

Inquiry into the delivery of vocational education and training in regional, rural, and remote Queensland

Submission No: 28


Submitted by: Local Government Association of Queensland

Publication:

Attachments:

Submitter Comments:

Submitter Recommendations:



Submission to the Queensland Parliamentary Committee on Delivery of VET in Regional, Rural and Remote Queensland





Date
27 January 2023




 www.lgaq.asn.au

 @LGAQ

 Local Government Association of Queensland

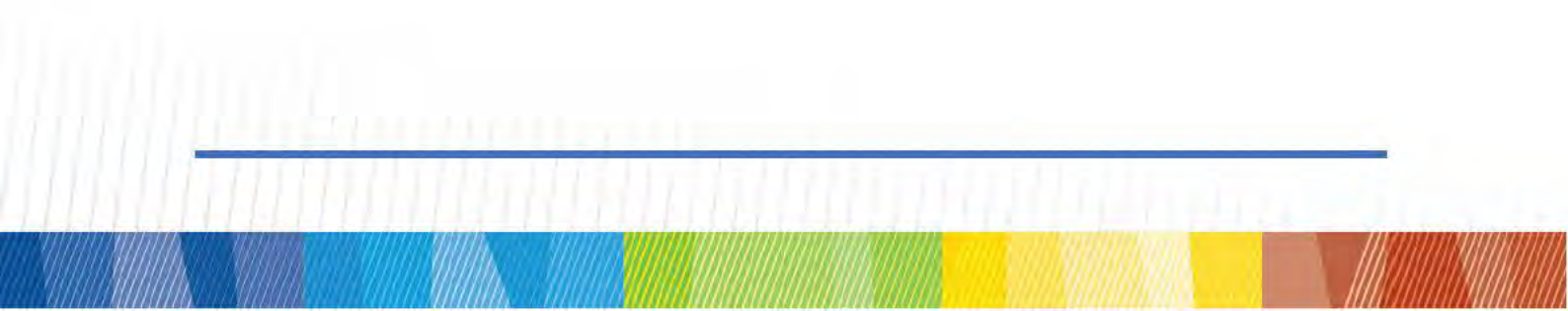
 @LocalGovQld

 @localgovqld

CONNECT
INNOVATE
ACHIEVE

Contents

About the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ)	3
Partners-in-Government Agreement.....	3
Rural and Remote Councils Compact.....	3
Executive Summary	5
The Queensland Local Government Context	7
Inquiry focus areas	9
The major barriers to the provision of localised and place-based VET, and priority areas and cohorts in Queensland	9
Existing Programs that exist in reducing barriers or supporting priority cohorts in accessing localised and place-based VET	11
Examples of successful localised VET models and how learnings might be applied in other locations.....	13
Opportunity for the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training to facilitate improvements in these areas.	13
Contact Details	14
Appendix	15



About the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ)

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) is the peak body for local government in Queensland. It is a not-for-profit association established solely to serve councils and their needs. The LGAQ has been advising, supporting, and representing local councils since 1896, enabling them to improve their operations and strengthen relationships with their communities. The LGAQ does this by connecting councils to people and places; supporting their drive to innovate and improve service delivery through smart services and sustainable solutions; and providing them with the means to achieve community, professional and political excellence.

Partners-in-Government Agreement

In August 2019, the LGAQ on behalf of all 77 Queensland Local Governments signed a three-year partners-in-government-agreement¹ with the State of Queensland.

The Agreement details the key principles underlying the relationship between the state and local governments and establishes the foundation for effective negotiation and engagement between both levels of government.

The agreement acknowledges that local government is the closest level of government to the community, affecting the lives of everyday Queenslanders and acknowledging Local Government as a genuine partner in the Australian government system.

The intent of the agreement was to continue the tradition of working in genuine partnership to improve the quality of life for all Queenslanders to enjoy. By identifying the roles and responsibilities of each party, it provides a solid foundation for effective negotiation and engagement between both levels of government.

The LGAQ is committed to working with the Queensland Government and will continue to be a passionate advocate for councils, to serve our joint jurisdiction for the people of Queensland.

