

High-Vis Army Working Group
Meeting 1 – Communiqué, 1 December 2021

Attendees:

Skills Tasmania: Alexis Wadsley – Chair of Working Group, Andrew Harris – Secretariat
Civil Contractors Federation (CCF); Bill Abbott – Chair of CCF, Rachael Matheson – CEO
Housing Industry Association (HIA); Stuart Collins – Executive Director
Keystone Tasmania; Norm McIlpatrick – Chair of Keystone
Master Builders Association Tasmania (MBA); Matthew Pollock – Executive Director

A discussion was held regarding the priorities for the working group which included:

- Collaborate over training and workforce development including identifying gaps in current training delivery and review the capability and quality of RTOs to deliver the required training.
- Provide advice on the 'Be Part of Building Something Big' campaign including a call to action and ensure it is engaging and understood by young people.
- Create a professional industry profile and highlight career opportunities to attract and retain people into the industry.
- Promote female participation in the construction industry
- Compliment work that is already happening by expanding with partners on Job Ready programs
- Ensure all parties can communicate to stakeholders in a consistent manner to cross promote opportunities.
- Share the learnings of the group and introduce best practice from other industries.

Members presented a Summary of their project plans:

The HIA project intends to introduce their national GTO which has now been registered in Tasmania. They will work with diversity groups which differentiates them from traditional GTOs and support the progression of Youth Build students into apprenticeships. Setting up specialist support services will be key to the success of their plan.

The MBA project intends to build the capacity to the training system ensuring that learners in Tasmania are trained and assessed to a consistent standard. They intend to support career development from entry point through to post trade training and certification. Their GTO will concentrate on working with stakeholders in the rural and regional areas along with forming a close working relationship in the Civil Construction areas.

The CCF project will initially undertake a Skills Analysis across the sector to establish where training and qualification gaps exist in the industry and potential for industry to take on trainees / apprenticeship. They have already started working closely with TasTAFE and Keystone to develop a business case for a civil construction training environment. The CCF has set up a comprehensive administration structure to guide the project which includes an internal governance committee supported by their existing Skills and Workforce Development Sub Committee.

Keystone Tasmania are building their understanding of gaps in the quality and quantity of potential industry candidates and how candidates can be attracted, mentored, and developed to join their industry. Pre-vocational and work readiness training were of priority as were identifying gaps in training delivery. Keystone will be able to provide this working group with valuable and consistent statistics on skills demand from the SOPHIA platform. Keystone also noted they intend to work closely with allied industry bodies such as the National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA), The Master Plumbers Association of Tasmania (MPAT) and The Air

Conditioning and Mechanical Contractors Association (AMCA) on workforce development challenges they face as part of the Tasmanian building and construction industry.

Alexis Wadsley gave the group an overview of the \$16.1M Energizing Tasmania fund provided, by the Federal Government, and noted that there were some clear alignments with the outcomes of the High-Vis Army projects and the Energizing Tasmania project. These two projects should work collaboratively to ensure there is no duplication but rather enhance each other.

It was noted that there are and will continue to be challenges which are common to all members of the group. These include the need to employ an additional 6,000 people in the industry to bring the workforce back up to where it was in 2018 and beyond. Whilst many Tasmanians are experiencing issues from the housing crisis it was noted that the workforce to undertake large projects such as the Bridgewater Bridge will also need housing. Building the High-Vis Army will assist in addressing the housing shortage for both the public and the construction industry employees. It was also suggested TasTAFE be invited as an observer at future meetings.

Future Meetings

To integrate these meetings with the already confirmed Peak meetings it was proposed to hold 2 meetings per year for the life of the deeds. These meetings would be held in March to review each participant's project plan heading into an update of the plans. This would also prepare the members for the mid-year Peak meetings. The second bi-annual meeting of the group would be held in September which would enable participants to report on their progress and share their learnings to date. This would also prepare members for the end of year Peak meetings.

Standing agenda items for future meetings would include:

- A summary of project progress to date and an outline of what will be undertaken in the following 12 months – All Members
- What's working well in other industries – Skills Tasmania
- Statistics and trends in workforce development and training – Keystone
- Shared learnings and challenges – All Members
- TasTAFE and RTOs

Skills Tasmania to circulate possible dates for next meeting and provide secretariat support.