Appendix A: Bilateral Implementation Plan – National Skills Agreement Policy Initiatives

PRELIMINARIES

1. This implementation plan is made between the Commonwealth of Australia (Commonwealth) and Tasmania under the 2024–2028 National Skills Agreement (the NSA) and should be read in conjunction with the NSA and the NSA Bilateral Implementation Plan Guidance.

2. Once executed, this implementation plan and any updates agreed with the Commonwealth, will be appended to the NSA and will be published on the Commonwealth's Federal Financial Relations website (https://federalfinancialrelations.gov.au).

3. This implementation plan is expected to expire on 31 December 2028 (in line with the NSA), or on completion of the initiative, including final performance reporting and processing of final payments against milestones.

4. In all public materials relating to the policy initiatives, Tasmania will acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution with the following statement: Measures to Strengthen the VET Workforce is a joint initiative between the Australian Government and Tasmanian Government.

REPORTING AND PAYMENTS

Reporting

5. Performance reporting will be due by 31 March and 30 September each year until the cessation of this Agreement, or the final payment is processed.

6. Tasmania will provide to the Commonwealth a traffic light status and activity summary on all policy initiatives.

7. The Commonwealth will provide templates for the purposes of reporting.

Payments

8. The Commonwealth will make payment subject to performance reporting demonstrating the relevant milestone has been met.

9. As part of the performance reporting, Tasmania will provide evidence of what has been delivered in the reporting period. Payments will be processed once performance reports have been assessed and accepted.

10. Where a payment is due at a reporting period (31 March and/or 30 September), Tasmania will complete the relevant section of the reporting template and provide the evidence required as agreed in the Milestones and Payments associated with this Implementation Plan.

11. Under A92 of the NSA, if a State is unable to expend any Commonwealth funding provided for policy initiative milestone payments, the Commonwealth may reduce a future payment by an amount equivalent to the unspent funds

MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE VET WORKFORCE (Clause A124 to A129 of the NSA)

1) Outline activities that will support, grow and retain a quality VET workforce (including relationship to the VET Workforce Blueprint):

Tasmania will implement a range of activities under the National Skills Agreement (NSA) to support, grow and retain a quality vocational education and training (VET) workforce.

The new and expanded initiatives in this bilateral implementation plan align with the goals of the VET Workforce Blueprint and the Tasmanian Skills Plan and contribute to the objective of the NSA in supporting people to obtain the skills and capabilities they need to prosper.

Through the NSA, Tasmania will:

1. Deliver a new stream of Tasmania's Industry Partnerships Program (IPP)

Beyond understanding the workforce better, consultations through the VET Workforce Blueprint identified that the most significant overall challenge facing the VET workforce is attracting people into roles, particularly teacher, trainer and assessor roles.

Stakeholder feedback in Tasmania advised that attracting and retaining quality VET teachers is the most critical challenge in delivering best-practice training. Not everyone is suitable for the role, and it may require a different skill set to work in the industry (RTO forum/feedback 2024, Tasmanian Skills Plan).

The IPP is a Skills Tasmania grant program that aims to deliver better quality training experiences for Tasmanian learners and improve the responsiveness of the training system to meet Tasmanian industry and business needs. The IPP encourages partnerships, collaboration and innovation between endorsed registered training organisations (RTOs) and Tasmanian employers, businesses and industry groups.

Under the new stream of the program, we will invite industry led proposals that aim to grow the number of trainers and assessors in Tasmania and support return to industry opportunities for existing trainers and assessors to maintain their industry currency. This would be informed by lessons learnt from similar initiatives that have been funded in the past. A total of $1.004 million over the life of the NSA has been allocated to the new IPP stream. The expected number of proposals supported through the investment is dependent on the applications. It will range between a minimum of four large grants (requiring co-contribution) or approximately 20 small grants, however, would likely be a mix of the two.

As a focused grant program approach, this activity will allow for localised, industry-specific action and tailored approaches to workforce challenges. This may contribute to developing further actions to grow and support a sustainable VET workforce. Applicants will have flexibility to submit unique proposals shaped by industry or business needs. Applicants will be required to provide a clear rationale for the need of the project and demonstrate how the project funding seeks to address the identified need or problem, supported by appropriate evidence.

The aim of this initiative is to fund projects that grow and support the VET workforce and support the overarching aim of the IPP to deliver better quality training experiences for Tasmanian learners and improve the responsiveness of the training system.

