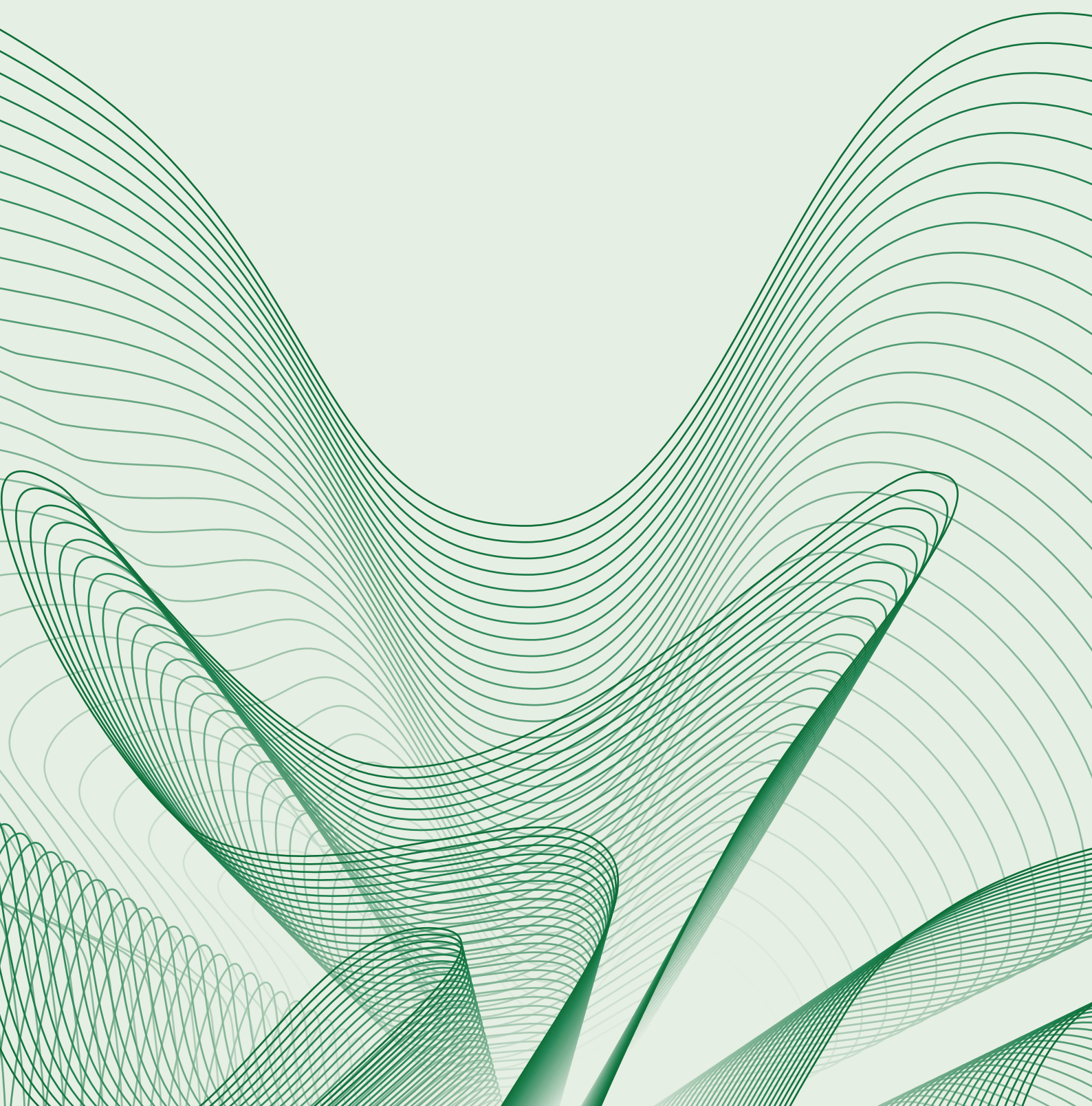


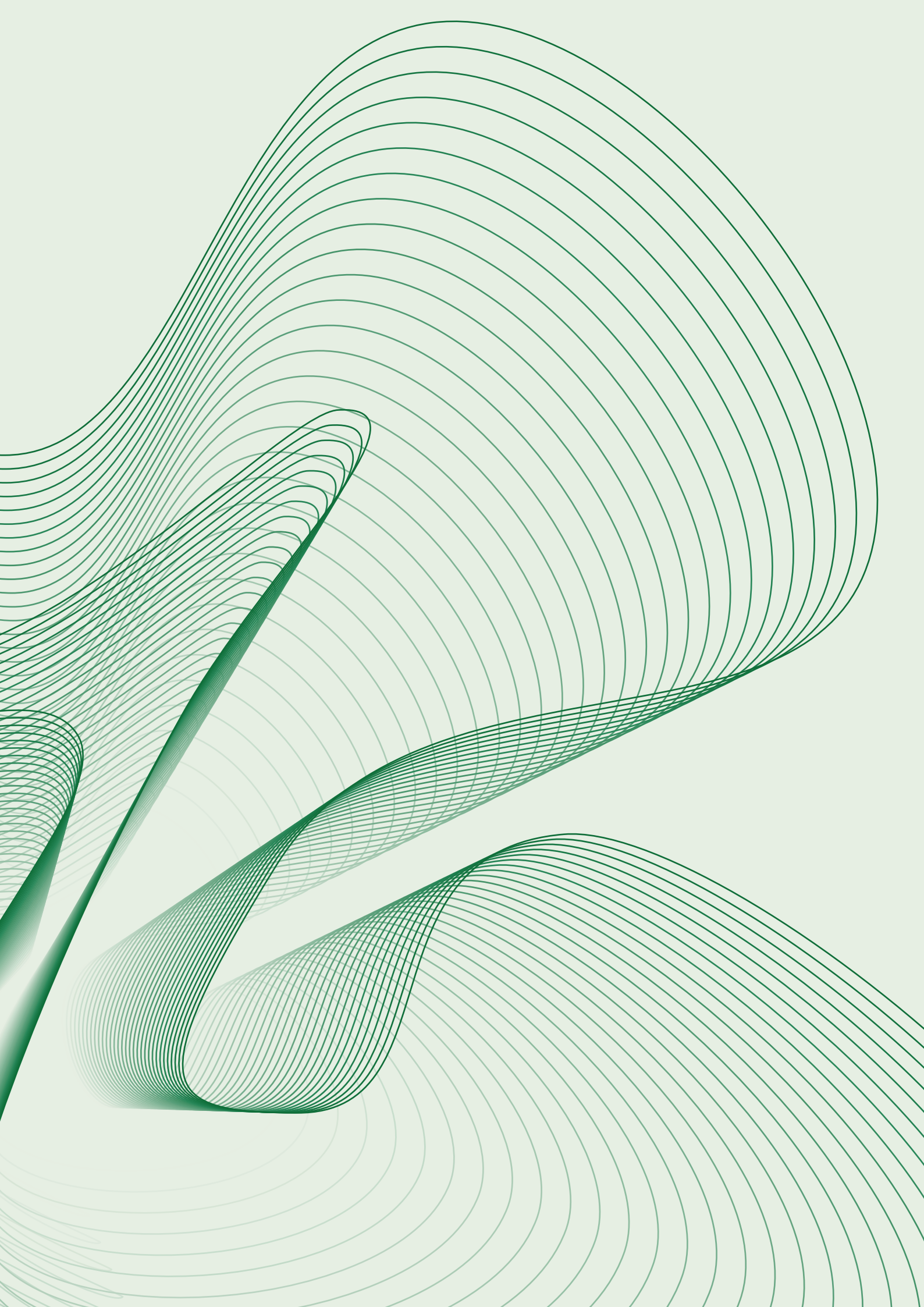
2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report



**PUBLIC SKILLS
AUSTRALIA**
PUBLIC SAFETY SKILLS AUSTRALIA LTD

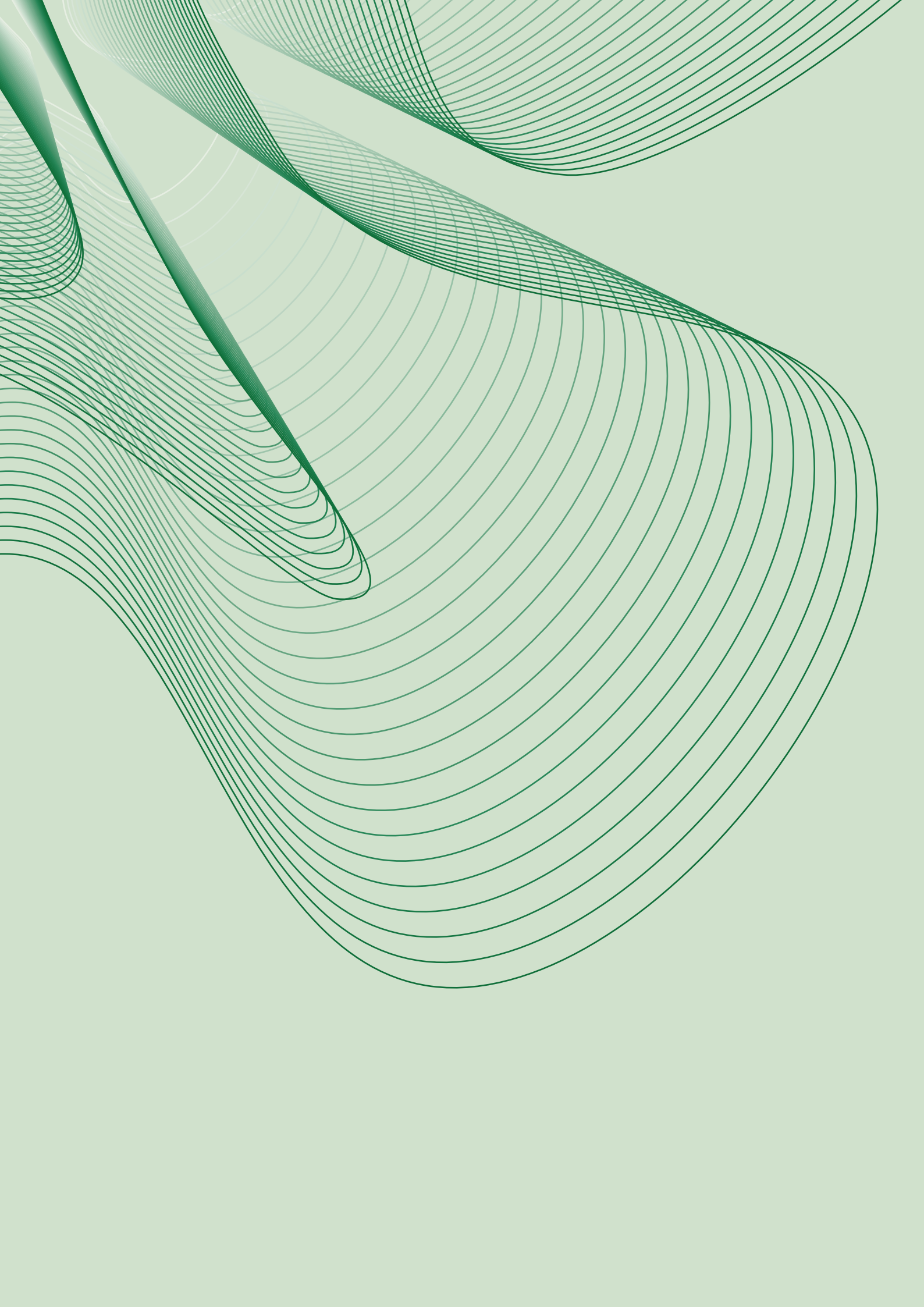
JSC

Jobs and Skills Council
Public Safety and Government
An Australian Government Initiative



Contents

About Public Skills Australia	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	6
Structure	6
Methodology	7
Drivers of Change	9
Local Government Industry-Sector Overview	11
State and Territory Workforce Profile	13
Industry Profile	18
Workforce Insights	21
1. Local Government Specific Occupational Shortages	21
2. Access to VET Qualifications and Training Delivery Partners	26
2026 Proposed Local Government Workforce Strategies	29
Workforce Insights: Update on 2025 Strategies	31
1. Local Government Skills Audit and Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package	31
Next Steps	32
2. Local Government Emergency Management Skills	33
Next Steps	33
Existing Industry-Sector Strategies	34
Commonwealth Government Initiatives	46
2027 and Beyond	57
Appendix A: Participants in the Local Government Skills Audit	58



About Public Skills Australia

Public Skills Australia is the Jobs and Skills Council (JSC) for the Public Safety and Government industry, comprising Correctional Services, Defence, Federal, State/Territory and Local Government, Fire and Emergency Services and Police industry-sectors. Through its work, Public Skills Australia actively supports employer and employee bodies in these industries and associated volunteer associations. Public Skills Australia works in partnership with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and other JSCs to give effect to broader ministerial and government priorities.

Public Skills Australia:

- › undertakes data analysis, research and consultation to deepen understandings of contemporary workforce challenges and what can be done to mitigate these challenges
- › develops quality training products to strengthen the skills and capabilities of Public Safety and Government workforces
- › monitors and promotes the implementation of training products to support career pathways for the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors
- › consults with, advocates for and promotes the needs of the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors.

Public Skills Australia remains committed to encouraging the participation of First Nations people,¹ those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those living with or experiencing disabilities, women and other gender diverse people and mature people in the Public Safety and Government industry workforces.

¹ Please note, First Nations people will be used as preferred terminology inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. When citing a data source (such as government strategies or state of the sector reports) the terminology of the data source will be used to maintain accurate data representation.

Executive Summary

Public Skills Australia's *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report* considers the wider operational contexts impacting Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. It identifies four drivers of change that will impact workforce planning in the short to medium term, aligned with the nine megatrends detailed in previous Workforce Insights Reports, that remain relevant to long term workforce trends.