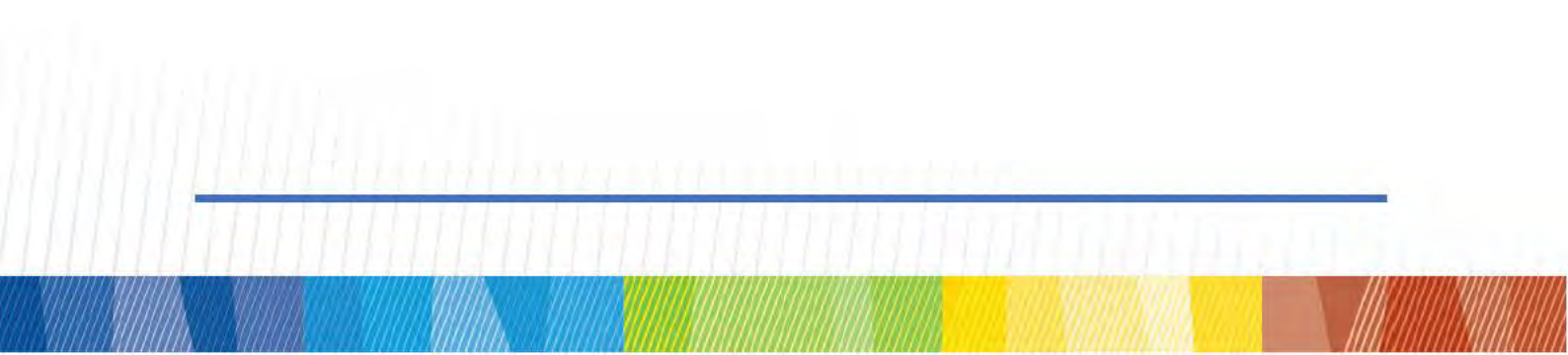
Rural and Remote Councils Compact

The Rural and Remote Councils Compact² signed on 25 June 2021, complements the existing partners-in-government agreement in place between the LGAQ and the Queensland Government to provide a platform to ensure issues of priority for these communities are carefully considered by the Government when developing policies, programs, and legislation.

¹ https://www.dlgma.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/45115/partners-in-government-agreement-2019.pdf

² <https://knowledgebaseassets.blob.core.windows.net/images/9c61cdc2-3cfa-eb11-94ef-002248181740/Rural%20and%20Remote%20Councils%20Compact%20-%20signed%20copy.pdf>

The Rural and Remote Councils Compact, pledges to amplify the voice of and improve outcomes for the state's 45 rural and remote councils and their local communities by enhancing engagement between both levels of government.



Submission to the Queensland Parliamentary Committee on delivery of VET (Vocational Education and Training) in Regional, Rural and Remote Queensland

Executive Summary

The LGAQ welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Queensland Parliamentary Committee on delivery of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Regional, Rural and Remote Queensland.

Ensuring the delivery of VET to local communities across the state is of critical importance to Queensland councils.

Councils employ more than 40,000 people statewide, across more than 294 different types of occupations. Indeed, in many communities councils are the main employer and the main service provider so they must have access to a skilled workforce in order to deliver the infrastructure and services their local communities need and expect.

As the tier of government closest to the community, councils across Queensland have first-hand experience of the significant impediments on the delivery of VET in regional, rural, and remote Queensland needed to support economic development.

The LGAQ helps deliver the highly successful Indigenous Capacity Building (ICB) Program on behalf of the State Government. This program delivers fit-for-purpose training, on country, to build local workforces across Queensland's discrete and remote First Nations communities.

Queensland councils also greatly value the Skilling Queenslanders for Work First Start program which helps fund local government traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities statewide.

A resolution calling for increased funding for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work First Start program was overwhelmingly supported by member councils in attendance at the LGAQ's 126th Annual Conference in Cairns in October 2022.

It was one of several workforce-related resolutions to be passed by Queensland councils last year, highlighting how critical an issue it is for the local government sector, which, like all sectors, is not immune to the current workforce challenges being faced across the state.