Grant applications will be funded in accordance with the IPP grant program guidelines and the Department of State Growth's grant management framework. Applications will initially be

assessed against the eligibility criteria. Applications will then be competitively assessed against the assessment criteria with a specific focus on the ability to achieve the program objects/aims and the quality of the project proposal. As the program has limited funding, it is possible not all eligible applications will receive a grant.

The program aligns with several opportunities and actions under the VET Workforce Blueprint to support and grow a sustainable VET workforce, including to:

- Develop initiatives to attract people into, and support and retain people in, VET workforce careers (action 10).
- Invest in innovative VET workforce pathways through scaling up existing initiatives and/or piloting new models which contribute to an uplift in workforce capacity or capability (action 9).
- Attract people into the VET workforce, particularly teachers, trainers and assessors (opportunity 2).
- Support professional learning, career progression and industry currency (opportunity 4).

The program aligns with Tasmania's Industry Skills Compacts in continuing to support qualified trainers to ensure they remain current and competent in their trade. We aim to strengthen the VET workforce by assisting trainers access up-to-date industry knowledge and experience to contextualise course content.

The investment further supports the Tasmanian Skills Plan to build a stronger, more connected system through strengthening and innovating the VET workforce and building a strong and sustainable training sector.

2. Deliver a suite of professional development and capability building activities for Tasmania's VET sector to support quality training delivery

As outlined in the VET Workforce Blueprint, alongside the challenge of ensuring a supply of workers are entering the VET workforce pipeline, there are challenges associated with making high-quality professional learning and career progression available to the current VET workforce particularly teachers, trainers and assessors. Cost, time commitment and course availability are the main barriers to uptake of professional learning.

Through this initiative, we will deliver a program of networking and professional development activities for Tasmania's VET sector. We will work with the sector to explore ways to improve access to professional development materials or expert support services to build the professional competency of trainers and assessors and enhance innovative, learner-focussed delivery approaches. This will include strengthening relationships between trainers and assessors working in the school system and the broader VET system, to provide more seamless learning experiences for those learners transitioning from school into mainstream VET.

The program of professional development sessions will be developed in consultation with the sector with a view to engage facilitators or professional learning organisations as appropriate. A range of learning and networking opportunities will be considered such as in person, online and hybrid programs. Professional development sessions may include broad knowledge topics and practical experience or focused specialist and support programs.

We will consider recent stakeholder feedback about the Tasmanian training and workforce development system, including feedback that shaped the Tasmanian Skills Plan. The opportunities under this program will be made available to all Skills Tasmania endorsed RTOs.

In addition to enhanced professional development and networking opportunities, this program of work will also assist RTOs with capability building activities to support quality training delivery. Activities may include targeted support for individual RTOs tailored to their specific workforce needs, such as resource development for targeted activities and supports. These important foundational activities will contribute to an uplift in capability to continue attracting, retaining and supporting a quality VET workforce. The reach of these activities will be dependent on consultation with the VET sector and influenced by the phased implementation of the professional development activities.

The activities will be scalable depending on evaluation of the programs' effectiveness, outcomes and feedback from participants. A total of $1 million over the life of the NSA has been allocated to this initiative.

The investment supports the Tasmanian Skills Plan to build a stronger, more connected system and grow and retain quality VET trainers. The program additionally aligns with several opportunities and actions under the VET Workforce Blueprint to support and grow a sustainable VET workforce, including to:

- Implement targeted professional learning to address key industry and pedagogical priorities (action 11).
- Develop and resource staff to support learners with diverse and complex needs (opportunity 6).
- Support professional learning, career progression and industry currency (opportunity 4).

2) Engagement arrangements, including relevant partnerships with First Nations peoples:

Engagement arrangements will be tailored for the activity (e.g. engagement with RTOs or specified industries). We will utilise existing effective engagement processes such as Industry Skills Compacts, established RTO communication channels and TasTAFE partnerships.

Engagement with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations will be managed in collaboration with Aboriginal Partnerships within Tasmania's Department of Premier and Cabinet. Aboriginal Partnerships guide and advise the Tasmanian Government on policy issues affecting Aboriginal people in Tasmania and can provide practical support such as providing introductions and consultancy-level advice on the design of engagement strategies. Aboriginal Partnerships work to embed Aboriginal led co-design processes and Aboriginal knowledges across all government agencies.

Commonwealth Investment ($)	State Investment ($)	Planned Start Date	Planned End Date
$2,004,000	$2,004,000	1 July 2024	31 December 2028

Measures to strengthen the VET workforce — approach to matched funding arrangements (clause A126 and A91 refer) — to be reconciled over the life of the NSA.