This Report identifies seven insights within the Local Government industry-sector, across two themes (Local Government Specific Occupational Shortages and Access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) Qualifications and Training Delivery Partners):

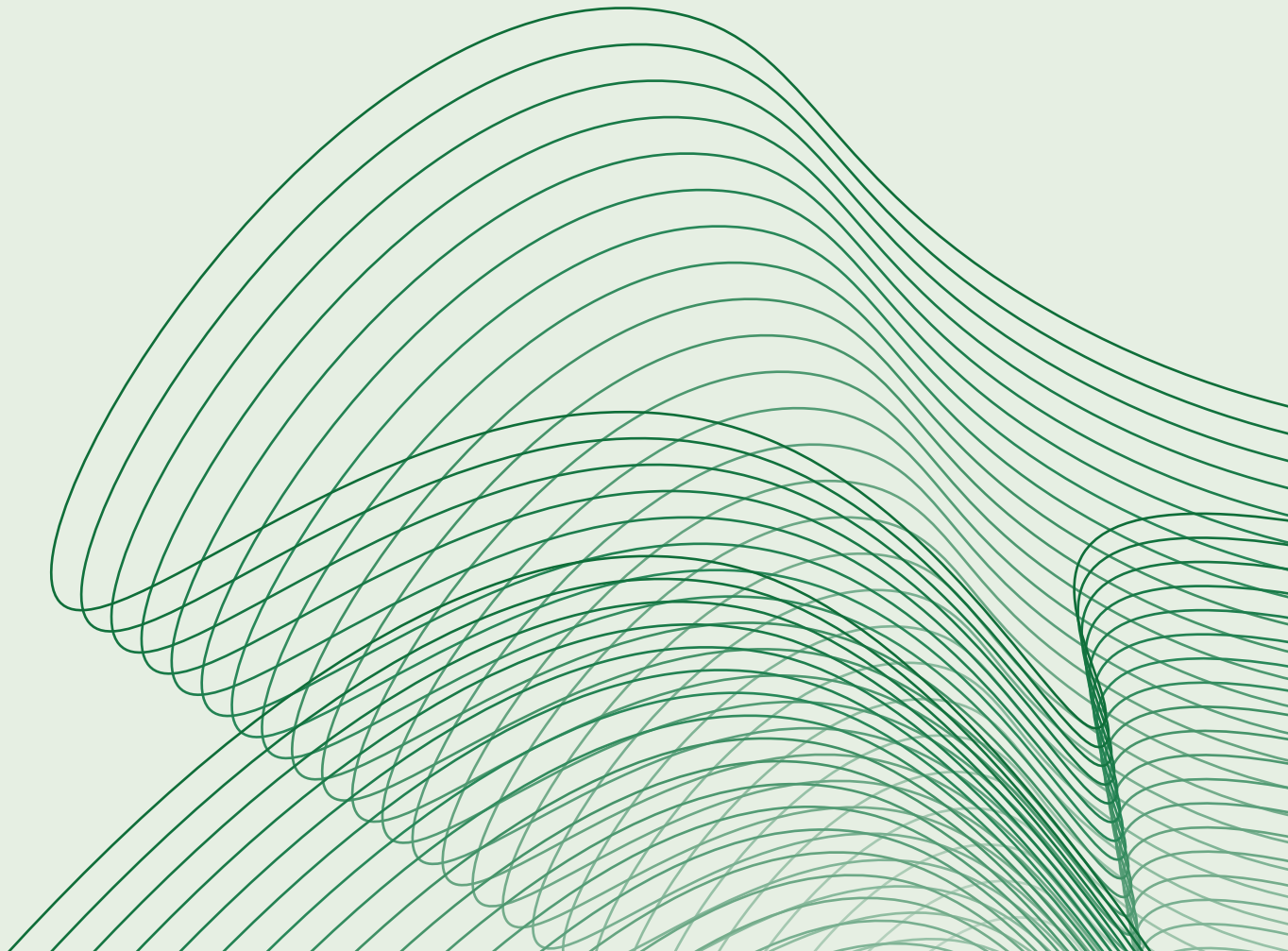
- › Local Government employers require a diverse range of skills to maintain the breadth of responsibilities undertaken by local councils²
- › Skills needs are changing due to workforce pressures, technological advances and shifting community expectations
- › There are acute occupational shortages specific to the Local Government industry-sector, particularly for Emergency Management
- › Access to Technical and Further Education (TAFE) or Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in regional, rural and remote locations is limited
- › Few TAFEs and RTOs are willing to travel to geographically isolated locations
- › Local councils have limited training budgets
- › Course delivery is often not tailored to regional, rural and remote areas.

² In this report, Public Skills Australia uses Local Government to refer to the national Local Government industry-sector. Local councils, or local council, is used as a preferred term when referring to a specific council or councils.

The following strategies have been developed to support efforts to address challenges identified through the above industry insights:

- › **Map Local Government occupational shortages to relevant VET training products:** Identify and map the use of relevant qualifications (beyond the Local Government Area (LGA) Local Government Training Package) to support VET training for key occupational shortages in Local Government.
- › **Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges:** Promote the Local Government industry-sector as a sustainable and skilled career pathway to enhance service delivery to communities.

This Report concludes by looking towards the *2027 Workforce Insights Reports* and beyond. Future work will firstly focus on broader priorities, including the participation of First Nations people, women and other genders in the Public Safety and Government workforces, in addition to examining the implications of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital transformation.



Introduction

The *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report* (the Report) is the fourth report generated by Public Skills Australia for the Local Government industry-sector since 2023. It builds on the previous iterations to identify workforce challenges and proposes strategic initiatives to mitigate them. This Report represents the insights, commitment and efforts of the Local Government industry-sector, shared with Public Skills Australia.

Public Skills Australia's *Workforce Insights Reports* are developed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data obtained from primary and secondary sources and supported by stakeholder consultations.

Structure

This Report is structured as follows:

Drivers of Change	› Identifies four key drivers of change that will impact Public Safety and Government industry-sectors in the short to medium term › Provides a recap of the nine megatrends identified in previous <i>Workforce Insights Reports</i> that remain relevant to long term workforce trends
Industry-Sector Analysis	› Examines the Local Government workforce, providing data analysis, identifying workforce insights and detailing strategies aimed at addressing workforce challenges
Proposed Strategies Summary	› Outlines the 2026 Workforce Strategies proposed through this Report
Existing Industry-Sector Strategies	› Details current strategic work being undertaken within the industry-sector and how this informs Public Skills Australia's work
Federal Government Initiatives	› Details Federal Government initiatives containing critical recommendations, strategic directions and national objectives that informs the planning and delivery of Public Skills Australia's projects
Looking Forward to 2027	› Concludes the Report by outlining key lines of inquiry that will support the shaping of the <i>2027 Local Government Workforce Insights Report</i>

Methodology

Public Skills Australia's *Workforce Insights Reports* are developed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods obtained from primary and secondary sources. This *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report* is supported by data obtained through stakeholder consultations and engagements.

These consultations were used to gain insight into challenges the Local Government industry-sector is facing with the development and maintenance of a skilled workforce. The challenges identified through consultations were thematically analysed to identify trends and priority areas to address for the industry-sector. Specific to the Local Government industry-sector, and in alignment with the tripartite approach for Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs), consultations were held with employers, employee bodies and Government organisations, both in-person and through online meetings, workshops and presentations. Public Skills Australia undertook targeted workforce planning consultation with key industry-sector representatives as below:

Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)	Local Government New South Wales (LGNSW)	Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT)	Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ)
Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA SA)	Local Government Association Tasmania (LGAT)	Local Government Professionals Victoria (LGPro VIC)	Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
WA Local Government Association (WALGA)	Local Government Professionals WA (LGPro WA)	United Services Union (USU)	

Following these consultations, Public Skills Australia conducted secondary qualitative and quantitative research to verify the challenges raised. In addition to these consultations, the findings and views presented in this Report are also drawn from consultations undertaken in the conduct of the Public Skills Australia *Local Government Skills Audit and Review of Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* project. Face-to-face and online consultations were undertaken across late 2025 and early 2026 as well as a broad national survey on workforce challenges, skills and training.

In total, Public Skills Australia engaged with a total of 280³ councils:



A full list of councils that participated in these activities is provided at Appendix A. Drafts were subsequently progressed through Public Skills Australia's governance process that includes:

Government Subcommittee	Industry Advisory Group	Public Skills Australia Board
The Subcommittee is responsible for recommending this Report to the Industry Advisory Group (IAG) for endorsement.	The IAG is responsible for endorsing this Report to the Public Skills Australia Board for approval to be submitted to DEWR.	The Public Skills Australia Board (the Board) is responsible to approve the submission of this Report to DEWR.
This recommendation is made on the basis that the Subcommittee is satisfied that sufficient consultation and engagement has been undertaken, and that consultation feedback was appropriately actioned.	This endorsement is made on the basis that the IAG is satisfied with the Government Subcommittee's recommendation for endorsement. The IAG further provides its strategic guidance and endorsement if comfortable that the strategic priorities of Public Safety and Government industry-sectors are also captured.	This approval is made on the basis that the Board is satisfied that an appropriate development and consultation process was followed and that the Report has been progressed in line with the internal governance requirements of Public Skills Australia.

The Report uses publicly available datasets accessible from Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and other supporting online sources. Due to the complexity of large-scale workforce data, no single source provides an accurate or complete picture. Therefore, multiple data sources are used to provide the most accurate representation of the workforce as possible, supported by qualitative research. This research was bolstered by literature reviews of government reports and documents, online sources, annual reports, departmental documentation, legislation, research articles and relevant Royal Commission Reports.

Public Skills Australia thanks the contributors, including industry representatives, its Board and governance group representatives, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and JSA for sharing their views and data generously, and supporting the development of this Report.

³ Note: councils were able to participate in both consultation and the survey. Councils who engaged in both have only been counted once. Public Skills Australia did not meet with stakeholders from the ACT as they do not have local councils. Insights related to the ACT Government industry-sector are included in the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Workforce Insights Report*.

Drivers of Change

In 2024, Public Skills Australia identified nine megatrends impacting the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. These megatrends were further considered in the development of the *2025 Workforce Insights Reports*.

These megatrends included:



**Limitations in
career pathways**



**Competition
for labour**



**Climate
change**



**Demographic
shifts**



**Diversity and
inclusion**



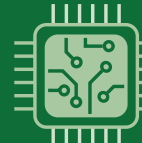
**Expansion of
core duties**



**Public trust and
perceptions**



**Recruitment and
retention**



**Technological
development**

While these megatrends will continue to have longer term implications for workforce planning and development across the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors, the *2026 Workforce Insights Reports* have built on these and analysed four key drivers of change that cut across most megatrends. This is important as these drivers of change will likely impact the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors in the short to medium term.

The four key drivers of change include:

- › **Resilience of organisations to respond to strategic shocks:** Organisational resilience is emerging as a critical driver of change across Australia's Public Safety and Government industry-sectors, particularly as agencies confront increasingly frequent and complex strategic shocks. Recent experience with compounding crises (such as increasingly intense bushfires, major cyber attacks and intensifying geopolitical tensions) have exposed structural vulnerabilities and highlighted the need for more adaptive, anticipatory and integrated capabilities. Investment will be required to deepen organisational capabilities that supports system-wide preparedness, robust governance and the ability to maintain critical functions under stress.⁴
- › **Challenges to workforce productivity:** In its *Five Pillars of Productivity* inquiry reports, the Productivity Commission observed that productivity growth has been slowing globally since the mid-2000s, with Australia experiencing the slowest productivity growth in 60 years. The Productivity Commission identified long-standing pressures that have contributed to the productivity slowdown, including market stagnation, a persistently tight labour market and slower uptake of technological innovations.⁵ These factors are further exacerbated by emerging challenges linked to the megatrends including an ageing population, technological development, climate change and competition for labour.⁶
- › **Emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), greater automation and broader digital transformation:** AI, automation and accelerated digital transformation are powerful drivers of organisational and system-level change in the short term. This is reinforced by a push from the Federal Government for greater adoption of AI and digital initiatives across federal agencies.⁷ These initiatives signal a shift toward embedding AI into core service delivery, regulatory functions and operational decision making. AI, automation and digital transformation represent an opportunity for significant capability uplift through AI-enabled analytics, automation of high-volume processes and advanced digital platforms that enhance situational awareness, threat detection and emergency response coordination. Conversely, they represent a growing security risk as they are also being leveraged by threat actors to disrupt government services, facilitate foreign interference, enable disinformation, promote false narratives through deepfakes and erode trust in government institutions.⁸
- › **Workforce inclusivity:** Workforce inclusivity has been a key focus across the labour market. In the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors this is likely to translate into a continued focus on recruiting, retaining and developing employees from diverse cultural, linguistic, gender, disability and neurodivergent backgrounds. As organisations seek to increase workforce participation from these cohorts, they will be required to adapt and change legacy systems and processes to respond to the needs of the modern workforce.

⁴ Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, [Organisational Resilience: Good Practice Guide](#), Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2024, accessed 25 February 2026.

⁵ Productivity Commission, [Five pillars of productivity inquiries – final reports](#), Productivity Commission, 2025, accessed 13 February 2026.