The 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey, commissioned by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), found 33 of the 37 (89 per cent) participating Queensland local governments were experiencing skills shortages in 2021-22, an increase from 83 per cent of respondents in 2018.

Plumbers, mechanics, water treatment operators, wastewater / sewerage operators, engineers, environmental health officers, human resource professionals, accountants and



computing/ICT professionals were among the most prevalent professional and trade shortages identified by respondents.

Apart from participating in the delivery of accredited training and apprenticeship and traineeship programs, Queensland councils are also championing the roll out of Regional University Centres (RUC) to help increase local skills and retain a skilled workforce. These centres enable local students in rural, remote and regional Queensland to gain a degree without leaving home. RUCs currently operating in regional Qld are supporting more than 500 students enrolled in tertiary studies including those provided by TAFE. They could serve as a vehicle to further increase the delivery of vocational education and training in rural, regional and remote Queensland by removing location barriers.

The LGAQ thanks the committee for the opportunity to provide a submission and makes six recommendations for consideration by the Inquiry.

Recommendation 1: The LGAQ recommends the State Government continue the delivery of the First Start Program to regional, rural and remote parts of Queensland and, where applicable, deliver the preferred option of face-to-face training to ensure participants are engaged and the achievement rate remains high and hurdles for participation are low.

Recommendation 2: The LGAQ recommends funding for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work First Start program be increased from stated \$6 million to \$9 million per annum to allow an increase in the number of places being offered.

Recommendation 3: The LGAQ recommends consideration be given to providing additional support to regional, rural and remote apprentices and trainees who have to travel to access training where on-site training is not possible, to help counter financial, mental and physical burdens and ensure completion rates remain high.

Recommendation 4: The LGAQ recommends the Federal Government reintroduce a wage subsidy scheme similar to their now ceased Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements and Completing Apprenticeship Commencements Programs in order to support employers who take on apprentices and trainees.

Recommendation 5: The LGAQ recommends the State Government consider extending the highly regarded and proven Indigenous Capacity Building Project model to rural and remote council areas to support rural and remote workforces.

Recommendation 6: The LGAQ recommends that the State Government review the areas where public VET providers do not deliver training and investigate and support measures to alleviate the negative impacts of the training gap.

Recommendation 7: The LGAQ recommends the State Government works with the LGAQ and Queensland councils to develop an innovative program to fund the establishment and expansion of the Regional University Centres concept to improve access and successful delivery of VET programs for regional and remote students across the state.



The Queensland Local Government Context

Ensuring the delivery of VET to local communities across the state is of critical importance to Queensland councils and, as reflected in Inquiry's focus, significant challenges are faced in the delivery of VET in regional, rural and remote areas.

In Queensland, local governments in many communities are either one of the largest, if not the largest local employers. Many of these councils, particularly in regional, rural, remote and First Nations communities, actively strive to maximise opportunities for local training and employment. To combat recruitment challenges, many regional, rural and remote councils are adopting a 'grow your own' approach which includes upskilling and training critical to the survival of these councils.

For those councils heavily dependent on State and Federal grants, there is a direct and immediate correlation between available funding and the capacity to offer training.

Increased funding to current programs, such as those that deliver apprenticeships and traineeships, is key to helping grow skilled workforces in communities across the state. So too is increasing opportunities for the delivery of vocational education and training on the ground in rural, regional and remote communities.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) commissioned the 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey to gather contemporary insights into the national workforce profile of Australia's local government sector to determine current and future workforce needs and priorities.

Workforce Profile

The Queensland Report³ includes the following headline statistics⁴:

- The Queensland sector's workforce is spatially distributed across Rural (61%), Urban and Urban Fringe (5%) and Urban Regional (34%) local governments.
- The average staff turnover rate across the participating local governments was 14% with turnover ranging from 0 to 48%. Turnover was higher across Rural local governments, averaging almost 17% in 2022, compared to 10% or Urban Regional local governments. These figures are significantly higher than the 2018 turnover rate of 8.6%.

