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Smart planting
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On the trail

The State Government is funding a further \$188,000 towards the Boyne to Burnett Inland Rail Trail for major upgrades and improvements.

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Patron for Boyne Burnett Inland Rail Trail Cr Desley O'Grady and Gladstone MP Glenn Butcher.

Now that's a smart, glass act

The State Government has put its first \$100 million investment into Alpha HPA in Gladstone, to turn sapphire glass into smart watches and mobile phones.

Funded by the Queensland Critical Minerals and Battery Technology Fund and managed by the Queensland Investment Corporation, Alpha HPA in Gladstone will accelerate the delivery of two purpose-built furnaces used to 'grow' sapphire glass.

Read the full story on page 2

Australia's hydrogen project

The Australian Government and the Australian Renewable Energy Agency have officially opened applications for the \$2 billion Hydrogen Headstart program.

The program aims to catalyse Australia's hydrogen industry and to take advantage of Australia's unparalleled opportunity to be a global hydrogen leader.

Read the full story on page 4

Resources, construction sectors highlight our big...

Opportunity

By Matthew Pearce

Representatives from Queensland's resources and construction sector will come together to showcase the state's renewable energy opportunities at an online industry conference on Thursday, 16 November.

Connecting Industry Pty Ltd managing director Kieran Moran said the Connecting Renewable Energy Conference Queensland would feature eight solar, wind, battery and hydrogen projects from around Central Queensland, highlighting the business and supply chain procurement opportunities within the renewable energy sector.

Delivered via live video virtual streaming, the online event is facilitated by a dedicated conference platform allowing all delegates to connect, engage, network, and have private live face to face meetings with presenting project speakers and their teams, exhibitors, sponsors, and all attendees.

The projects being presented at the online conference are:

- Ark Energy: Boomer Green Energy Hub.
- Energy Estate/CS Energy: North Queensland Clean Energy Project (HyNQ).
- Sunshine Hydro: The Djandori Gung-i Superhybrid Project.
- Macquarie's Green Investment Group: Boulder Creek Wind Farm.
- RES Australia and Central Queensland Power: Moah Creek Renewable Energy Project (3 projects presented).
- Genex Power: Bulli Creek Clean Energy Project.

Mr Moran said Queensland was being recognised globally as an ideal location for growing industries such as renewables, hydrogen, and associated manufacturing hubs.

"Delivering more clean energy will be vital in supercharging our emerging renewable industry economy and helping to grow industrial hubs and manufacturing across the

state," he said.

"The strategic focus of the conference is to stimulate business development and solution-based opportunities and highlight renewable energy projects and their work opportunities to assist industry and the supply chain in their planning for future work."

Mr Moran said the conference presented an opportunity for businesses of all sizes, ranging from Tier 1 and 2 engineering and construction firms to recruitment.

"Fundamentally this event is about creating relationships," he said. "Many proponents have a requirement to look locally first for companies who have the capability and capacity to be able to deliver the work."

"Whether it's concreting, scaffolding or paving roads, to supplying the bolts that hold down the wind turbines to working at heights, there is a wide variety of supply chain work involved in building these projects from the ground up."

Continued page 3

Turbine No.1 in place

Australia's leading renewable energy company Squadron Energy has successfully installed its first turbine at Clarke Creek Wind Farm.

The turbine, which stands 207 metres tall and has three 76.2 metre blades, involves the installation of 13 components and has a capacity of 4.5MW.

Read the full story on page 5

That's a smart, glass act

By Breanna Lloyd

The State Government is putting its first investment into a Gladstone company, Alpha HPA, to turn sapphire glass into smart watches and phones.

The investment through the \$100 million Queensland Critical Minerals and Battery Technology Fund, managed by the Queensland Investment Corporation, will accelerate the delivery of two purpose-built furnaces used to 'grow' sapphire glass at Alpha HPA in Gladstone.

Alpha HPA, is an Australian-based company that has commercialised the world's first purification technique for aluminium production.

The solvent extraction (SX) technique produces a growing range of ultra-high purity aluminium materials.