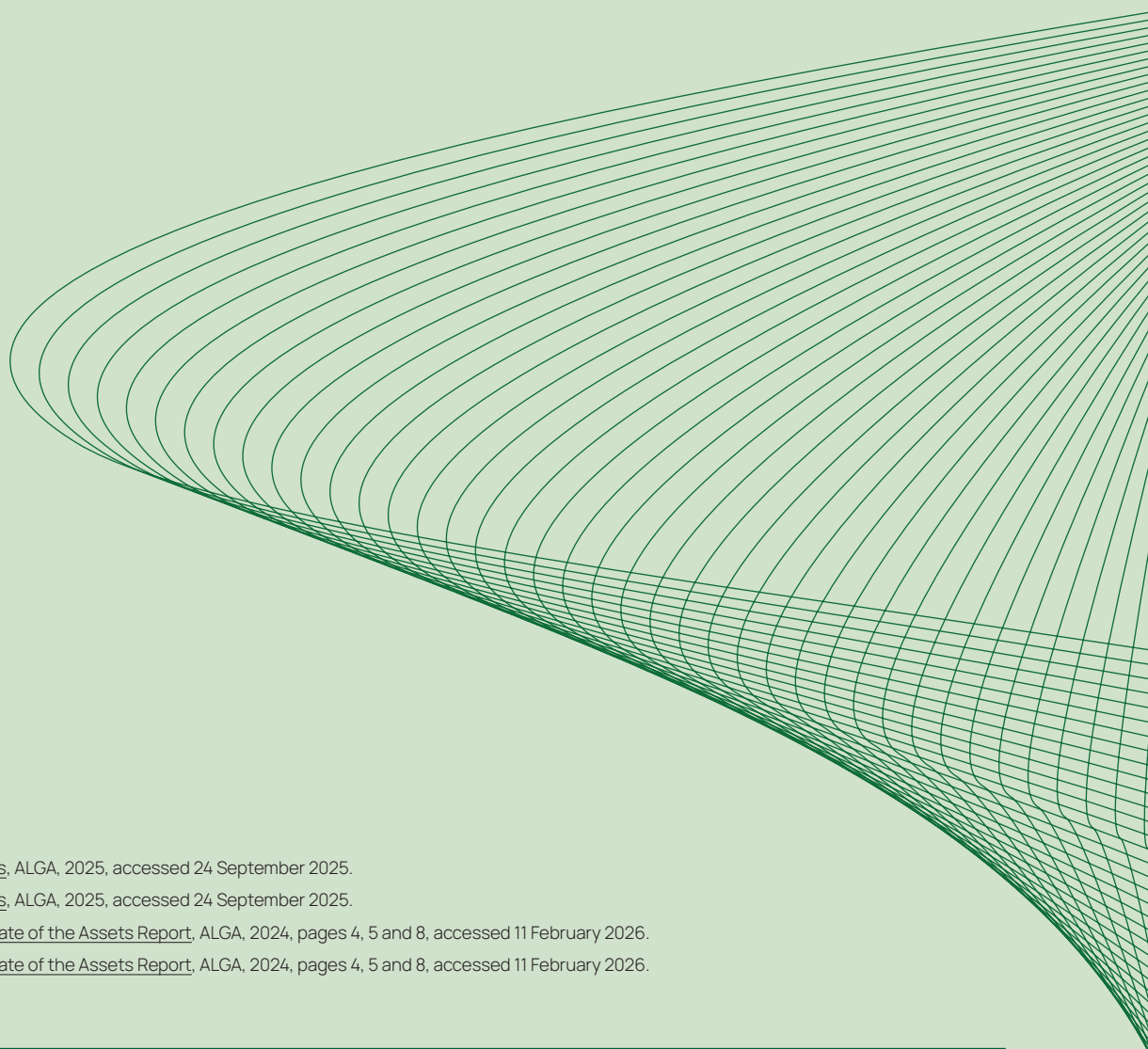
⁶ Productivity Commission, [Five pillars of productivity inquiries](#), Productivity Commission, 2025, accessed 25 February 2026.

⁷ Australian Government Department of Finance, [National framework for the assurance of artificial intelligence in government](#), Australian Government Department of Finance, 2024, accessed 25 February 2026; Australian Government Digital Transformation Agency, [Policy for the responsible use of AI in government](#), Australian Government Digital Transformation Agency, 2025, accessed 25 February 2026.

⁸ Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), [Director-General's Annual Threat Assessment 2025](#), ASIO, 2025, accessed 25 February 2026.

Local Government Industry-Sector Overview

Across Australia, there are 537 local councils.⁹ Of these local councils, around 55 per cent are located in regional, rural or remote areas with the other 45 per cent split across urban regions, urban fringe and urban areas.¹⁰ Local councils manage approximately one-third of Australia's public infrastructure assets, including roads, airports, facilities and other assets¹¹ and make up 77 per cent of the national road network (by length). The public assets managed by local councils are valued at an estimated \$643 billion.¹²



⁹ ALGA, [Facts and Figures](#), ALGA, 2025, accessed 24 September 2025.

¹⁰ ALGA, [Facts and Figures](#), ALGA, 2025, accessed 24 September 2025.

¹¹ ALGA, [2024 National State of the Assets Report](#), ALGA, 2024, pages 4, 5 and 8, accessed 11 February 2026.

¹² ALGA, [2024 National State of the Assets Report](#), ALGA, 2024, pages 4, 5 and 8, accessed 11 February 2026.

The Local Government workforce is multidisciplinary, employing over an estimated 400 different occupations.¹³ Their workforces are managed individually at the local council level but are brought together and commonly represented through state and territory associations and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA). It is estimated that the Local Government workforce is made up of approximately 218,000 employees.¹⁴ While employment projections have estimated significant growth in the Local Government workforce over the next ten years, successive *Workforce Plans*¹⁵ and Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry have noted extensive challenges with recruitment and retention, and a significant expansion of roles and responsibilities for the Local Government industry-sector.¹⁶ The following datapoints were identified through this industry-sector overview for the Local Government workforce:

- › **State and territory Workforce Profile:** The Local Government workforce is spread across a diverse geographical area. The workforce profile consists of a balanced gender representation and high representation of First Nations employees (8.2 per cent of total national workforce) when compared to the total national population (3.8 per cent of total Australian population).¹⁷
- › **Key Occupational Shortages by state and territory:** In consultation with stakeholders for the *Local Government Skills Audit and Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* project, each local council identified top occupational shortages affecting their workforces. In examining these shortages against the *Jobs and Skills Australia Occupational Shortage List*, several Local Government specific shortages have been identified.

¹³ ALGA, [Facts and Figures, ALGA](#), 2025, accessed 24 September 2025.

¹⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Public Sector Employment and Earnings](#), ABS, 2025, accessed 11 February 2026.

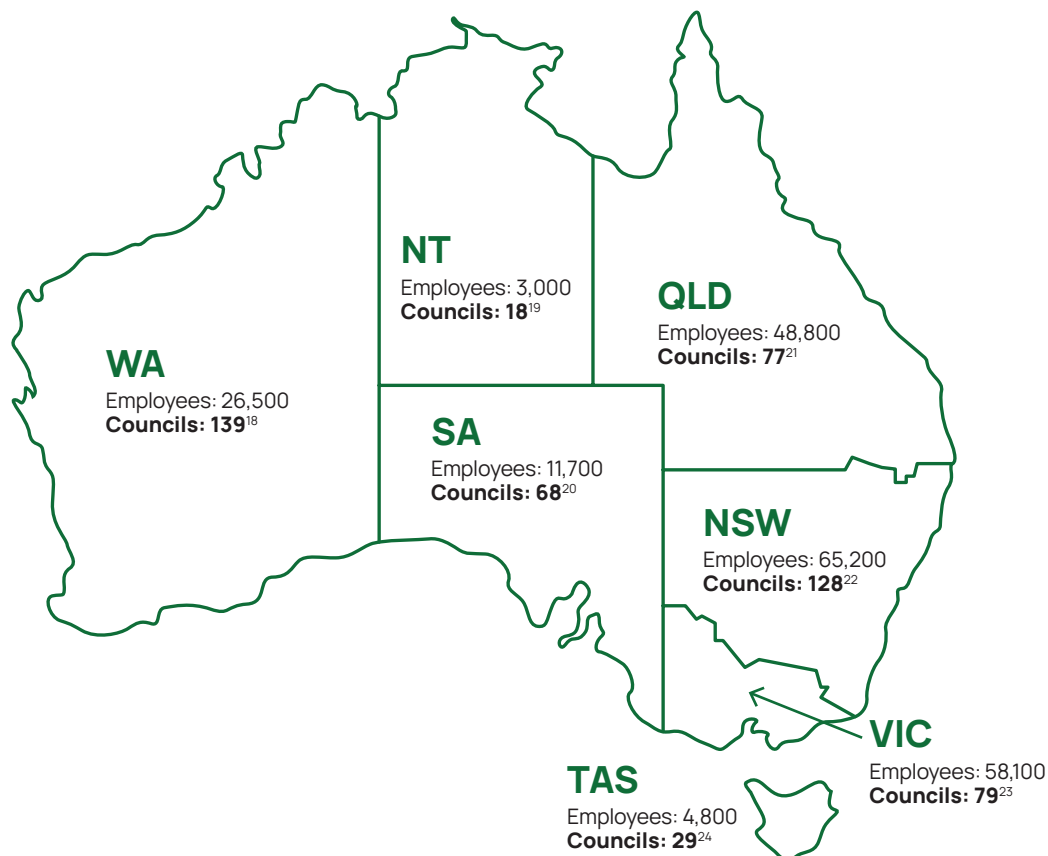
¹⁵ Public Skills Australia (PSA), [Federal, State/Territory and Local Government Workforce Plan 2024](#), PSA, 2024, accessed 11 February 2026; PSA, [2025 Local Government Workforce Insights Report](#), PSA, 2025, accessed 11 February 2026.

¹⁶ Parliament of Australia, [Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability Interim Report](#), Parliament of Australia, 2025, accessed 11 February 2026.

¹⁷ ABS, [Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians](#), ABS, 2021, accessed 12 February 2026; ALGA, [2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey](#), ALGA, 2022, page 39, accessed 11 February 2026.

State and Territory Workforce Profile

Employees by State and Territory



218,000
Local government
employees
as of June 2025²⁵

49.1%
National workforce
is female²⁶

50.9%
National workforce
is male²⁶

8.2%
National workforce
identifies as
First Nations²⁶

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Public sector employment and earnings](#), 2025, Table 2

¹⁸ Western Australia Local Government Association (WALGA), [The Western Australian Government Local Government Directory 2025](#), WALGA, 2025, accessed 24 February 2026.

¹⁹ Northern Territory Government, [Find your council](#), Northern Territory Government, 2026, accessed 24 February 2026.

²⁰ Local Government Association South Australia (LGA SA), [SA Councils list and map](#), LGASA, n.d., accessed 24 February 2026.

²¹ Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers, [Local Government Directory](#), Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers, 2026, accessed 24 February 2026.

²² Local Government New South Wales (LGNSW), [NSW Council Links](#), LGNSW, n.d., accessed 24 February 2026.

²³ Victorian Government, [Know Your Council](#), Victorian Government, 2025, accessed 24 February 2026.

²⁴ Local Government Association Tasmania (LGAT), [Tasmanian Councils](#), LGAT, n.d., accessed 24 February 2026.

²⁵ ABS, [Public Sector Employment and Earnings](#), 2025, Table 1.

²⁶ ALGA, [2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey](#), 2022, Table D2.

NEW SOUTH WALES

TOP 5 OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > IT Officer/Cyber Specialist
- > Planner (including Town and Urban)
- > Engineer (including Civil and Environmental)
- > Tradesperson (including Mechanic and Construction)
- > Building Surveyor

NATIONAL SHORTAGES

Occupation identified in shortage in NSW through Skills Audit	OSL – NSW specific shortage	OSL – Australia wide shortage
IT Officer/Cyber Specialist	No shortage	No shortage
Planner	Regional shortage	Regional shortage
Engineer	Shortage	Shortage
Tradesperson	Shortage	No shortage
Building Surveyor	Shortage	Shortage

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > IT Officer/Cyber Specialist
- > Planner (including Town and Urban)
- > Tradesperson (including Mechanic and Construction)

NORTHERN TERRITORY

TOP 5 OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Community Service Roles
- > Managerial Roles
- > Tradesperson
- > Works Officer
- > Community Program Coordinator

NATIONAL SHORTAGES

Occupation identified in shortage in NT through Skills Audit	OSL – NT specific shortage	OSL – Australia wide shortage
Community Service Roles	Shortage	No shortage
Managerial Roles	Shortage	No shortage
Tradesperson	Shortage	No shortage
Works Officer	Shortage	No shortage
Community Program Coordinator	Shortage	No shortage

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Community Service Roles
- > Managerial Roles
- > Tradesperson
- > Works Officer
- > Community Program Coordinator

QUEENSLAND

TOP 5 OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Town Planner
- > Engineer
- > Tradesperson
- > Water Operations Officer
- > IT Officer

NATIONAL SHORTAGES

Occupation identified in shortage in QLD through Skills Audit	OSL – QLD specific shortage	OSL – Australia wide shortage
Town Planner	Regional shortage	Regional shortage
Engineer	No shortage	Shortage
Tradesperson	No shortage	No shortage
Water Operations Officer	No shortage	No shortage
IT Officer	No shortage	No shortage

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Town Planner
- > Tradesperson
- > Water Operations Officer
- > IT Officer

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

TOP 5 OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Civil Engineer/Operations
- > Arborist
- > Project Manager/Business Analyst
- > Building Surveyor
- > Community Development Officer

NATIONAL SHORTAGES

Occupation identified in shortage in SA through Skills Audit	OSL – SA specific shortage	OSL – Australia wide shortage
Civil Engineer/Operations	Shortage	Shortage
Arborist	Shortage	Shortage
Project Manager/Business Analyst	No shortage	No shortage
Building Surveyor	Shortage	Shortage
Community Development Officer	No shortage	No shortage

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Project Manager/Business Analyst
- > Community Development Officer

TASMANIA

TOP 5 OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Urban/Town Planner
- > Building Surveyor
- > Engineer
- > Plumbing Inspector

NATIONAL SHORTAGES

Occupation identified in shortage in TAS through Skills Audit	OSL – TAS specific shortage	OSL – Australia wide shortage
Urban and Regional Planner	Regional shortage	Regional shortage
Building Surveyor	Shortage	Shortage
Civil Engineer	Shortage	Shortage
Plumbing Inspector	No shortage	No shortage