Skills shortages

- 89% of participating local governments reported that they were experiencing skills shortages in 2021-22, compared to 83% of respondents in 2018.
- 70% of participating local governments said that vacancies, skills shortage, skill gaps or training needs have impacted or delayed project delivery.
- Engineers, environmental health officers, human resource professionals and plumbers were the top skill shortage areas experienced in 2020-2021, identified by around 40% of responding local governments.

³ <https://alga.com.au/app/uploads/LG-Workforce-Skills-and-Capability-Survey-QLD-Report.pdf>

⁴ Page 4 of <https://alga.com.au/app/uploads/LG-Workforce-Skills-and-Capability-Survey-QLD-Report.pdf>

- A breakdown of skill shortages by areas shows that Rural and Urban Regional local governments differed in their experience of occupational skill shortages. Community development and engagement officers were the top shortage area for Rural local governments. While engineers were the top shortage area cited by Urban Regional local governments.
- As a result of these shortages, local governments said they resorted to recruiting less skilled applicants for accounting, supervisor and team leader and engineering positions.
- Queensland local governments who participated in the 2022 Survey said they anticipated that many of the skill shortage areas experienced in 2021-22 would become critical. These were engineers, accountants, water treatment officers and wastewater operators.
- The most common drivers of skill shortages were remoteness of location, housing availability and high rental prices, a lack of suitably qualified or experienced applicants, and an inability to meet remuneration expectations. Some local governments provided further detail regarding location-specific factors, citing a lack of educational facilities for school-aged children, cost of living in some regional centres, and even candidates' perception of regional living and opportunities for career progression.
- The key drivers of critical skills gaps vary by occupation. For managers, the drivers included a lack of training opportunities and an inability to source experienced people leaders for the level of remuneration on offer. For building trades, housing availability limited external recruitment, while many environmental health officers were diverted to contact tracing during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these factors are beyond local government's direct influence or control.
- The most successful methods for filling vacancies included reskilling and upskilling employees, followed by using advertising and social media platforms and external recruitment agencies.
- The most common reason behind the length of time to fill vacancies was difficulty in attracting staff with the right skills and experience, followed by those who cited the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on attracting out-of-region staff.
- The most popular approach to addressing skills gaps and shortages was to provide opportunities to act up and/or across other roles, followed by providing informal on-job training. Some local governments also said they relied on recruiting temporary labour hire employees, succession planning and sourcing apprentices, trainees, and cadets.

Training needs and challenges

- 83.7% of respondents said their workforce had unmet training needs in 2021-22, compared to 53% of local governments in 2018. The most common areas of unmet training need were leadership and management training, supervisor training and change management training. Local governments also identified a gap in cultural competency training, diversity and inclusion training and project management training.
- A higher proportion of Rural local governments decreased training expenditure between FY19/20 and FY20/21 compared to Urban and Urban Fringe local governments.
- The most common driver experience by local governments with respect to unmet training needs was a lack of access to training due to the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by access to quality issues in local training options.
- A higher proportion of Rural local governments preferred in-person delivery compared to Urban Regional local governments. 56.7% of respondents do not believe they are taking on enough trainees and/or apprentices to meet future skilling needs, compared

to 4.5% of respondents who believe they are. The barriers to employing more trainees and apprentices include funding and other resource constraints, and a remote location which posed a barrier for trainees and apprentices who prefer in-person on-site training rather than online training.

- 65% of respondent local governments identified COVID-19 pandemic as the most common disruptor of training needs in 2021 to 2022, followed by difficulties sourcing quality training programs locally and balancing training needs with employees' time constraints.
- Factors impacting future skilling needs include changes in government funding followed by an ageing workforce, major council or external infrastructure projects and technological change.
- The most significant impacts on workforce attraction and retention included COVID-19, housing pressure, uncertainty of long-term funding and changing local/regional economy.
- 76% of respondent local governments said they use flexible training and development as the most common strategy for meeting future skilling needs, followed by 70% who provided targeted training and development programs and 43% who were improving access to educational opportunities.
- Other strategies included: conducting virtual reality training, sourcing funding to construct staff housing for relocating staff, collaborating with other local governments and industry, apply a market loading to remuneration for specialist roles and development a workforce attraction and retention strategy.