Details of matched funding	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Commonwealth contribution	-	$550,000	$650,000	$704,000	$100,000	$2,004,000
State contribution	$437,500	$605,500	$555,500	$405,500	-	$2,004,000
Total	$437,500	$1,155,500	$1,205,500	$1,109,500	$100,000	$4,008,000

The Tasmanian Government will provide details of their matched funding contributions at the end of each financial year, commencing 1 July 2024 until 31 December 2028. Final payments under this implementation plan may be reduced where the total contribution by the Tasmanian Government over the life of the project does not align with the Commonwealth contribution.

Performance Indicators

Tasmania will utilise its existing reporting framework and evaluation processes to monitor the performance of Tasmania's system of training and workforce development, including the new and expanded initiatives under the NSA.

Progress reporting will be provided in accordance with the milestones and payments section of this implementation plan. Reporting will include quantitative and qualitative measures where appropriate and relevant, as available at reporting dates.

Indicators expected to be utilised include:

New stream of IPP

- Expressions of interest/number of applications
- Funded projects
- Number of participants supported through program funding
- Case studies
- Feedback from participants/stakeholders

Professional development and capability building activities

- Stakeholders' engagement with professional learning activities (e.g. number of attendees at networking events, engagement with topics or course completions).
- Number of professional development forums or workshops
- Number of RTOs that engage with capability building activities
- Case studies
- Feedback from participants/stakeholders

Evaluation arrangements

Skills Tasmania will adhere to best practice evaluation requirements as established by the Tasmanian Government's Department of Treasury and Finance.

Key legislation includes:

- *Financial Management Act 2016*
- *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013*
- *TasTAFE (Skills and Training Business) Act 2021*
- Other requirements under the Tasmanian Treasurer's Instructions

Skills Tasmania, as part of the Department of State Growth, operates under a grant management framework that covers the full end to end process of offering and administering grants. The grant management framework aims to facilitate compliant, efficient, consistent, timely and valuable grant programs that benefit recipients and the broader Tasmanian community and economy.

TASMANIA'S APPROACH TO MATCHED FUNDING

Tasmania has made proactive investments in measures to strengthen the VET workforce. The Tasmanian Skills Plan sets out the strategic direction for Tasmania's training and workforce development system and informs Tasmanian Government funding priorities over the next five years (2024 – 2028). It outlines how we will grow Tasmania's future workforce through investment in VET and complementary activities to meet skills and workforce needs, while supporting the learner at the centre of our skills and training system.

The Youth Jobs Strategy (2024 – 2030) builds on existing efforts in place, including the Regional Jobs Hub Network, to ensure that all young people in Tasmania can access opportunities for employment in decent, meaningful work, and employers and industry can attract, develop and retain skilled young employees for a thriving community and productive economy.

Tasmania will meet its matched funding obligations for the measures to strengthen the VET workforce policy initiative through committed expenditure in three new initiatives, as outlined below. The initiatives will be delivered between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2028.

i. Implement initiatives to support industry experts and skilled tradespeople to deliver VET in Tasmania's schools and colleges.

ii. Develop an improved framework and funding program for Tasmanian government-subsidised training delivery.

iii. Support a pilot partnership being led by the plumbing industry with TasTAFE to develop and deliver initiatives that support the plumbing workforce.

The Tasmanian Government will provide an annual report on progress implementing these three initiatives in September of each year, in line with the agreed reporting periods outlined in milestones and payments. The Commonwealth will use this report to understand the effectiveness of these actions. The report will contribute to the evidence-base on VET Workforce policy and guide future policy development and investment and national planning.

Details of matched funding	**2024-25**	**2025-26**	**2026-27**	**2027-28**	**Total**
VET in schools/colleges	$187,500	$187,500	$187,500	$187,500	$750,000
Improved framework and funding program	n/a	$168,000	$168,000	$168,000	$504,000
Plumbing workforce	$250,000	$250,000	$200,000	$50,000	$750,000
Total Tasmanian contribution	$437,500	$605,500	$555,500	$405,500	**$2,004,000**

i. Implement initiatives to support industry experts and skilled tradespeople to deliver VET in Tasmania's schools and colleges.

The program is managed by the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) in its position as an RTO and the largest provider of VET in schools in Tasmania. The mission of DECYP's RTO is to provide pathways into further education or employment for young Tasmanians to contribute to a successful, skilled and innovative workforce.