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Plumbing Inspector

VICTORIA

TOP 5 OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Mechanic
- > Planner
- > Arborist
- > Human Resources
- > Maternal Child Health Nurse

NATIONAL SHORTAGES

Occupation identified in shortage in VIC through Skills Audit	OSL – VIC specific shortage	OSL – Australia wide shortage
Mechanic	No shortage	No shortage
Planner	Regional shortage	Regional shortage
Arborist	Shortage	Shortage
Human Resources	No shortage	No shortage
Maternal Child Health Nurse	Shortage	Shortage

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Mechanic
- > Planner
- > Human Resources

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

TOP 5 OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Corporate Performance
- > IT/Cyber/AI/ERP Specialist
- > Environmental Officer
- > Finance (rates) Officer
- > Urban Planner

NATIONAL SHORTAGES

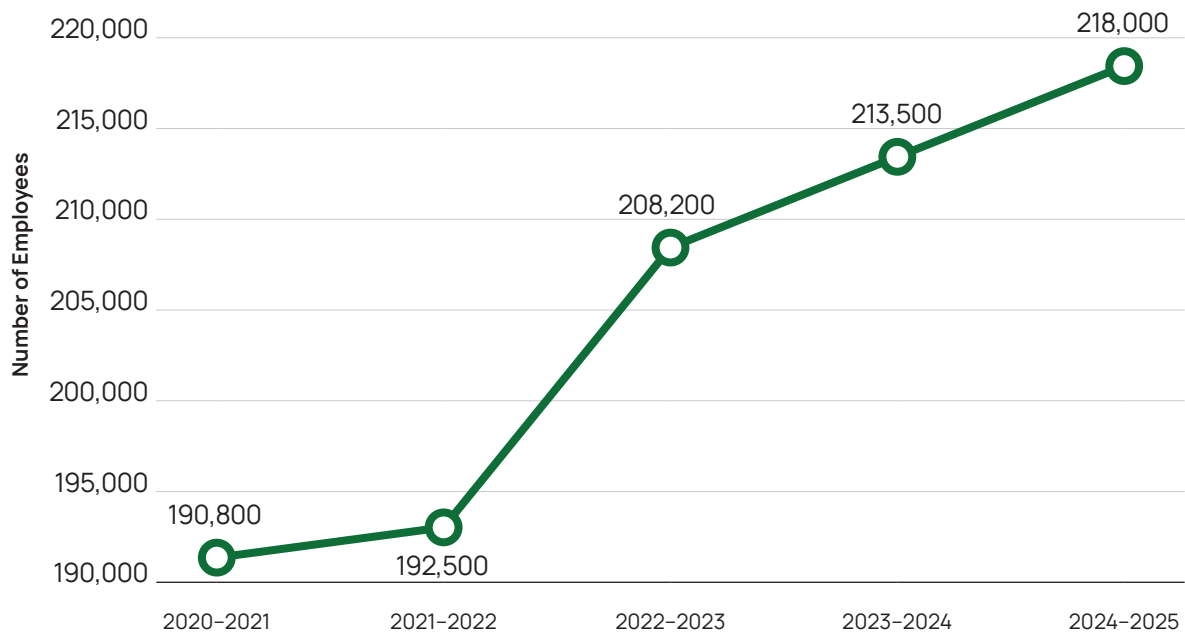
Occupation identified in shortage in WA through Skills Audit	OSL – WA specific shortage	OSL – Australia wide shortage
Corporate Performance	No shortage	No shortage
IT/Cyber/AI/ERP Specialist	No shortage	No shortage
Environmental Officer	Regional shortage	Regional shortage
Finance (rates) Officer	No shortage	No shortage
Urban Planner	Regional shortage	Regional shortage

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SHORTAGES

- > Corporate Performance
- > IT/Cyber/AI/ERP Specialist
- > Environmental Officer
- > Finance (rates) Officer
- > Urban Planner

Industry Profile

2020–2025 Employment Growth in Local Government



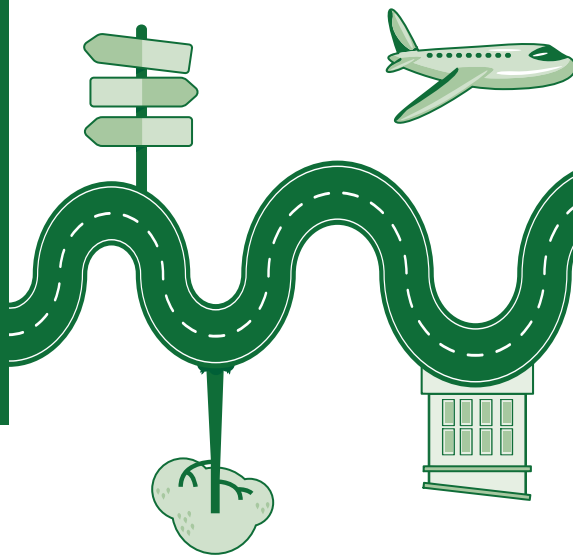
Source: ABS, [Public sector employment and earnings](#), 2025, releases 2020–2025

Asset Management

Local
Government
roads make up

77%

of the national
road network
(by length)

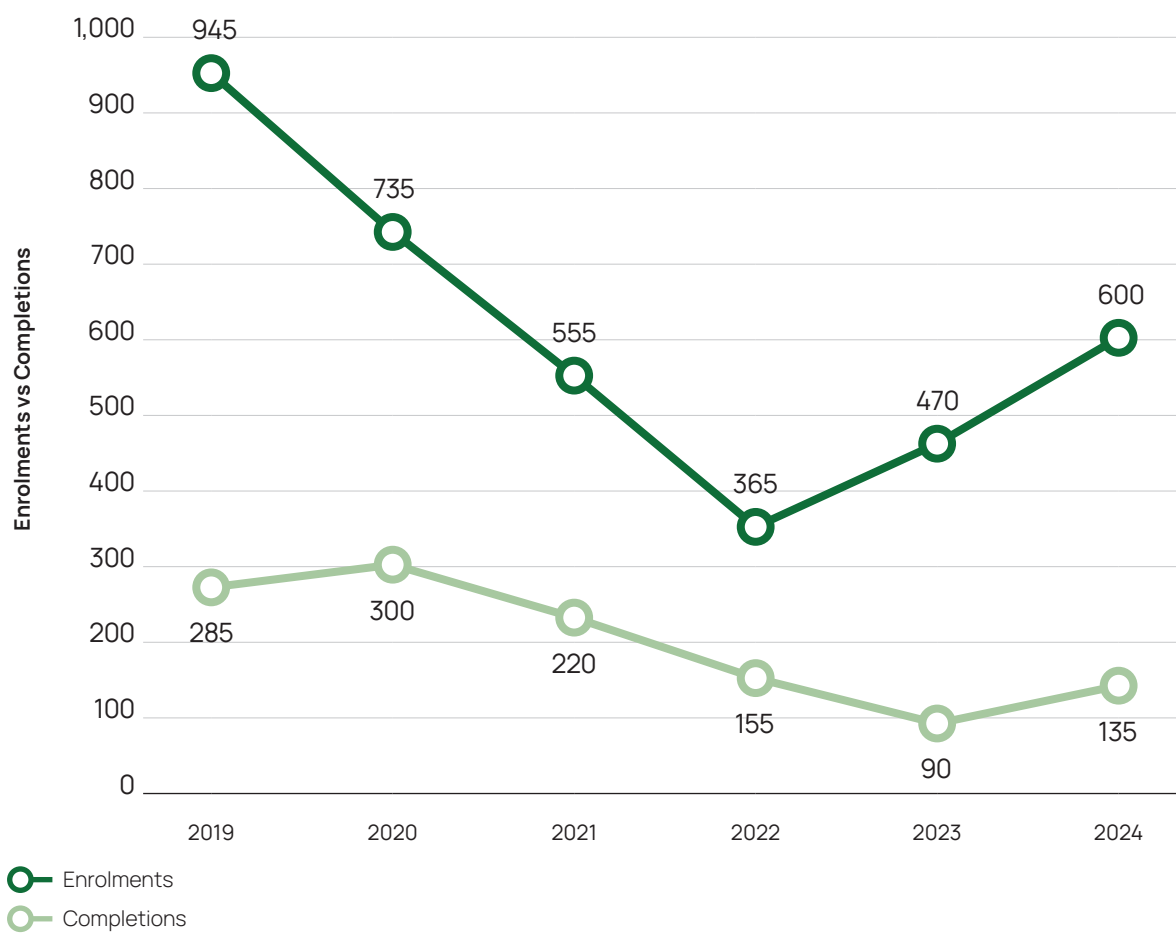


Public assets
managed by
Local Government
are valued at an
estimated

**\$643
billion**

Source: ALGA, [2024 National State of the Assets Report](#), 2024, pg. 5 & 8

Local Government Training Package Enrolments and Completions



Source: NCVER, [Total VET students and courses 2024: DataBuilder \[data set\]](#), 2024

Workforce Insights

This Report identifies the following themes and industry-sector insights relating to Local Government:

Theme	Industry Insights
1. Local Government Specific Occupational Shortages	› Local council employers require a diverse range of skills to maintain the breadth of responsibilities undertaken by local councils › Skills needs are changing due to workforce pressures, technological advancements and shifting community expectations › While local council employers are experiencing some shortages in identified national shortage occupations, several Local Government specific shortages were also identified
2. Access to VET Qualifications and Training Delivery Partners	› Access to TAFE or RTO in regional, rural and remote locations is limited › Few TAFEs and RTOs are willing to travel to geographically isolated locations to deliver required qualifications › Local councils have limited training budgets to support financial impost of course enrolment as well as travel to and from training › Course delivery is often not tailored to suit those from regional, rural or remote locations

1. Local Government Specific Occupational Shortages

In support of both the *2024 Federal, State/Territory & Local Government Workforce Plan* and the *2025 Local Government Workforce Insights Report*, local council employers continue to emphasise the broad scope of occupations employed in their workforce. Role expansion in local councils has been a consistent theme identified during consultations which has been further examined through two Parliamentary inquiries examining Local Government sustainability and Local Government funding and fiscal sustainability.²⁷ These inquiries confirmed that the role of local councils has expanded over time and that this expansion is impacting both financial and workforce sustainability.²⁸

²⁷ Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, [Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability](#), Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, 2026, accessed 11 February 2026; Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, [Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability](#), Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, 2024, accessed 11 February 2026.

²⁸ Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, [Interim Report into Local Government Sustainability](#), Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, 2025, pages 5 and 21, accessed 11 February 2026.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Responsibilities differ between states and territories as well as regional, rural, remote and metropolitan local councils. During consultations held for the Local Government Skills Audit and Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package, stakeholders described the following key services delivered by the industry-sector:

- › local infrastructure maintenance, utilities and asset management
- › waste management
- › ordinance enforcement
- › community services and safety
- › community planning, infrastructure and programs
- › environmental health, parks and community recreation space management and tree management
- › transport delivery and fleet management
- › community services, such as childcare, aged care, cultural support services and NDIS programs

As a diverse workforce, local councils require access to a broad range of skills to deliver services. Similar to other employers, Local Government stakeholders noted that technological advancements, shifting community expectations and workforce pressures are changing the role of local councils, the nature of their service delivery and the skills their employees require.

Technological Advancement

Across the broader Australian labour market, technological advancement is changing the core skills required in certain occupations. Adopting new technologies requires rapid skilling/upskilling which may challenge traditional approaches to training,²⁹ particularly for local council employers that have previously expressed their challenges with access to TAFE and RTOs.³⁰

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Fleet management, water operations and infrastructure services are facing significant technological transformation as automation and electrification are reshaping operational roles. Local councils are adopting smart meters, digital planning tools and AI-driven solutions.

AI-enabled planning tools, automation in plant operations and heightened cybersecurity risks demand new technical competencies which will require significant upskilling. Roles once considered manual, such as trades and multi-skilled operators, now require digital literacy, remote operation skills and familiarity with advanced diagnostic tools.

Increased Regulator and Community Expectations

Stakeholders generally reported that community expectations of local council services have continued to increase. Some reported that increased access to technology and technological transformation has led to public expectations of local councils to provide 24/7 access to flexible, digital-first support which can be challenging for smaller or regional, rural and remote local councils to accommodate. Where community expectations cannot be met, stakeholders noted that rising reports of customer aggression toward frontline employees was driving investment in conflict resolution training, safety protocols and engagement strategies, reducing budgets for VET training investment.

Waste services and aged care support (delivered by some local councils) are facing increasing complexity in their compliance and governance requirements. Legislative changes, including to the *Aged Care Act 2024*³¹ and commitments to mandated *Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) recycling for households by 2030*,³² increase complexity for project officers, engineers and compliance employees in local councils.

²⁹ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), *Connecting for Impact – The Jobs and Skills Report 2025*, JSA, 2025, page 81, accessed 19 November 2025.

³⁰ PSA, *Local Government Workforce Insights Report 2025*, PSA, 2025, page 14–15, accessed 11 February 2026.

³¹ Australian Government, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, *About the new rights-based Aged Care Act*, Australian Government, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, 2025, accessed 11 February 2026.

³² New South Wales Environmental Protection Agency (NSW EPA), *FOGO mandates and rollout*, NSW EPA, 2025, accessed 11 February 2026.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Local councils noted that there are challenges attracting employees skilled in navigating regulatory requirements and working in dynamic environments, making it difficult to anticipate and plan for training and skilling requirements.

Workforce Pressures

Resourcing and recruitment were previously raised as challenging for local councils.³³ Key occupations continuing to be identified as in shortage include community service officers, tradespersons, managers, finance officers and project managers. Further, local councils are also struggling to secure specialists, particularly Information Technology (IT) and cyber security experts, arborists, environmental officers and town planners. These shortages are particularly pronounced in regional, rural and remote areas where they may be competing with private industry. These challenges are further compounded as local councils are also experiencing challenges with upskilling of their existing employees (particularly where expectations or technological skills have changed the core competencies of an occupation).

