential to optimise outcomes.

Infrastructure Delivery and Project Pipelines

Clear, coordinated pipelines of shovel-ready infrastructure projects are essential to business confidence and workforce planning.

NECA supports fast-tracking approvals for energy, transmission, and infrastructure projects. Including rise and fall provisions in long-term contracts would protect contractors from material and labour cost volatility.

Emerging Technologies

Investment in emerging technologies such as electric vehicle charging, energy storage, and hydrogen infrastructure will be critical to Australia's energy future.

The Electrotechnology workforce will be central to deploying, maintaining and integrating these technologies.

Targeted training and skills development must accompany technology investment so that we can ensure that we have the necessary resources available and are not reliant on external solutions.

Market-Based Transition

NECA supports market-based mechanisms to achieve emissions reduction objectives. A pragmatic transition pathway is required to avoid unintended economic and system risks. Policy settings should support innovation, competition and investment certainty.

With the anticipated growth in IT data centres the determination and implementation of suitable policies and regulatory frameworks to meet sustainability targets by state and federal governments will be important.

Recommendations

- Increase energy generation, transmission and storage capacity to meet growing demand.
- Fast-track approvals for energy and infrastructure projects.
- Include rise and fall provisions in long-term federal contracts.
- Invest in emerging energy technologies and associated workforce skills.
- Adopt market-based mechanisms to support the transition to net zero.
- Improve coordination and transparency in national energy policy.



Delivery

Delivering the Infrastructure Australia Needs

Australia's long-term economic growth and social prosperity depend on the timely delivery of nation-building infrastructure. Energy systems, transport networks, housing, digital connectivity, and emerging industries all rely on the availability of skilled Electrotechnology workers and efficient infrastructure delivery frameworks.

The Electrotechnology industry is central to the planning, construction, and operation of this infrastructure. Electrical contractors deliver the front-end connections, power systems, communications networks, and automation technologies that enable projects to proceed and operate safely.

However, workforce shortages, regulatory delays, and fragmented project planning are placing increasing strain on the industry's capacity to deliver. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated national action that aligns infrastructure investment with workforce development and regulatory reform. This requires government to work closely with industry to ensure we address these concerns.

Infrastructure Pipelines and Workforce Alignment

Large-scale infrastructure projects require long lead times, skilled labour planning, and investment certainty. Inconsistent project sequencing and delayed approvals create periods of workforce underutilisation followed by acute shortages, undermining productivity and increasing costs.

NECA supports clearer national infrastructure pipelines with transparent timelines and sequencing. Publishing coordinated project schedules would allow industry to plan workforce recruitment, training and capital investment more effectively.

Closer collaboration between governments, infrastructure agencies, and industry bodies is essential to align training delivery with upcoming project demand and ensure sufficient skilled labour is available when required.

Addressing Skilled Labour Shortages

Australia faces a projected shortfall of up to 32,000 electricians by 2030. This shortage poses a serious risk to the delivery of energy infrastructure, housing supply, transport electrification, and digital projects.

NECA supports targeted investment in apprenticeships, including increased commencements, subsidised support for adult and mature-age apprentices and retention incentives to reduce attrition during peak demand periods.

Apprenticeships and Workforce Retention

Apprenticeships remain the most effective pathway for developing a skilled Electrotechnology workforce. Small and medium sized businesses, particularly in regional areas, often face significant financial and operational challenges when engaging apprentices, including supervision capacity, variable workloads and compliance obligations.

Industry led Group Training Organisations play a critical role in addressing these barriers by directly

employing apprentices, managing payroll and compliance, coordinating rotations across host employers, and providing structured pastoral care and mentoring, resulting in higher completion rates and more stable workforce outcomes. NECA supports tiered incentives for small and regional businesses, targeted funding for mentoring and support services delivered through industry led Group Training Organisations, and financial incentives to retain skilled workers and apprentices during peak demand cycles.

Workforce Diversity and Participation

Expanding workforce participation is essential to addressing skills shortages. NECA supports increased participation from women, Indigenous Australians, mature-age workers, and people from diverse backgrounds.

Targeted policies should promote inclusive workplaces, flexible training arrangements, and stronger regional participation pathways.

NECA supports targeted, practical measures to remove structural barriers to workforce participation, including subsidising appropriate female amenities on construction and infrastructure sites. The absence of fit for purpose toilet and hygiene facilities remains a persistent and unnecessary deterrent to women entering and remaining in the Electrotechnology workforce, particularly on small and medium sized projects where site establishment costs are tightly constrained.

Targeted Commonwealth funding to subsidise compliant female amenities would deliver an immediate and tangible workforce participation outcome, improve safety and dignity on worksites, and support broader government objectives on skills growth, productivity and gender equity. NECA further considers that work health and safety legislation and associated regulations should clearly reflect the requirement for adequate, gender appropriate amenities as a core safety obligation, ensuring consistent expectations across jurisdictions while avoiding ad hoc or inconsistent enforcement. This is a low cost, high impact intervention that directly addresses a known participation barrier and complements existing apprenticeship, training and diversity initiatives without imposing additional regulatory burden on employers.

Electrification of Transport and Housing

Electrification of transport and housing is critical to Australia's decarbonisation strategy. Electrical contractors deliver essential power connections, charging systems and energy-efficient technologies.

NECA supports streamlined approvals, competitive infrastructure design and improved coordination between utilities, developers and regulators.