Inquiry focus areas

It is noted the Parliamentary Education, Employment and Training Committee's inquiry into the delivery of VET in regional, rural and remote Queensland has outlined it is seeking input in relation to the following terms of reference:

1. The role of public providers in VET delivery in rural, remote and regional Queensland, including:
 - a. VET Pathways, participation rates and outcomes
 - b. VET delivery for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including enablers and barriers to VET
2. The major barriers to the provision of localised and place-based VET, and priority cohorts in accessing localised and place-based VET
3. Existing programs that might assist in reducing barriers or supporting priority cohorts in accessing localised and place-based VET
4. Examples of successful localised VET models and how learning might be applied in other locations
5. Opportunities for the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training to facilitate improvement in these areas.

The LGAQ's submissions addresses the majority of these focus areas below.

The major barriers to the provision of localised and place-based VET, and priority areas and cohorts in Queensland

Regional, rural and remote councils face significant obstacles with the provision successful VET programs.

Challenge 1: Lack of face-to-face mode of delivery

Face-to-face training continues to be the preferred method for delivery of most VET.



There can be challenges to providing face-to-face mode of delivery, particularly in regional, rural and remote councils. The factors which contribute to this include:

- The cost barrier to delivery due to the remoteness of location
- The lack of availability of providers, for some qualifications, that are willing/able to deliver VET on site.

Challenge 2: Absence of public VET providers in some qualifications

The cost of delivering VET in regional, rural and remote communities can be exorbitant. As such, there are occasions where the public VET provider is unwilling to deliver a particular course due to the cost. By way of example, the ability to access adequate water operations training is a non-negotiable for local government. Council employees qualified in water operations are essential to ensuring communities have access to water that is safe to drink and to keeping wastewater plants operating appropriately. Previously, TAFE provided water operations training. However, TAFE has made a decision to no longer offer this service. As a consequence, there is now only one known RTO in Queensland who has this qualification on scope and is willing to deliver the service. For a state the size of Queensland, that is a sub-optimal circumstance and a cause of great concern for the local government sector. For those councils who do not have access to government funding to cover the substantial costs associated with water operations training (i.e., those 55 councils who are not eligible to participate in the ICB Program), the cost of this course can be prohibitive. Such is the concern, the LGAQ's member councils passed a resolution calling on the State and Federal governments to work with the LGAQ and other peak bodies to investigate solutions to existing workforce challenges associated with developing, attracting and retaining a skilled water industry workforce in Queensland.

Challenge 3: Unfunded costs to the employer associated with VET

An obstacle for rural, regional and remote councils is the cost of travel and accommodation to send apprentices for block training in a central location. While there are subsidies to assist with cost, there remains a significant shortfall, which falls on the employer to meet.

Challenge 4: Unfunded costs to the participant associated with VET

Regional, rural and remote apprentices often have to leave their home/community to undertake/complete their apprenticeship. This means they must arrange travel/meals/accommodation, sometimes hundreds of kilometres from home, which at times can be most expensive. These costs are often far greater than the apprentice's wages cover.

Challenge 5: Social impact of off-country training

When VET participants are required to travel away from their community, they are removed from their support network and may have to navigate social/travel/life experiences far outside their lived experience: things such as bus timetables/travel, cooking meals, urban lifestyle exposure. Further there may be an absence of proper and appropriate supervision to assist these participants as they seek to navigate a totally foreign environment. This is a particular risk factor for First Nations community members and there can be negative impacts from both a mental health and physical safety perspective.

Challenge 6: Lack of centralised source of information

Currently, information to assist regional, rural and remote apprentices (and their families) to source fiscal, physical and mental health support, as well as information about available apprenticeships, is not considered to be easily accessible. (Although we do note that the information published is being continually updated). There is no one stop app/website with all information clearly and concisely available, and in a user-friendly language and format.