Consultation conducted throughout the *Local Government Skills Audit and Update and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* project, identified differences between recognised occupational shortages between states and territories and, in some cases, among regional, rural and remote communities. Comparisons with the *Jobs and Skills Australia Skills Priority List* (see data presented in the *State and Territory Workforce Profile* of this Report) indicate that while some specialist occupations – such as engineers, civil engineers, arborists, maternal health nurses and building surveyors – are in national shortage, other shortages may be more specific to the Local Government industry-sector.

³³ PSA, *Local Government Workforce Insights Report 2025*, PSA, 2025, page 19, accessed 11 February 2026.

Occupations which appear to be in shortage specific to the Local Government industry-sector in states and territories (when compared to *National Occupation Shortage List*) include:

New South Wales › IT Officer/Cyber Specialist › Planner › Tradesperson	Northern Territory › Community Service Roles › Managerial Roles › Tradesperson › Works Officer › Community Program Coordinator
Queensland › Town Planner › Tradesperson › Water Operations Officer › IT Officer	South Australia › Project Manager/Business Analyst › Community Development Officer
Tasmania › Plumbing Inspector	Victoria › Mechanic › Planner › Human Resources
Western Australia › Corporate Performance › IT/Cyber/AI/ERP Specialist › Environmental Officer › Finance (rates) Officer › Urban Planner	

Support to connect local council employers with VET providers who can deliver timely and appropriate skilling training courses to address Local Government-specific occupational shortages is needed to enable the sector to meet expanding and increasing service delivery requirements.

2. Access to VET Qualifications and Training Delivery Partners

Access to training has consistently been raised as a challenge for local council employers located in regional, rural and remote locations. This challenge is affirmed in the *Interim Report into Local Government Sustainability*,³⁴ Public Skills Australia's *2025 Local Government Workforce Insights Report*,³⁵ and the Australian Local Government Association's *2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey*.³⁶

Throughout consultation for the *Local Government Skills Audit and Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* project, VET was consistently identified as the most relevant pathway for roles requiring technical expertise and compliance assurance. Local councils emphasised the importance of VET's role where formal qualifications underpin regulatory compliance and risk management in functions such as water treatment and civil construction, and for several technical positions that require *Certificate III* or *IV* such as Water Operator, Mechanic and Childcare Educator. However, while they acknowledged VET overwhelmingly supports work-related training, some stakeholders noted concerns about their ability to access TAFEs and RTOs to obtain qualifications that are contextualised to the Local Government industry-sector.

Access to VET Training

The consultations for the *2024 Federal, State/Territory & Local Government Workforce Plan* and the *2025 Local Government Workforce Insights Report*, as well as the *Local Government Skills Audit and Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* project, re-affirmed the challenges relating to access to qualifications and training delivery. These are further detailed below:

- **Limited local TAFEs or RTOs to support training delivery:** Regional, rural and remote local councils face acute challenges in accessing suitable VET training. Further, some qualifications require supervision in the workplace as part of their delivery (e.g., mechanic apprenticeships), which is challenging for local councils. For example, some local councils reported having to contract external trainers to supervise apprentices or alternatively, employees having to travel significant distances for face-to-face instruction under supervision.
- **Few TAFEs and RTOs are willing to travel to geographically isolated locations to deliver training:** Few RTOs are willing or able to deliver tailored, in-community training, especially for niche or highly contextual skills. Regional, rural and remote local councils stressed the need for more RTOs experienced in delivering training in community settings and to First Nations learners. Stakeholders also indicated that for First Nations learners, some training may not offer an appropriate level of cultural sensitivity or access to translated materials and interpreters.

³⁴ Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, *Interim Report into Local Government Sustainability*, Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport, 2025, page 21, accessed 11 February 2026.

³⁵ PSA, *Local Government Workforce Insights Report 2025*, PSA, 2025, page 19, accessed 11 February 2026.

³⁶ ALGA, *2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey*, ALGA, 2022, page 10, accessed 11 February 2026.

- › **Limited training budgets to support course enrolment and travel to access training:** Several VET programs require travel to urban centres, which is costly and disruptive, especially for remote employees and their families. For example, on Tiwi Islands, it is culturally appropriate for families to travel together, increasing costs. Local councils reported spending more on travel than on actual training. In addition, for accessing full qualifications, some noted high costs and limited access to accredited training. For example, one local council body reported spending approximately \$40,000 for water operator training for six participants.
- › **Non-Tailored delivery options:** Local councils consistently reported that self-paced online learning, which may be offered by both TAFEs and RTOs, is ineffective for practical, hands-on roles, such as horticulture or construction. Blended or face-to-face approaches are preferred, but high qualification costs and travel expenses often result in employees seeking and selecting non-accredited options outside VET. In addition, delivery models are not always suitable for all, particularly for those with low English language, literacy, numeracy and/or digital (LLND) skills. As local council employers aim to maintain a diverse workforce, stakeholders noted challenges with VET training delivery. For example, some Northern Territory stakeholders highlighted that several First Nations employees speak English as a third or fourth language and find the standard of English used in VET courses a significant barrier to participation. The level of evidence that RTOs are required to collect to certify competency was considered restrictive for learners with limited literacy. One stakeholder recounted a VET unit requiring a learner to rewrite an example report 17 times, which was seen as unnecessary and intimidating and had deterred other employees from undertaking training. Local council employees reported a desire to see the level of language reviewed to make courses more accessible, as well as exploring different delivery options that accommodate people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Stakeholders noted that closer engagement with government decision makers, TAFEs, RTOs and councils to consider solutions to challenges such as access to training, delivery options and costs may support local councils to build the technical capability they need for the future.

Contextualisation of Qualifications to Local Government Service Delivery

Stakeholders expressed concern with the ability of qualifications to be contextualised to accommodate the unique operating environments of local councils. Some indicated a preference for training that:

- › includes cultural, geographic and operational contexts of working in regional, rural and remote, and First Nations communities, with case studies drawn from real-world experiences
- › accurately reflects the realities of local council work and aligned with operational priorities
- › reflects jurisdiction-specific requirements, particularly for modules covering regulations and local laws, which may differ across LGAs.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Stakeholders from New South Wales noted challenges with delivery of some civil qualifications which were deemed not sufficiently flexible and included modules that did not align with operational needs. Stakeholders indicated a preference for tailored electives that directly address workforce requirements and ensure modules are specific to LGA contexts, since regulatory demands differ across regions.

While some stakeholders expressed interest in an expansion of the LGA Local Government Training Package to host contextualised qualifications, challenges with qualification duplication could emerge. Bringing together state and territory decision makers, State and Territory Training Authorities/Senior Responsible Officers (STTA/SRO), Local Government partner TAFEs and RTOs to discuss solutions to training access, delivery styles, financial implications and contextualisation of learning materials, may support more sustainable and targeted training outcomes for Local Government industry-sector occupational shortages.

2026 Proposed Local Government Workforce Strategies

Public Skills Australia proposes the following strategies aligned to the workforce insights identified to support the Local Government industry-sector:

1

Map Local Government occupational shortages to relevant VET training products

Workforce Insight: Local Government Specific Occupational Shortages

JSC Function: Implementation, Promotion and Monitoring

Objective: Identify and map the use of relevant qualifications (beyond the LGA Local Government Training Package) to support VET training for key occupational shortages in local councils.

Approach: Map the most challenging occupational shortages (as identified through the *JSA Occupation Shortage List* and the *Local Government Skills Audit and Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package*) to relevant qualifications contained in both the LGA Local Government Training Package and other Training Packages (as well as the RTOs that delivers them).

Key Stakeholders

- > Australian Local Government Association
- > State/Territory Local Government Associations
- > Local Government Workforce Development Group
- > RTOs
- > STTA/SROs
- > State/Territory Local Government Departments

Deliverable: Occupational Shortage Map

Impact: Support the Local Government workforce by identifying current qualifications which may support appropriate and timely skilling, resulting in increased enrolments and completions of relevant qualifications.

Anticipated timing: 12-month project

2

Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges

Workforce Insight: Access to VET Qualifications and Training Delivery Partners

JSC Function: Industry Stewardship, Training Product Development

Objective: Promote the Local Government industry-sector as a sustainable and skilled career pathway to enhance service delivery to communities.

Approach:

Part A: Bring together state and territory decision makers, STTAs/SROs, Local Government Partners, TAFEs and RTOs to facilitate conversations about whole of VET system responses to Local Government industry-sector challenges. This should include discussions about training delivery, funding of training for occupations in shortage in local councils and could see potential agreements between local councils and RTOs regarding training delivery.

Part B (optional): If gaps in specialist local council skills are identified in Strategy 1 (*Map Local Government occupational shortages to relevant VET training products*), an evaluation of the current LGA Local Government Training Package may be undertaken, with a focus on the number of qualifications, training pathways, design of specialisation areas and the potential utility of skill sets.

Key Stakeholders

- › Australian Local Government Association
- › State/Territory Local Government Associations
- › Local Government Workforce Development Group
- › Jobs and Skills Councils
- › RTOs
- › STTA/SROs
- › State/Territory Local Government Departments

Deliverable:

Part A: Roundtable discussions and summary report of discussions

Part B: Reviewed training product/s

Impact: Support the Local Government industry-sector by facilitating access to whole of VET sector stakeholders.

Anticipated timing:

Part A: 12-month project

Part B: TBC if required

Workforce Insights: Update on 2025 Strategies

Public Skills Australia's *2025 Local Government Workforce Insights Report* identified three challenges that are currently impacting Local Government workforces:

Access to Training	Skills Gaps	Resourcing and Recruitment
Accessing training is a key challenge for local councils, particularly in regional, rural and remote LGAs.	The local councils are experiencing significant occupational shortages in job roles that have long training pathways, or occupations that are emerging, such as emergency management.	Recruitment is a continuous challenge for local councils, particularly due to resourcing limitations such as access to housing and infrastructure.

To support the Local Government industry-sector with these challenges, Public Skills Australia commenced two projects in 2025. These projects provide deeper insights into how these challenges arose, what the key indicators of these challenges are and recommended tools for mitigating these challenges.

1. Local Government Skills Audit and Review of Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package

The aim of the *Local Government Skills Audit and Review of Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* (this Project) is to reach as many local councils, in as many LGAs as possible, to gain a thorough understanding of the occupational, skills and training challenges within the Local Government industry-sector. This work provided Public Skills Australia with insight into the current occupations employed, and skills needed in local councils, and therefore where the occupational shortages and skills gaps are. This Project also provides an understanding of the emerging skills and occupational needs in the Local Government workforce by categorising these needs based on regional, rural remote, and metropolitan LGAs.

Public Skills Australia concluded the qualitative research phase of this Project, engaging with 137 councils across Australia from every state and the Northern Territory. A *Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey* was deployed in collaboration with the Australian Local Government Association, which had 210 respondents. This Survey provided longitudinal data for the Local Government industry-sector, following on from its deployment in 2018 and 2022. The project will continue in 2026 by reviewing the current qualifications and units of competency in the LGA Local Government Training Package. It will also review, where appropriate, content from other relevant training packages to identify whether this content can assist in addressing identified shortages.

This Project continues to support several other priorities for Public Skills Australia, including:

Ministerial Priority 2026	This Project will contribute to building a shared, evidence-based view of the workforce challenges and opportunities, improving the sustainability of the Local Government workforce and progressing the priority reforms under the <i>Closing the Gap National Agreement</i> , by leveraging insights from First Nations local councils.
Public Skills Australia Strategic Plan	Support the Local Government industry-sector through working toward reviewing, developing and implementing high-quality training products.
Drivers of Change	Resilience of local councils to respond to strategic shocks and drivers of change, particularly: > expansion of core duties > recruitment and retention > competition for labour

Next Steps

Publication of the qualitative research from this Project, as well as the *National Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey* results, will be made available to the public in mid-2026. Public Skills Australia is undertaking analysis of these findings to provide appropriate recommendations back to the industry-sector, including further insights into the uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package. This will provide findings on refinement to the VET Training Package, ensuring its effectiveness in addressing identified occupational shortages, skills gaps and training needs. It will also inform what further research can be undertaken to meet the needs of the Local Government workforce.

2. Local Government Emergency Management Skills

The aim of the *Local Government Emergency Management Skills Project* (Skills Project) is to address urgent skilling and upskilling needs of the Local Government industry-sector. The *2025 Local Government Workforce Insights Report* identified emerging occupational shortages and skills gaps which are impacting the service delivery of councils to their communities, particularly in areas such as emergency management and disaster recovery. This Report found that drivers of change such as climate change, are impacting the skills and training needs of Local Government workforces through the acceleration and increased frequency of emergency events and natural disasters.

The Skills Project will refer to the findings of the *Local Government Skills Audit and Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package*, to identify opportunities to bolster the offerings in VET for occupations such as emergency management. The Skills Project will also identify where skill sets may be used from other Training Packages, or where the creation of new skill sets may be required.

The Skills Project continues to support several broad priorities for Public Skills Australia:

Ministerial Priority 2026	The Skills Project will contribute to embedding of Qualifications Reform principles, strengthening capabilities of the Public Safety and Government workforces, in preparing for and responding to emergency events and the sustainability of the Local Government workforce into the future.
Public Skills Australia Strategic Plan	Support the Local Government industry-sector through working toward reviewing, developing and implementing high-quality training products.
Drivers of Change	Resilience of local councils to respond to strategic shocks and drivers of change, particularly: > expansion of core duties > recruitment and retention > competition for labour > technological development > climate change

Next Steps

Public Skills Australia is currently engaging with stakeholders in the Local Government industry-sector, to confirm the priority areas for skilling, and identify other potential occupational focus areas beyond emergency management for the Skills Project to work toward. Initial research and findings of the Skills Project will be used to assess whether an Activity Project Submission will be developed for May 2026.