The Certificate IV in Training and Assessment is the minimum entry-level qualification for people who would like to enter the VET workforce as a VET teacher, trainer and assessor. As outlined in the VET Workforce Blueprint, stakeholder feedback highlighted a need for people undertaking this qualification to be well supported, trained effectively and to have the required teaching strategies and skills to enable their career as a teacher, trainer and assessor.

In Tasmania, there is an identified need to provide more support and improve programs for VET teachers in schools and colleges. The program managed by DECYP involves a range of activities to upskill and support 60 tradespeople and workers across industries to deliver VET in Tasmanian schools and colleges, with the aim to attract teachers, trainers and assessors into the VET workforce, and retain them.

Actions in this initiative include:

Supporting the completion of an innovative Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

- Purchasing and developing teacher resource packs, adjusted for teaching to school-aged learners.
- Improved training delivering models including face to face and online training.
- Fostering greater collaboration across industry, including collaboration with non-government schools.
- Additional teacher support such as induction courses on student management and behaviour or teaching strategies.

DECYP's consultation with stakeholders in 2024 and 2025 will identify priorities for support and training that will most effectively achieve outcomes.

DECYP will initially look within school communities for potential trainers. This localised approach has proven success in Tasmania as industry experts and skilled tradespeople within communities usually have established networks and connections with the school.

The program strongly aligns with several opportunities under the VET Workforce Blueprint to support and grow a sustainable VET workforce, including to:

- Attract people into the VET workforce, particularly teachers, trainers and assessors (opportunity 2).
- Make it easier for high-quality teachers, trainers and assessor to enter and stay in the VET workforce (opportunity 3).
- Provide more support for early career teachers, trainers and assessors (opportunity 5).

DECYP monitors the performance of this program through a range of measures including, but not limited to, expressions of interest in the program, number of teachers completing TAE training and teacher satisfaction and retention.

ii. Develop an improved framework and funding program for Tasmanian government-subsidised training delivery.

In consultation for the Tasmanian Skills Plan, we heard that Tasmanian training providers want a more transparent funding system and simpler application processes. Private RTOs want greater confidence in future funding and longer funding agreements. They want recognition of their track record in delivering training and compliance with requirements.

This initiative aims to build a strong training sector and improve sustainability for RTOs through ongoing and secure employment for their workforce.

Actions in this initiative include:

- Developing and implementing a quality, risk and compliance framework.
- Supporting training providers to improve quality and compliance by rewarding high -performing providers with streamlined access to funding and longer funding agreements that continue to enable the purchase of priority training.
- Enhancing client support services for government-subsidised RTOs in Tasmania, including facilitating improved access to broader business support and workforce planning resources.

The expected benefit is for training providers to have greater certainty to enable them to retain staff, and to allow providers to sustainably manage their workforce and business growth.

The revised framework will apply to all funded RTOs that deliver Government subsidised training in the Tasmanian training and workforce development system.

This initiative strongly aligns with several opportunities and actions under the VET Workforce Blueprint including to:

- Make it easier for teachers, trainers and assessors to enter and stay in the workforce (opportunity 3).
- Develop initiatives to attract people into, and support and retain people in, VET workforce careers (action 10).
- Undertake work to map and analyse compliance and administrative burden and implement strategies to reduce this burden, where appropriate, for the VET workforce (action 13).

The Tasmanian Government will monitor the performance of this program through its existing monitoring and evaluation processes of training delivery as a whole, including leveraging its established outcomes surveys and RTO communication channels.

iii. Support a pilot partnership being led by the plumbing industry with TasTAFE to develop and deliver initiatives that support the plumbing workforce.

The Tasmanian Government's Industry Skills Compact (Building and Construction) reflects the importance of supporting stronger collaborative partnerships between participants in the training and workforce development system, while recognising that both Government and industry have areas of strength and responsibility for the system.

The actions under this activity align with key priorities for the plumbing sector in Tasmania as per the Industry Skills Compact.

Master Plumbers Association of Tasmania (MPAT) will work collaboratively with TasTAFE over a three-year period and employ a new Industry Engagement Officer to:

- Provide a structured and supportive framework for the plumbing industry to access industry trainers to assist with the delivery of plumbing trades training.
- Work with industry experts and provide them opportunities to engage with apprentice and non-apprentice plumbing learners. Industry experts to speak with groups at TasTAFE on their subject matter expertise and potential topics that may be covered across qualifications.
- Facilitate training workshops on presentation skills to allow industry representatives to effectively engage and interact with learners.
- Coordinate the return to industry opportunities for TasTAFE teaching staff.