These challenges disincentivise regional, rural and remote VET participants to complete their training and feeds into the growing disparity of services and skills available in regional, rural and remote communities.

LGAQ member councils passed several resolutions at the 126th Annual Conference in Cairns in 2022 related to supporting and growing their local workforces through increased access to vocational education and training. This included a resolution moved by Burke Shire Council for support to assist apprentices, particularly rural and remote, to successfully complete their apprenticeship in a location of their choosing. Members also resolved to support calls to increase the First Start program funding to \$9 million.

Existing Programs that exist in reducing barriers or supporting priority cohorts in accessing localised and place-based VET

The LGAQ is fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in existing programs to support councils to grow their workforce.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work First Start Program

The Queensland Government Skilling Queenslanders for Work First Start Program continues a long-established employment initiative which commenced with the introduction of the Beattie Government Breaking the Unemployment Cycle programs in 1998. These programs have specifically targeted and continue to target apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities in Queensland local government and statutory authorities.

During the course of some 20 years, and despite funding variances due to changes in economic conditions, applicable employers have proven strong supporters of the program and councils have embraced the opportunity to provide apprenticeships and traineeships in their communities. Benefits include retaining the participants within their community and the ability to retain skilled workers within their workforce.

It is believed that the First Start Program has in excess of a 90 per cent achievement rate of ongoing employment outcomes for participants – an excellent achievement for an employment program by any standard. There are some excellent examples of successful participants.

Indigenous Capacity Building (ICB) Project

Since 2015, the LGAQ has, in partnership with the State Government, been delivering the ICB Project. A truly unique initiative, the ICB Project has supported the 17 First Nation Councils, along with six councils that have high indigenous populations, with their vocational training needs.

It is estimated that more than 1700 participants have received training since its inception, benefitting both councils and their local communities as it has led to better trained employees who have remained in employment for longer periods of time.



The success of this program is built upon the selective approach of working with RTO's who have a proven record of working effectively in discrete communities. A best practice approach that all training is conducted on country has enabled the ICB Project to achieve and exceed its KPI's. The LGAQ has played a core role in the identification of suitable RTO's and creating the basis for how the training is delivered.

In 2022 the LGAQ received further funding of \$3 million to continue the program until 2025. Since the agreement was confirmed in June 2022, contracts for training have been signed with RTOs for 13 First Nation councils, supporting 190 participants. This includes an agreement to undertake Water Operations training with participants from Burke, Mornington, and Doomadgee councils. Due to the high cost of this training, it is very rarely run for council staff. The ICB Project has funded and coordinated this opportunity, which will prove to be of huge value to the participants, councils and their communities. The benefits of running this training across three councils mean that it is more cost effective with greater sharing of resources.

Going forward, the ICB Project will fund training for a cohort of Animal Management Officers, taking participants from 10 First Nation councils. There will also be a Pest Management qualification delivered, which will comprise of participants from eight First Nation councils.

When this current contract concludes the ICB Project will have delivered a decade of support in partnership with its member First Nation councils and RTOs, providing invaluable opportunities for vocational training and meaningful collaboration between councils.

Growing your own talent – Regional University Centres

Regional University Centres (RUCs) have emerged as a key initiative to help support local communities to grow and retain skilled workers. Supported by funding from the Federal Government, the centres are making a valuable contribution to regional Queensland communities by improving access to higher education.

The Country Universities Centre (CUC) – the body that has championed the rollout of RUCs across the country - has utilised funding under the Federal Government's Regional University Program to establish centres in Roma, St George and Dirranbandi with two more centres due to open in Cooktown and Mt Isa.

The CUC model is designed and developed by regional people for regional people and their communities to provide equitable access to higher education. It is both a grassroots and agile model. Each centre is owned (often a repurposed council asset like a library etc.), governed, and driven by its local community through an independent Board of Directors. This framework provides for place-based learning solutions. The CUC can respond quickly to the unique higher education challenges and needs of local communities.