Existing Industry-Sector Strategies

2026 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey

Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)

Anticipated mid-2026

ALGA has run the *Local Government Workforce Skills and Capabilities Survey* since 2018. For the 2026 survey, Public Skills Australia collaborated with ALGA to include new questions on local council skills, occupations, and training needs. The 2026 survey received 210 responses from across Australia. The results of this survey will be integrated into national and state/territory reports in 2026 through Public Skills Australia's delivery of the *Local Government Skills Audit and Review of Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* project.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

Over 200 local councils responded to the survey. The rich data and contributions provided by these local councils informed detailed consultation with Local Government industry-sector stakeholders particularly through engagement with the research process and findings.

2025 Workforce Strategies

Collaborating with ALGA on this survey bolstered the *Local Government Skills Audit and Review of Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* project by providing an evidence base. This survey provided detailed insights and data, particularly for jurisdictional-specific occupational shortages and current training needs.

2026 Workforce Strategies

This survey will positively impact the *Mapping of Local Government occupational shortages to relevant VET training products* and *Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges* strategies, by providing up-to-date data and analysis.

Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability

Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport

Lapsed

The Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability, conducted by a House of Representatives Committee, is examining the sustainability of the Local Government industry-sector. Through submissions and hearings, it has gathered insights from Local Government stakeholders on key challenges. This includes ongoing issues relating to financial sustainability and funding, increasing infrastructure and service delivery obligations, structural barriers that affect local council employees and the services they provide, and workforce trends, particularly in attracting and retaining skilled employees, and the impacts of labour hire practices. The inquiry received 287 submissions, held 16 public hearings and examined the sustainability of service delivery in the Local Government industry-sector, with emphasis on the constant expansion of roles and responsibilities that local councils perform.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

This inquiry has provided greater context and focus on the future of the Local Government industry-sector. Public Skills Australia's consultations and engagements have benefited from the interim report findings, which align to the challenges from the ongoing expansion of roles and responsibilities of local councils across Australia.

2025 Workforce Strategies

The *Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* highlighted similar findings to this inquiry which contribute to ongoing skills challenges for the Local Government workforce, such as the expansion of core duties, increased service delivery needs and structural barriers to employment.

2026 Workforce Strategies

The inquiry will inform Public Skills Australia's research on the *Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges* strategy by identifying potential systemic responses to the current and emerging challenges local councils are experiencing.

Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability

Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport

Ongoing

The Inquiry is being undertaken by referral from the Minister of Emergency Management; Minister for Regional Development Local Government and Territories, to examine how current funding arrangements affect the ability of local councils to deliver services and invest in infrastructure.

This Inquiry notes the evidence provided in the previous *Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability*, which will be considered in this inquiry as per the terms of reference. This Inquiry seeks submissions that provide further information into this issue. Submissions have been closed at time of publishing this Report.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

This Inquiry informed and aligned to recurring themes in Public Skills Australia's ongoing consultation with stakeholders. Stakeholders consistently identified challenges with sustainability in the Local Government industry-sector.

2025 Workforce Strategies

Expanding roles and responsibilities is a consistent theme identified in Public Skills Australia's research and this Inquiry provides context about funding and fiscal elements of workforce skills shortages across the Local Government industry-sector. This was highlighted in the *Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package*, noting the obligations local councils have to their communities.

2026 Workforce Strategies

The Inquiry will inform the research into the *Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges* proposed strategy, that will seek to resolve resourcing and cost based challenges when accessing accredited VET training.

National Housing Accord 2024 – 2029

The Australian Government

Ongoing

The federal and state/territory governments have all agreed to deliver 1.2 million homes over five years commencing in mid-2024, as part of a broader housing agenda supporting social housing, renters and homebuyers. National Cabinet has endorsed \$3.5 billion in federal funding to assist state/territory governments and local councils in delivering the National Housing Accord 2024-2029 (The Accord).

How this informs Public Skills Australia’s work

Consultation and engagement

Access to housing continues to be a key challenge for Local Government Workforces, particularly in attraction and retention in regional, rural and remote LGAs. The Accord will continue to be monitored to assess impact to the Local Government workforces.

2025 Workforce Strategies

The Accord provided valuable context for understanding how housing supply impacts skills and occupational shortages across diverse regional, rural and remote contexts as part Public Skills Australia’s scoping research for the *Local Government Skills Audit and review of the uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package*.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Public Skills Australia will continue to monitor the progress of the Accord and factor this progress into the *Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges*. Whilst housing is not directly in the remit of Jobs and Skills Councils, challenges facing regional, rural and remote Local Government workforces such as attraction and retention, as well as access to training, may be impacted by this strategy.

Queensland Local Government Workforce Strategy 2024 – 2028

Local Government Association Queensland

2024 – 2028

The *LGAQ Workforce Strategy 2024–2028* (The Strategy) provides a succinct plan for developing and strengthening the Local Government industry-sector in Queensland and its workforce. It sets out objectives, strategies and measures, and identifies risks and opportunities. Key themes centre around support for the work conducted, building a capable workforce and ensuring a safe working environment.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

This strategy informed engagement with Queensland Local Government stakeholders and provided insights specific to Queensland's Local Government workforce.

2025 Workforce Strategies

Queensland-specific objectives and strategies were considered throughout the process of research for the *Local Government Skills Audit and review of the uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* and will inform the jurisdictional report for Queensland, published as part of this work.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Jurisdictional context is important for the *Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges*. Connecting the LGAQ's Workforce Strategy to the broader influential organisations, including RTOs, TAFEs, STTAs/SROs may provide greater opportunity for Queensland local councils to overcome their access to training challenges.

Workforce and Gender Equality in South Australian Local Government

Local Government Professionals South Australia

2025

The *Workforce Gender and Equality in South Australian Local Government Report* (This Report), provides an in-depth overview of the current gender equity landscape in South Australia, and more specifically in its local councils. The Report highlights an almost equal gender balance in South Australia's Local Government workforce but acknowledges that there are still disparities. This Report goes further to highlight gender pay gap issues, segregation by workforce streams (e.g. women making up more part-time, casual and short-term contract roles) and that the length of service is generally longer for males.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

This Report provided specific jurisdictional information for the Local Government industry-sector in South Australia on a key priority area. It provides valuable context in engagements with stakeholders addressing diversity and inclusion challenges.

2025 Workforce Strategies

The *Local Government Skills Audit and review of the uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* addressed challenges with workplace gender equality identified in this Report, through the National Survey and workshops undertaken for this project.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Addressing themes of diversity and inclusion, in this case, gender equality, are leading themes for the *Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges*. This Report will inform Public Skills Australia's broader understanding of gender parity and different gendered workforce experiences in Local Government, and the challenges and opportunities these present.

2023 Local Government Workforce Shortages Survey in Western Australia

Local Government Professionals Western Australia

2023

The *2023 Local Government Workforce Shortage Survey in Western Australia* (This Survey) found significant recruitment and retention challenges, driven by persistent skills shortages, geographic constraints and strong competition from other industries. It also highlighted the growing role of social media in recruitment and upskilling and recommended more targeted, flexible training to strengthen the workforce and support effective service delivery.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

This survey informed engagement with Western Australian Local Government Stakeholders, supporting Public Skills Australia to understand jurisdictional-specific skills and training challenges.

2025 Workforce Strategies

This survey was valuable in identifying the key aspects in Public Skills Australia's development of industry-sector-wide surveys for the *Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package*. This survey provided context in Public Skills Australia's engagement with Western Australian stakeholders for this project and is a reference point of comparison as the jurisdictional report for Western Australia it publishes.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Findings from this survey will provide specific data for Western Australian local councils and will be informative in the project to *Map Local Government occupational shortages to relevant VET training product*, to identify opportunities for Local Government in Western Australia.

Careers at Council

Local Government NSW

Ongoing

Local Government Association of South Australia

Municipal Association of Victoria

Local Government Association Tasmania

Western Australian Local Government Association

Local Government Association Queensland

Local Government Association of the Northern Territory

The *Careers at Council Hub* (The Hub) is an online database that showcases the career areas and occupations employed by local councils, and what potential employees can expect from having a career in the Local Government industry-sector. It is informed and run by seven Local Government Associations and the Australian Local Government Association. Potential employees can also search for current job opportunities and register to be informed of opportunities.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Hub has informed consultation as several Local Government stakeholders have referred to insights and information garnered through this recruitment initiative. These insights have provided specific understanding for how local councils organise their workforces.

2025 Workforce Strategies

The Hub informed the *Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package*, to understand the breadth of occupations currently employed in the Local Government industry-sector.

2026 Workforce Strategies

The categories of occupations provided by the Hub will inform research for the project to *Map Local Government occupational shortages to relevant VET training products* project, by providing a list of occupations employed by local councils nationally. This will then be mapped against the LGA Local Government Training Package to identify greater training pathways and opportunities for occupations that are currently in shortage across the Local Government industry-sector.

Earn and Learn Program

RMIT, Swinburne, Victoria University and Federation University

2024 – ongoing

The *Earn and Learn Program* (This Program) is designed to address skills shortages that are critical to Australia's future economic prosperity. It is a nationally recognised work-based-learning qualification to be delivered in collaboration with industry. Students will earn a wage while completing their degree and be partially sponsored through the employer and learn skills of the job-role at the same time. For the Local Government industry-sector, it is an opportunity to fill critical skills shortages by creating pathways into occupations in collaboration with higher-education institutions.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

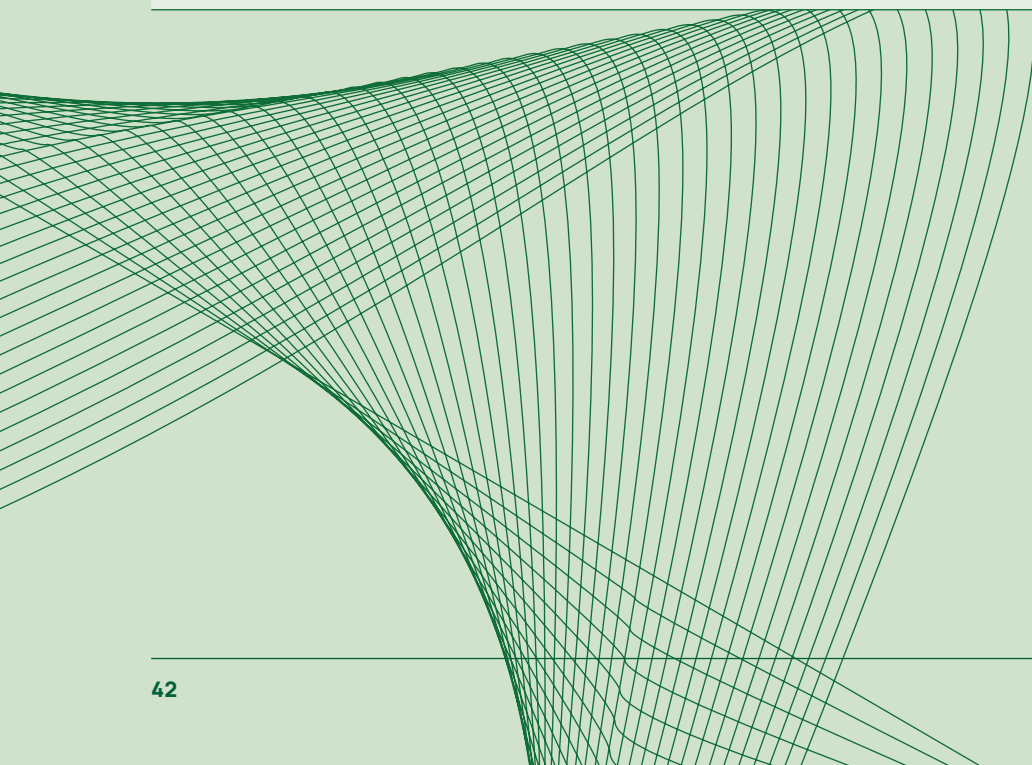
This program has informed engagement with Local Government stakeholders, particularly when discussing apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities in Local Government workforces, and how this program may provide an opportunity for the Local Government industry-sector.

2025 Workforce Strategies

The *Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package* was informed by this program, by providing findings on the industry-sector's demand for these types of training programs.

2026 Workforce Strategies

The *Mapping of Local Government occupational shortages to relevant VET training products* project, will be informed by this program to understand the current training landscape in VET, and in higher education institutions.



Fresh Start Program

NSW Office of Local Government

2025 – 2031

The New South Wales Government aims to increase the Local Government workforce through the employment of apprentices for a period of six years, starting January 2026, through the *Fresh Start Program* (This Program). Through a grant program with councils, the NSW Government will provide local councils with funding for wages and ongoing costs of employment. This aims to increase the capacity of the NSW Local Government workforce, generate local knowledge, training and employment opportunities, and contribute to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

This program provided context on current workforce needs for NSW local councils, and potential challenge mitigation opportunities through further training and employment opportunities in collaboration with other levels of Government.

2025 Workforce Strategies

This program informed the *Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the Local Government Training Package*, by providing specific jurisdictional data for NSW. This program also contributed to a broader understanding around different and novel approaches to training attraction and promotion.

2026 Workforce Strategies

This program will inform the *Mapping of Local Government Occupational Shortages to relevant VET training products* by providing comparative data and the opportunity for knowledge sharing among other states and territories.

Local Government Association of the Northern Territory Strategic Plan

Local Government Association of the Northern Territory

2025 – 2028

The *Local Government Association of the Northern Territory Strategic Plan* (This Plan) outlines LGANT's purpose, vision, values and focus areas. The main priorities to support the Local Government workforces in the Northern Territory include advocacy, development, engagement and performance. Included in these areas of support include strategies to connect workforces to further training and technical expertise and facilitate strong engagement to understand ongoing operational needs of local councils and their workforces.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

This Plan provided context when engaging with stakeholders in the Northern Territory, informing current challenges faced by their Local Government Workforces, and future initiatives being conducted to mitigate these challenges.