The activity forms part of the Tasmanian Government commitment to boost the highly successful High Vis Army to 2027 including the extension to the MPAT and supports excellence in our building and construction workforce per the Tasmanian Skills Plan.

The target outcomes for the program include working with a minimum of six eligible industry experts, enhancing return to industry opportunities for all TasTAFE teaching staff and engaging a minimum of 50 schools over a two-year period.

The activity strongly aligns with the VET Workforce Blueprint to encourage and facilitate industry led responses to VET workforce challenges (action 5) and invest in innovative VET workforce pathways through scaling up existing initiatives and/or piloting new models which contribute to an uplift in workforce capacity or capability (action 9).

The partnership activity further contributes to the goals of the NSA to enhance teaching and learning in VET including bolstering support for TAFE to continue delivering the dual outcomes of excellence and accessibility.

The Tasmanian Government monitors the performance of this initiative through MPAT's periodic progress reports that measure project milestones, engagement activities and outcomes.

MILESTONES AND PAYMENTS – MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE VET WORKFORCE

Milestone	Evidence	Payment Value Up To (Commonwealth funded)	Commonwealth reporting period
Milestone 1: Initial payment on agreement of bilateral implementation plan.	Bilateral implementation plan agreed with the Commonwealth	$200,000	N/A
Milestone 2: Commonwealth acceptance that Tasmania has operated measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 30 September 2025, to be demonstrated by: – developing the new Tasmanian Industry Partnerships Program (IPP) stream – researching a suite of professional development and capability building activities.	Report signed by the relevant Tasmanian Senior Skills Official that provides an annual report on progress implementing measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 30 September 2025 and includes: – the grant program guidelines for the Tasmanian IPP per the Department of State Growth's grant management framework that includes eligibility criteria, assessment criteria, and application process, and – summary of consultation with the VET sector in Tasmania on professional development program.	$300,000	30 September 2025
Milestone 3: Commonwealth acceptance that Tasmania has operated measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 31 March 2026, to be demonstrated by: – researching and planning a suite of professional development and capability building activities	Report signed by the relevant Tasmanian Senior Skills Official that provides an update on progress implementing measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 31 March 2026 and includes: – the project plan for professional development and capability building activities that outlines project scope, project governance, business requirements, stakeholder engagement, activities planned and delivery timeframes (including for engaging facilitator(s) or onboarding professional learning organisation(s), commencing events and PD sessions).	$50,000	31 March 2026

Milestone 4: Commonwealth acceptance that Tasmania has operated measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 30 September 2026, to be demonstrated by: – establishment and operation of the new Tasmanian IPP stream – development and delivery of a suite of professional development and capability building activities.	Report signed by the relevant Tasmanian Senior Skills Official that provides an annual report on progress implementing measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 30 September 2026 and includes: – details of funded IPP projects (including associated deliverables) – details of professional development and capability building activities already delivered (and whether these will be scaled up), future activities planned, and confirmation of the facilitator(s) or onboarding of the professional learning organisation(s) as appropriate – performance indicators, and – any complete evaluation.	$650,000	30 September 2026
Milestone 5: Commonwealth acceptance that Tasmania has operated measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 30 September 2027, to be demonstrated by: – establishment and operation of the new Tasmanian IPP stream – development and delivery of a suite of professional development and capability building activities.	Report signed by the relevant Tasmanian Senior Skills Official that provides an annual report on progress implementing measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 30 September 2027 and includes: – details of funded IPP projects (including associated deliverables) – details of professional development and capability building activities that have been delivered (and whether these will be scaled up) and future activities planned – performance indicators, and – any complete evaluation.	$704,000	30 September 2027

Milestone 6: Commonwealth acceptance that Tasmania has operated measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 30 September 2028, to be demonstrated by: – establishment and operation of the new Tasmanian IPP stream – delivery and evaluation of a suite of professional development and capability building activities.	Report signed by the relevant Tasmanian Senior Skills Official that provides an annual report on progress implementing measures to strengthen the VET workforce to 30 September 2028 and includes: – details of available performance indicators, and – a final evaluation report of the measures to strengthen the VET workforce.	$100,000	30 September 2028
	Total	**$2,004,000**	

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this implementation plan as follows:

Signed *for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by*



The Honourable Andrew Giles MP
Minister for Skills and Training

22/ 9 / 2025

Signed *for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by*



The Honourable Felix Ellis MP
Minister for Skills and Jobs

16/ 9/ 2025