The RUC program's supports regional students to access tertiary education, to have more positive experiences during their studies, and to achieve positive post-graduation outcomes.

Currently, RUCs in regional Queensland are supporting more than 500 students enrolled in tertiary studies including those provided by TAFE. These 500 students represent an important contribution to the pipeline of local labour supply in regional Qld in the near to medium term – particularly in the towns where the RUCs are located. Some 80 of these students are enrolled in Health courses (most of these courses being in Nursing and Midwifery), while another 12 students are enrolled in courses in the areas of Education, Psychology, Social Work and Community Services. There are also 40 students who are enrolled in Education courses – with the greatest number of these students studying Early Childhood and Primary Education.

The students in these courses represent a pipeline of workers who will be able to deliver services locally where there is high (and growing) demand – in the key sectors of Health Care

and Social Assistance and Education and Training. The National Skills Commission projects that over the five years to 2025, these two sectors will account for the first and third-largest increases.

Not only are RUCs enabling and supporting rural, regional, and remote students to access and complete higher education without having to leave their community, they are also meeting a demonstrated gap in support for study in these communities.

The centres complement existing and planned university investments and activities in regional areas, such as satellite campuses and study centres.

Each centre reflects the community it serves and is established with consideration of the:

- Geographic location of the study Centre in relation to the community
- Population size, demographic, and cultural needs of the local community
- Local industry and businesses in the area and the skills they need
- Location of local TAFE and VET providers

At the LGAQ's Annual Conference in Cairns in October 2022, local governments from across the state voted overwhelmingly in favour of the LGAQ seeking a financial commitment from the Federal Government to support the establishment of more centres to cater for regional, rural and remote regions experiencing the need for retaining, developing, and attracting a skilled workforce.

The local place-based models are proving successful in not only stopping leakage of young workforces to capital cities but also in making regional communities more liveable while meeting the region's future workforce needs.

These centres could prove a solution to the ability to deliver VET to regional, rural and remote areas by utilising current facilities established in regional Queensland, and in supporting the expansion of RUCs into areas that currently do not have one.

Examples of successful localised VET models and how learnings might be applied in other locations.

The First Start Program and ICB Project are examples of success stories of Queensland Government programs that deliver assistance to Queensland local councils.

At present, the ICB Project funding is open to First Nations Councils as well as six other remote councils that have a high indigenous workforce. The Queensland Government, as part of its Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022 – 2032 has committed to *"Partner with rural and remote communities to deliver local skills and job creation initiatives to increase workforce capacity in these locations."* It is noted that the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training has made contact to discuss a partnership with LGAQ to provide financial support to those councils that are not covered by the ICB Project and yet still could greatly benefit from assistance. This collaborative approach to working together to best support the local communities of Queensland is optimal and an approach most likely to ensure success.

Opportunity for the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training to facilitate improvements in these areas.

The LGAQ acknowledges the current support provided by the State Government to meet the training needs of Queensland local councils and local communities.

The LGAQ makes the following recommendations to address barriers to the delivery of VET and to further enhance the level of support already provided.

Recommendation 1: The LGAQ recommends the State Government continue the delivery of the First Start Program to regional, rural and remote parts of Queensland and, where applicable, deliver the preferred option of face-to-face training to ensure participants are engaged and the achievement rate remains high and hurdles for participation are low.

Recommendation 2: The LGAQ recommends funding for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work First Start program be increased from stated \$6 million to \$9 million per annum to allow an increase in the number of places being offered.

Recommendation 3: The LGAQ recommends consideration be given to providing additional support to regional, rural and remote apprentices and trainees who have to travel to access training where on-site training is not possible, to help counter financial, mental and physical burdens and ensure completion rates remain high.

Recommendation 4: The LGAQ recommends the Federal Government reintroduce a wage subsidy scheme similar to their now ceased Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements and Completing Apprenticeship Commencements Programs in order to support employers who take on apprentices and trainees.