2025 Workforce Strategies

This Plan informed the development phase of the *Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the Local Government Training Package* by providing specific jurisdictional data and workforce challenges.

2026 Workforce Strategies

This Plan will provide insights specific to the Northern Territory for the *Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges*. This will ensure engagement with stakeholders for this *Project* are robust and sensitive to specific opportunities and challenges in the Northern Territory. This Plan will be important for key stakeholders to connect to as part of this strategy, to ensure that any whole-of-system response meets the needs and goals of LGANT and the local councils.

Local Government Association of Tasmania Strategic Plan

Local Government Association Tasmania

2025 – 2030

The *Local Government Association of Tasmania's Strategic Plan* (This Plan) highlights key outcomes for the mitigation of local council challenges for this cycle of planning until 2030. This will be achieved through advocacy, leadership, support and representation of Tasmania's local councils. This Plan includes outcomes specific to the skills and training needs of the workforces to ensure the needs to Tasmanian communities are being met.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

This *Plan* provided valuable context for stakeholder engagement in Tasmania, outlining current workforce challenges and the initiatives being developed to address them.

2025 Workforce Strategies

This *Plan* informed the development of the *Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the Local Government Training Package* by bolstering the specific state-based data for Tasmania. This was valuable in identifying specific workforce planning challenges and opportunities addressed in the audit.

2026 Workforce Strategies

This *Plan* will provide insights specific to Tasmania in the *Facilitate a roundtable on whole of VET system responses to Local Government challenges*. This will inform Public Skills Australia's consultation on the roundtable, by informing discussions of workforce planning opportunities and challenges in the Tasmanian context and ensuring that any whole-of-system response meets the needs and goals of LGAT and the local councils.

Commonwealth Government Initiatives

Public Skills Australia's work is informed and guided by the Federal Government initiatives detailed in the table below.

National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Closing the Gap)	
National Cabinet (Formerly Council of Australian Governments)	2020 – 2031
Closing the Gap is a commitment from all Australian Governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to a fundamentally new way of developing and implementing policies and programs that impact the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes policies and programs impacting recruitment, health and social programs specific to First Nations peoples, many of which are relevant to the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. Closing the Gap is jointly implemented by the Federal, State and Territory governments, along with Australian Local Government Associations and Coalitions of Peaks. It focuses on four priority reforms (strengthen formal partnerships and shared decision making; build the community-controlled sector; transform government organisations; and shared access to data) and 19 national socio-economic targets, covering areas such as life expectancy, education, employment, justice and child protection. Overall progress towards meeting Closing the Gap targets has been mixed. Implementation of Closing the Gap is ongoing to 2031. The Productivity Commission is tracking these targets. The National Agreement on Closing the Gap has informed the research and engagements undertaken as part of the 2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report, as it highlights and reaffirms the importance of working toward programs and initiatives that impact First Nations communities. Closing the Gap has informed engagement with Local Government stakeholders, particularly with the First Nations Councils who participated in the <i>Local Government Skills Audit and uptake and utility of the Local Government Training Package</i> project. This has ensured that the policies and programs impacting First Nations peoples, employees, and community members, are reflected accurately and fairly in this Report.	

The Australian Government's Strategic Priorities

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

2022 – 2026

The *Australian Government's Strategic Priorities* provide a four-year (2022-2026) policy direction for the Australian Public Service (APS) and sets targets across key areas. These areas include the economy, public health and climate change. The *Australian Government's Strategic Priorities* are into the final year of their implementation by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet with the relevant APS departments and organisations. So far, the *Australian Government's Strategic Priorities* have achieved several outcomes, including hosting a Jobs and Skills Summit, developing a plan for cheaper childcare, implementing fee-free TAFE and creating more university places, establishing the National Reconstruction Fund, introducing legislation for a national anti-corruption commission and strengthening strategic partnerships in the Pacific and Southeast Asia. Progress is continuing for public health and aged care; improving housing supply and planning reforms; and advancing government budget sustainability.

The *Australian Government Strategic Priorities* have provided guidance for the *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report*, as it clearly identifies where efforts can be made by the Local Government industry-sector, Local Government stakeholders, and Public Skills Australia in working toward shared goals. Specifically, these priorities are relevant to Local Government as they address identified challenges such as housing, TAFE funding and sustainability practices among government.

Working for Women – A Strategy for Gender Equality

Australian Government – Minister for Women

2023 – ongoing

The *Working for Women Strategy* outlines a framework for the Australian Government to improve national gender equality. It sets out five priority areas and reports on a range of outcomes and indicators annually to monitor Australia's progress. These priority areas are:

- › Priority Area 1 – Gender-based violence
- › Priority Area 2 – Unpaid and paid care
- › Priority Area 3 – Economic equality and security
- › Priority Area 4 – Health
- › Priority Area 5 – Leadership, representation and decision-making

Specific to JSCs, Priority Area 3 focuses on improving gender pay gaps, supporting access to skills and training and reducing occupational and industrial gender segregation. To date, the Australian Government has increased female recruitment into trades and other occupations through apprenticeship support, fee-free TAFE and targets in the Australian Skills Guarantee, along with including gender equality as a national priority in the National Skills Agreement. In March 2025, the Department for Workplace Relations launched the Advancing Gender Equality in Gender Segregated Industries grant program, directly linked to Priority Area 3. This grant program received a \$28.5 million extension in December 2025.

The above priorities have informed the contextualisation of research for the *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report*. Understanding challenges and developing mitigating strategies on key gender equity priorities remains a goal of Public Skills Australia across all research and reporting. Public Skills Australia will continue to prioritise diversity and inclusion in all research and to fairly report employment, skills and training challenges as it relates to gender equality.

The Clean Energy Generation: Workforce needs for a Net Zero Economy

Jobs and Skills Australia

2023 – 2025

The Clean Energy Generation considers emerging and future clean-energy workforce requirements as Australia strives to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. JSA's preliminary modelling estimates Australia's clean-energy workforce will need to grow from the current 53,000 employees to 84,000 employees by 2050.

The Clean Energy Generation makes 50 recommendations to support Governments in focusing their efforts on how skills shortages can be averted in the set time, resources and legislative constraints and government objectives. Broadly, the recommendations cover the challenge areas of participation and attraction, hiring and retention, transitioning employees and communities, roles and responsibilities, critical occupations, education and training and transport. Implementation remains ongoing and long-term, aligned with the 2050 net-zero target.

The Local-Government industry-sector is exposed to the risks posed by climate change, particularly the increased frequency of environmental crises. This is leading to skills and occupation gaps in emergency management occupations which Public Skills Australia is addressing through *The Local Government Emergency Management Skills Project*.

Australian Cyber Security Strategy

Department of Home Affairs

2023 – 2030

The *2023–2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy* serves as a roadmap to achieve the Australian Government's vision of becoming a world leader in cyber security by 2030.

The *2023–2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy* is structured around six 'cyber shields' (strong citizens and businesses, safe technology, world-class threat sharing, protected critical infrastructure, sovereign capability and resilient regional/global leadership). These are to be delivered in three stages or 'Horizons' (2023-2025 strengthening the foundations, 2026-2028 scaling efforts across the whole economy and 2029-2030 leading the development of new cyber technologies). Progress to date has focused on the foundational aspects of the Strategy, with the initial work under 'Horizon 1' (2023-2025) concentrating on improving incident reporting and response mechanisms, introducing legislative reforms, piloting threat-sharing initiatives and raising government and critical infrastructure security standards. Overall coordination sits with the Department of Home Affairs, specifically through the Australian Cyber Security Coordinator. The remaining two horizons are to be implemented over the next four years up to 2030.

The *2023–2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy* has informed the *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report* by outlining priorities for the federal government to maintain Australia's cyber security. This information is highly relevant for the Local Government industry-sector, where cyber security occupations and skills are in shortage.

Unlocking the Potential of VET

Qualification Reform Design Group

2024

In March 2024, the Qualification Reform Design Group (QRDG) provided advice to Skills Ministers on reforming the Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications system. This included advising that:

- › Qualification and unit of competency design and development processes should be reviewed and updated where appropriate
- › The VET system should be consolidated by removing training products that are under-utilised or unnecessarily duplicated
- › The Training Package Organising Framework should be updated, where necessary

As a result, Public Skills Australia undertook a Demonstration Project that consulted widely to determine the efficacy of updating qualification and unit of competency templates. This Report was delivered to the QRDG in Q3 2024.

In December 2024, the QRDG provided their final report and recommendations to Skills Ministers, based on national consultation and findings from the JSC Demonstration Projects. The recommendations from this Report centred around modernising VET qualifications by implementing a purpose-led, principles-based approach to qualification design. As a result, JSCs are responsible for ensuring qualifications serve a clear purpose, are linked to workforce needs and are not unnecessarily duplicated.

This work has informed Public Skills Australia researching into the utilisation and purpose of the LGA Local Government Training Package. As a result, projects are underway at Public Skills Australia to Review the Uptake and Utility of the LGA Local Government Training Package. This will ensure that training products provided to the Local Government workforces are streamlined, purposeful and relevant to meet the needs of the workforces and address current skills and training challenges.

Occupation Standard Classification for Australia

Australian Bureau of Statistics

2024 – ongoing

Formally known as Australia New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupation (ANZSCO), the Occupation Standard Classification for Australia (OSCA) is a standardised framework for classifying occupations in Australia. As part of the replacement process from ANZSCO to OSCA in 2024, the ABS announced that OSCA will undergo regular updates in accordance with the OSCA Maintenance Strategy, which was released in 2025.

The changes to OSCA outlined in the Maintenance Strategy involve stakeholder engagement and are timed to ensure that each Census of Population and Housing uses the most recent update. Under the strategy, the first round of consultations and feedback with stakeholders on proposed changes to OSCA are scheduled to be completed in August 2026, with the next update to be published in March 2027 before the data release of the 2026 Census in October 2027.

The OSCA standardised framework is a key data source for Public Skills Australia in all research pertaining to occupations. Public Skills Australia will continue to be involved in providing feedback for the framework, to ensure data release are purposeful to the Public Safety and Administration sector. The *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report* has utilised the OSCA framework in occupational mapping exercises across the Local Government workforces.

2024 Core Skills Occupation List – Key Findings Report

Jobs and Skills Australia

2024 – ongoing

The Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL) provides labour market analysis that informs the identification of occupations that are considered appropriate for employer-sponsored temporary migration through the Core Skills Stream of the Skills in Demand (SID) Visa.

The *2024 CSOL Key Findings Report* compiled a list of 456 occupations considered appropriate for the Core Skills Stream of the new employer-sponsored temporary SID visa. In addition to updating the list, JSA examined the drivers of skill shortages through CSOL analysis and stakeholder engagement and identified a 'suitability gap' category – occupations where there are enough qualified applicants, but they are not regarded as suitable by employers (e.g. auditors, electronics engineers, software and applications programmers). JSA also identified a 'retention gap' category – occupations with below-average rates of retention such as construction and hospitality jobs and child carers. JSA's consultations to inform the 2025 CSOL opened in August 2025 and JSA submitted its advice to Government for consideration in October 2025.

The *2024 CSOL Key Findings Report* has provided contextual information around appropriate skilled migration pathways through the Local Government industry sector. These types of employment pathways are becoming popular ways for local councils to fill vacant job roles, particularly in regional, rural and remote areas where recruitment pools are limited. Reports such as this are important in understanding barriers to these employment pathways, and how the local council employers can work within the parameters of certain Visas to address occupation needs.

Better Together – The Jobs and Skills Report 2024

Jobs and Skills Australia

2024 – ongoing

Better Together was released in November 2024 as part of JSA's mandated obligations to provide insight on the Australian labour market and advice on workforce needs and priorities. It details evidence aligned to five strategic pillars to enable a more prosperous economic future, including:

- › **Fostering inclusive participation:** Focused on broadening employment opportunities through identifying and removing barriers for people and communities
- › **Understanding today's workforce:** Detailing data to build an evidence base that informs and addresses current and emerging labour market and skills needs
- › **Shaping Australia's future workforce:** Projecting forward to plan for the opportunities and challenges of Australia's future workforce needs
- › **Optimising pathways and system architecture:** Monitoring, analysing and advising on the effectiveness of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system as key to skilling the workforce
- › **Activating an informed dialogue:** Detailing stakeholder engagement across the VET system to provide the best evidence and advice on Australia's current and future workforce and skills needs and opportunities

Better Together outlines JSA's key current and emerging datasets that provide useful insights on the intricacies of Australia's labour market for use in development of strategic workforce planning for the JSCs.

Better Together provided insights for clear goals and initiatives that the Local Government industry-sector can continue work towards. Public Skills Australia carries many of these priorities in our research and engagement with the Local Government industry-sector. These address themes such as diversity and inclusion, First Nations participation, evolving VET landscape, and skills and training challenges, all of which Public Skills Australia aims to address through research and stakeholder engagement within the Local Government industry-sector.

Training Package Organising Framework

Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council

2025 – ongoing

In July 2025, the Training Package Organising Framework (TPOF) was updated based on advice from the QRDG in December 2024. Housing the Training Package Products Development and Endorsement Process Policy (TPPDEPP), Training Package Products Policy (TPPP) and the Standards for Training Packages, the TPOF, sets out the process for developing and seeking approval of new VET training products for JSCs. As a JSC, Public Skills Australia will continue to adhere to the TPOF to ensure the Australian VET system is high-performing and readily supports student and industry needs.

The TPOF Framework is highly relevant to the work being undertaken for the LGA Local Government Training Package with the potential development of new training products being researched at time of publishing the *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report*. Systems such as the TPOF will ensure accuracy and relevancy for new Local Government training products, that will address skills and training challenges.