Housing Supply and Front-End Infrastructure

Electrical contractors play a critical role in delivering front-end infrastructure required for housing developments.

NECA supports fast-tracking infrastructure approvals, encouraging competition and reducing regulatory barriers that delay housing delivery.

Project Delivery and Risk Management

Long-term infrastructure projects face cost pressures from labour shortages, material volatility and regulatory delays.

NECA supports appropriate risk-sharing mechanisms, including rise and fall provisions in government contracts.

Nation-Building Outcomes

Aligning infrastructure investment with workforce development will improve productivity and ensure Australia's infrastructure ambitions are delivered.

The Electrotechnology industry stands ready to partner with governments to power Australia's economic, energy and digital future.

Australian Standards Access

NECA's policy position is that Australian Standards which are mandated by law must be freely accessible to those required to comply with them, particularly in the electrotechnology and construction sectors where standards directly govern safety critical work. Electrical contractors are legally obligated to design, install, test and certify work in accordance with Australian Standards, yet access to these documents is increasingly restricted by cost and licensing arrangements.

Where a standard is incorporated into legislation, regulation, or codes of practice, it effectively becomes law and should be treated accordingly. Free access would materially improve compliance, reduce safety risks, lower administrative and cost pressures on businesses, and support consistent national application of safety requirements. A Commonwealth funding model would ensure the integrity of the standards system while recognising that public safety outcomes must take precedence over commercial access models.

Recommendations

- Invest in apprenticeships, including mature-age support particularly for Female apprenticeships.
- Streamline approvals for infrastructure projects.
- Introduce workforce retention incentives.
- Promote workforce diversity and inclusion
- Introduce targeted Commonwealth funding to subsidise compliant female amenities on construction sites,
- Ensure work health and safety legislation and regulations clearly mandate the provision of adequate, gender appropriate facilities as a core safety requirement across all jurisdictions.
- Provide free access to all Australian Standards that are mandated by law

Digital Economy, Data Centres and Connectivity

Electrotechnology Industry and Nation Building

The Electrotechnology industry is central to Australia's nation-building agenda, delivering critical infrastructure across energy, transport, housing and digital systems.

Major infrastructure programs rely on a skilled, mobile and well-supported electrical workforce to ensure projects are delivered safely, efficiently and on time.

Renewable Energy and Energy Security

Transitioning to renewable energy requires significant investment in electrical infrastructure, including generation, transmission and storage.

Fast-tracking regulatory approvals and investing in workforce capability are essential to maintaining energy security during the transition.

Transport Infrastructure

Electrification of rail networks, expansion of public transport systems and rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure are critical national priorities.

Electrotechnology contractors play a key role in delivering power systems, automation and communications for modern transport networks.

Housing and Urban Development

Electrification of housing stock and delivery of affordable, energy-efficient homes are essential to achieving emissions reduction and cost-of-living objectives.

Delays in planning approvals and infrastructure provision increase project costs and exacerbate housing shortages.

Workforce Capacity and Skills

A projected shortage of electricians threatens the timely delivery of nation-building projects. Investment in apprenticeships, workforce retention and skills development is essential to meeting future demand.

Recommendations

- Prioritise energy infrastructure to support data centres.
- Improve industrial relations stability.
- Upskill workers in AI, automation and energy-efficient technologies.
- Encourage domestic data centre investment.

Skills and Training Reform

Australia's Digital Growth

Data centres are critical to Australia's digital economy, supporting artificial intelligence, cloud computing and secure data storage.

Reliable, affordable energy and stable industrial relations are essential to attract domestic and international investment in digital infrastructure.

NECA members design and deliver electrical systems that power data centres, telecommunications networks, and emerging digital platforms.

Economic Opportunity and Data Sovereignty

Investment in domestic data centres strengthens Australia's data sovereignty and reduces reliance on offshore storage.

A strong domestic digital infrastructure sector enhances national security, privacy protections, and economic resilience.

Energy Capacity and Infrastructure

Data centres are energy-intensive and require robust transmission, storage and firming capacity.

Electrotechnology businesses play a key role in delivering smart grids, energy-efficient systems, and advanced electrical infrastructure.

Skills and Training Reform

The Electrotechnology industry faces persistent skills shortages driven by demographic change and rapid technological advancement. With technology constantly evolving, post-qualification training is also becoming increasingly important to ensure that tradespeople retain suitable skills.

A strong vocational education and training system is essential to delivering job-ready graduates, and post-graduates, with industry-relevant skills.

Apprenticeships and Workforce Development

Industry-led training providers consistently achieve higher completion rates and better employment outcomes.

Targeted incentives are needed to support small and regional businesses to take on apprentices.

Reskilling and Lifelong Learning

Continuous professional development is essential as technologies evolve.

NECA supports a national continuing professional development framework to maintain workforce capability.

International Skills Pathways

Skilled migration can complement domestic training efforts during periods of acute skills shortage.

NECA supports a Trades Passport program to fast-track electricians from comparable international jurisdictions.

Recommendations

- Increase investment in industry-led VET providers and training programs..
- Introduce a Mature Apprentice Subsidy Scheme.
- Promote workforce diversity, including increased participation by women and Indigenous Australians.
- Implement a Trades Passport program.
- Establish a national CPD framework.
- Support regional training infrastructure.
- Support workforce retention through training grants and incentives.
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To arrange a meeting or discuss this proposal further, please contact:

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