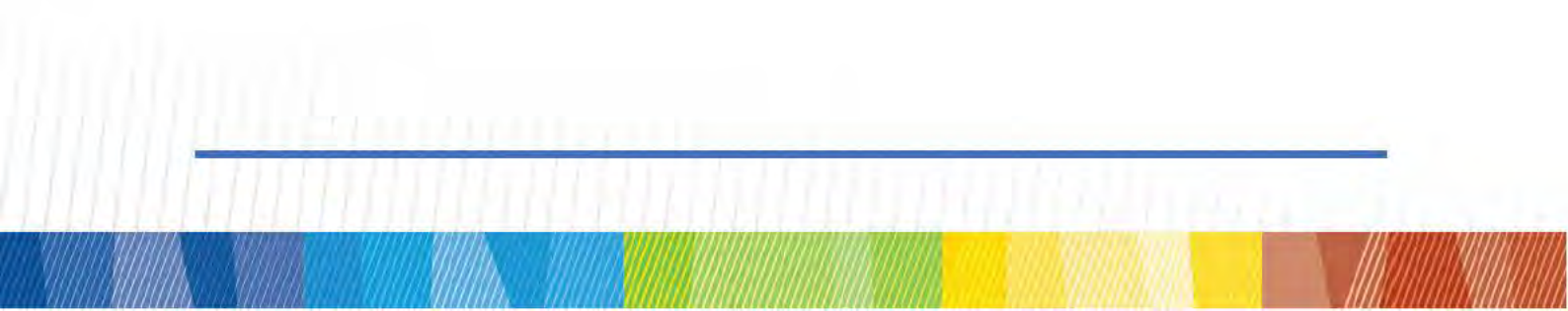
Recommendation 5: The LGAQ recommends the State Government consider extending the Indigenous Capacity Building Project model to rural and remote council areas to support rural and remote workforces.

Recommendation 6: The LGAQ recommends that the State Government review the areas where public VET providers do not deliver training and investigate and support measures to alleviate the negative impacts of the training gap.

Recommendation 7: The LGAQ recommends the State Government works with the LGAQ and Queensland councils to develop an innovative program to fund the establishment and expansion of the Regional University Centres concept to improve access and successful delivery of VET programs for regional and remote students across the state.

Contact Details

Please do not hesitate to contact Kathleen Jones, Manager, Workforce & Industrial Relations via email [REDACTED] or phone [REDACTED] should you wish to discuss any aspect of this submission.



Appendix

LGAQ Policy Statement

The LGAQ Policy Statement⁵ is a definitive statement of the collective voice of local government in Queensland.

The relevant policy positions of local government are as follows:

4.1.2 Training and Development

- 4.1.2.1 Local government supports accredited and non-accredited training and skill development that builds capacity in elected members and employees.
- 4.1.2.2 Local government recognises that an investment in training and development is an investment in people and the future success of Queensland local government.
- 4.1.2.3 Local government supports the maximisation of industry led training and development initiatives given the demonstrable advantages such programs deliver over direct funding of training organisations.

LGAQ Annual Conference Resolutions

The LGAQ is committed to member-driven advocacy and working with members to build stronger local governments and more resilient local communities.

Resolutions passed at each LGAQ Annual Conference represent the views of Queensland councils and are pursued by the LGAQ on their behalf.

The relevant 2022 Annual Conference resolutions include:

2022 Resolution 44: The LGAQ calls on the State and Federal governments to work with LGAQ and other peak bodies (including the Queensland Water Directorate) to investigate solutions to existing workforce challenges associated with developing, attracting and retaining a skilled water industry workforce in Queensland, building on the work undertaken under the Queensland Water Skills Partnership.

2022 Resolution 102: The LGAQ seeks support to assist apprentices, particularly rural and remote, to successfully complete their apprenticeship in a location of their choosing.

2022 Resolution 130: The LGAQ calls on the State Government to increase funding to programs ensuring that apprentices and trainees are an integral part of the Local Government workforce.

2022 Resolution 131: The LGAQ calls on the State and Federal governments to create incentives to attract and train qualified childcare staff that works regionally.

⁵ LGAQ Policy Statement – available online [here](#)