Five Pillars of Productivity Inquiries – Final Reports

Productivity Commission

2025 – ongoing

The Productivity Commission has provided 47 recommendations across ‘five pillars’ of productivity policy:

- › Creating a more dynamic and resilient economy
- › Building a skilled and adaptable workforce
- › Harnessing data and digital technology
- › Delivering quality care more efficiently
- › Investing in cheaper, cleaner energy and the net zero transformation

At the time of drafting this Report, the Australian Government is yet to provide response to the recommendations.

Public Skills Australia follows the advice and recommendations of the Productivity closely, to ensure the research and training products available to the Local Government industry-sector are addressing relevant challenges. Of the five pillars above, building a skilled and adaptable workforce is most relevant to the Local Government workforce. Public Skills Australia will continue to monitor the response to the recommendations, and how this will impact the Local Government industry-sector.

Opportunity and Productivity: Towards a Tertiary Harmonisation Roadmap Report

Jobs and Skills Australia

2025 – ongoing

This Report seeks to articulate the benefits of a deeper harmonised tertiary sector and provides recommendations on how to create a sustainable pathway forward in collaboration with key stakeholders. It outlines 19 key recommendations, across three categories (Enabling the tertiary harmonisation roadmap; Early priorities for the roadmap and medium-term horizon roadmap priorities) to work towards a harmonised system that can tackle national challenges, address skilled workforce shortages and improve productivity.

For the Local Government industry-sector, this report can provide insights for best practice within the tertiary education system, and how these practices compare to the current VET system utilised by the Local Government industry-sector for skills and training needs.

Gender Economic Equality Study

Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA)

2025 – ongoing

The Gender Economic Equality Study explored three challenges for the jobs and skills systems that contribute to gender economic inequality:

- > occupational segregation
- > pay gaps and gendered divides in the education
- > training and skills systems

The study was reported over three papers, with the third and final paper *Speeding up progress towards gender economic equality* being released in October 2025. This paper sets out 10 recommendations to address challenges in the jobs and skills system that perpetuate inequality and impact productivity:

1. Deliver a three-year 'Shifting the Dial on Gender Segregation' action and evaluation agenda
2. Introduce early career learning into schools to intervene earlier in gendered study choices
3. Embed gender targets and reporting across future National Skills Agreements
4. Coordinate national action to reduce gender segregation in VET pathways for shortage occupations
5. Support First Nation women through a standalone economy-wide plan
6. Accelerate inclusive, safe and respectful workplaces and training settings
7. Normalise men's participation in paid and unpaid care work
8. Adopt the Gender Segregation Intensity Scale (GSIS) to guide and measure progress
9. Further address gender bias in labour market and skills frameworks
10. Expand research, data and intersectional analysis to strengthen accountability

These recommendations have been influential in determining future research into the Local Government workforce gender equality priorities. It outlines recommendations with the potential to shape the future of the Local Government workforce toward fairer gender balances, including addressing the gender pay gap, which Public Skills Australia will continue to monitor for future insights.

Occupational Shortage List (OSL)

Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA)

Ongoing

The Occupational Shortage List (OSL), formerly the Skills Priority List, offers an annual point-in-time review of the status of Australian occupations. Specifically, the OSL reports on whether occupations (at the 4-digit and 6-digit ANZSCO level, and the 6-digit OSCA level) are experiencing shortages nationally and for each State and Territory in regional or metropolitan areas.

The OSL was last updated in 2025. The latest OSL differed from previous iterations due to the fact that in 2024 the ANZSCO classification framework for occupations was replaced with the OSCA classifications. In terms of the 2025 OSL results, it was reported that 29 per cent of occupations (293 out of 1,022 assessed) were in national shortage, which was 4 per cent lower than 2024 (33 per cent) and more than 7 per cent lower than 2023 (36 per cent). The OSL in 2025 also added 29 occupations newly in shortage compared to 2024, most of which were roles related to health, science, technicians and trades and machinery operators and drivers. As at February 2026, JSA had started the 2026 OSL survey but it had not yet confirmed a publication date for this year's list.

The OSL remains a key data source across Public Skills Australia's work. For the *Local Government Skills Audit*, the OSL was a crucial tool to assist in identifying relevant Local Government industry-sector occupational shortages.

2027 and Beyond

Public Skills Australia has built on the *2024 Workforce Plans and the 2025 Local Government Workforce Insights Reports* to deliver the *2026 Local Government Workforce Insights Report*. These reports continue to be the strategic centrepiece guiding annual Business Plans for Public Skills Australia, alongside Ministerial, industry-sector and other priorities (e.g. Royal Commissions and Inquiries).

The *2027 Workforce Insights Reports* will firstly focus on broader priorities detailed below and may be delivered throughout 2026/27:

- › Inclusion and participation of First Nations people, women and other genders in the Public Safety and Government workforces.
- › The use of AI and digital transformation and the impact of these technologies on the Public Safety and Government workforces.

Additionally, the *2027 Workforce Insights Reports* will focus on any other emerging priorities impacting the Local Government industry-sector.

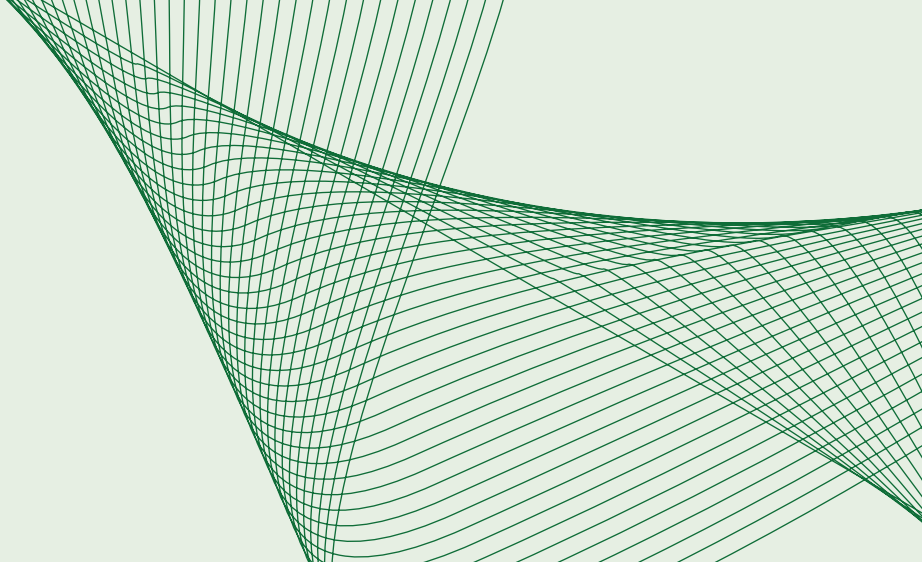
The Local Government Skills Audit will continue to provide a holistic national picture of the Local Government workforce. Outcomes of this project will likely highlight key priority areas for further examination and consideration in future reports.

Beyond these focused lines of inquiry, the *2027 Workforce Insights Reports* will seek to examine the impact of the Drivers of Change identified in this year's reports on our industry-sector workforces.

Appendix A:

Participants in the Local Government Skills Audit

New South Wales	
Albury City Council	Clarence Valley Council
Armidale Regional Council	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
Ballina Shire Council	Cumberland Council
Balranald Shire Council	Edward River Council
Bathurst Regional Council	Eurobodalla Shire Council
Bayside Council	Forbes Shire Council
Berrigan Shire Council	Georges River Council
Blacktown City Council	Goldenfields Water County Council
Bland Shire Council	Goulburn Mulwaree Council
Blue Mountains City Council	Griffith City Council
Bourke Shire Council	Gunnedah Shire Council
Brewarrina Shire Council	Gwydir Shire Council
Burwood Council	Hawkesbury City Council
Byron Shire Council	Hay Shire Council
Cabonne Council	Hornsby Shire Council
Camden Council	Inner West Council
Canada Bay Council	Inverell Shire Council
Canterbury-Bankstown Council	Kempsey Shire Council
Carrathool Shire Council	Kiama Municipal Council
Central Coast Council	Ku-ring-gai Council
Central Darling Shire Council	Lachlan Shire Council
Cessnock City Council	Lake Macquarie City Council



New South Wales	
Lane Cove Municipal Council	Randwick City Council
Leeton Shire Council	Richmond Valley Council
Lismore City Council	Riverina Water County Council
Lithgow City Council	Rous County Council
Lockhart Shire Council	Shellharbour City Council
Mid-Coast Council	Singleton Council
Narrandera Shire Council	The Hills Shire Council
Narromine Shire Council	Tweed Shire Council
Newcastle City Council	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Northern Beaches Council	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
Oberon Council	Uralla Shire Council
Orange City Council	Wagga Wagga City Council
Parkes Shire Council	Wingecarribee Shire Council
Parramatta City Council	Wollondilly Shire Council
Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	Wollongong City Council
Port Stephens Council	Woollahra Municipal Council
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Yass Valley Council

Northern Territory

Alice Springs Town Council

Katherine Town Council

Barkly Regional Council

MacDonnell Regional Council

Belyuen Community Government Council

Tiwi Islands Regional Council

Central Desert Regional Council

Victoria Daly Regional Council

Coomalie Community Government Council

Wagait Regional Council

Darwin City Council

West Arnhem Regional Council

East Arnhem Regional Council

West Daly Regional Council

Groote Archipelago Regional Council

Queensland	
Banana Shire Council	Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council
Barcaldine Regional Council	Lockyer Valley Regional Council
Blackall-Tambo Regional Council	Mareeba Shire Council
Boulia Shire Council	Noosa Shire Council
Brisbane City Council	North Burnett Regional Council
Burdekin Shire Council	Paroo Shire Council
Cairns Regional Council	Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council
Carpentaria Shire Council	Quilpie Shire Council
Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Redland City Council
Central Highlands Regional Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Charters Towers Regional Council	Scenic Rim Regional Council
City of Logan	South Burnett Regional Council
City of Moreton Bay	Southern Downs Regional Council
Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council	Sunshine Coast Regional Council
Flinders Shire Council	Toowoomba Regional Council
Goondiwindi Regional Council	Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Gympie Regional Council	Townsville City Council
Ipswich City Council	Western Downs Regional Council
Isaac Regional Council	Winton Shire Council
Livingstone Shire Council	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

South Australia

Adelaide Plains Council	Onkaparinga City Council
Alexandrina Council	Port Adelaide Enfield City Council
Barossa Council	Port Lincoln City Council
Charles Sturt City Council	Port Pirie Regional Council
Copper Coast Council	Prospect City Council
Gawler Town Council	Robe District Council
Grant District Council	Salisbury City Council
Holdfast Bay City Council	Tea Tree Gully City Council
Lower Eyre Peninsula District Council	Wakefield Regional Council
Loxton Waikerie District Council	Wattle Range Council
Marion City Council	West Torrens City Council
Mitcham City Council	Whyalla City Council
Murray Bridge Rural City Council	Yorke Peninsula Council

Tasmania

Break O'Day Council	George Town Council
Brighton Council	Glenorchy City Council
Central Coast Council – TAS	Hobart City Council
Circular Head Council	Huon Valley Council
Clarence City Council	Southern Midlands Council
Dorset Council	Waratah-Wynyard Council

Victoria	
Ararat Rural City Council	Mitchell Shire Council
Bass Coast Shire Council	Moonee Valley City Council
Boroondara City Council	Nillumbik Shire Council
Campaspe Shire Council	Port Phillip City Council
Cardinia Shire Council	Borough of Queenscliffe
Frankston City Council	South Gippsland Shire Council
Glen Eira City Council	Stonnington City Council
Glenelg Shire Council	Towong Shire Council
Golden Plains Shire Council	Warrnambool City Council
Greater Bendigo City Council	Wellington Shire Council
Knox City Council	Whittlesea City Council
Latrobe City Council	Wodonga City Council
Macedon Ranges Shire Council	Wyndham City Council
Manningham City Council	Yarra City Council
Melbourne City Council	Yarra Ranges Shire Council
Mildura Rural City Council	Yarriambiack Shire Council

Western Australia	
City of Albany	Shire of Boddington
City of Armadale	Shire of Boyup Brook
City of Bayswater	Shire of Brookton
City of Bunbury	Shire of Broome
City of Busselton	Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup
City of Cockburn	Shire of Capel
City of Gosnells	Shire of Carnarvon
City of Greater Geraldton	Shire of Chittering
City of Joondalup	Shire of Collie
City of Kalamunda	Shire of Dalwallinu
City of Karratha	Shire of Dardanup
City of Kwinana	Shire of Esperance
City of Mandurah	Shire of Exmouth
City of Melville	Shire of Gingin
City of Nedlands	Shire of Gnowangerup
City of Stirling	Shire of Goomalling
City of Subiaco	Shire of Halls Creek
City of Swan	Shire of Harvey
City of Wanneroo	Shire of Jerramungup
Mindarie Regional Council	Shire of Katanning
Shire of Augusta Margaret River	Shire of Kondinin
Shire of Beverley	Shire of Lake Grace

Western Australia	
Shire of Manjimup	Shire of Victoria Plains
Shire of Menzies	Shire of Waroona
Shire of Merredin	Shire of West Arthur
Shire of Mingenew	Shire of Williams
Shire of Moora	Shire of Wongan-Ballidu
Shire of Mount Magnet	Shire of Woodanilling
Shire of Mukinbudin	Shire of Wyalkatchem
Shire of Murray	Shire of Yilgarn
Shire of Narembeen	Shire of York
Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku	Town of Bassendean
Shire of Northam	Town of Cottesloe
Shire of Nungarin	Town of East Fremantle
Shire of Tammin	Town of Mosman Park
Shire of Trayning	Town of Victoria Park

Public Skills Australia is one of ten Jobs and Skills Councils.

Jobs and Skills Councils enable the modern and responsive skilled workforces that are required for Australia to prosper. Skilled workforces underpin our strong economy, allowing us to keep living standards high.

We lead efforts to make sure Australia has the right workers, with the right skills, that our nation needs.

2026 LOCAL GOVERNMENT
WORKFORCE INSIGHTS REPORT



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JSC

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