The Alpha HPA company has a wide range of high-technology industries including LED lighting, synthetic sapphire, semiconductors and lithium-ion battery markets.

Setting them apart from competitors is their market-leading purity levels developed with a dramatically lower carbon profile.

The state treasurer and minister for trade and investment Cameron Dick said he is absolutely delighted to be here in Gladstone with the state member for Gladstone Glen Butcher and also Rimas Kairaitis.

"It may not seem like much, but this is sapphire glass it's incredibly tough and durable in fact there are only very few products in the world that are harder and tougher than this and we are going to be making this here in Queensland," he said.

"I am very pleased to announce that we will be making our first investment out of the QLD critical minerals and battery and technology fund to Alpha HPA in Gladstone.

"We are going to take that product and create sapphire glass and the value of that glass is ten times as great as the high purity aluminium that's already produced."

Alpha HPA is now able to produce more than four tonnes of sapphire glass from High Purity Alumina (HPA) yearly.

Due to its remarkable durability, sapphire glass is ideal for use in micro-LEDs and smartphone screens.

From this, the extraordinary sapphire glass is now a hot commodity for producers worldwide.

Queensland will now capture significant value in the advanced materials supply chain and will unlock new export opportunities due to the local production of sapphire glass.

"For every Queenslander that looks at their phone, they may be looking at sapphire glass," Mr Dick said.

"We know the world's demand for critical minerals is growing enormously and is predicted to expand to three and a half times bigger between now and 2030 alone."



Alpha HPA Managing Director Rimas Kairaitis, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment Cameron Dick and Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Member for Gladstone Glenn Butcher. Pictures: CONTRIBUTED

Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Member for Gladstone Glenn Butcher said if they can make things in Queensland, they absolutely should.

"We are committed to growing the state's critical minerals processing capabilities to support downstream value-adding and export opportunities exactly like this," Mr Butcher said.

"By improving the viability of the HPA Project, our investment will support the local High Purity Alumina industry and downstream uses like the semiconductor, lithium-ion battery, and LED lighting sectors."

Alpha HPA Managing Director Rimas Kairaitis said Alpha HPA was delighted to have reached an agreement with QIC on funding for Alpha Sapphire and for the broader support from QIC and the Queensland Government to support private sector investment to add value via downstream processing of Queensland's materials.

QIC CEO Kylie Rampa said QIC is proud to leverage its expertise to support the growth of the critical minerals sector within Queensland through private infrastructure development.

"The Queensland Critical Minerals and Battery Technology Fund's first investment in Alpha HPA is a logical value-add complementing the existing alumina project," Ms Rampa said.

"A looming shortage of natural sapphire glass in the market and growing demand for more energy-conscious manufacturing processes makes this an attractive opportunity to enter a fast-growing market with all the competitive advantages Queensland has to offer."



The State Government is investing in a Gladstone company.

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Students have dual focus

CQUniversity's Engineering students are developing honours thesis projects not only aligned with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but also making themselves more attractive to employers with innovation in mind.

The UN's 17 SDGs were a highlight of the recent SDG Summit in New York.

CQU Head of College for Engineering and Aviation Associate Professor Benjamin Taylor said the sustainable development goals were one of the foundations of the University's Engineering courses and impressed upon students from Term 1 of their studies.

"Our Engineering courses include several project-based and theory-based units purposefully aligned with the United Nations' SDGs to foster contextual learning of engineering and sustainable development," he said.

"We also have many first-year students contributing to the SDGs through the Industry Project Experience unit. One team designed and 3D printed a prosthetic arm for children to ride a bicycle in Nepal. This project was supported by Bundaberg Rotary.

"Continuous learning through the sustainability lens from the first term culminates in students demonstrating tangible



William Sloan is studying a Bachelor of Engineering Honours (Resource Systems) while he works for Kestrel Coal Resources as a gas drainage/mining engineer.

contributions to the SDGs for our local communities through individual Honours Thesis projects."

Bachelor of Engineering Honours (Civil) student Brooklyn Davis said innovation and sustainability were reasons she chose to study at CQU.

"Every engineer has an impact on the world through the work they do, whether that be a good or bad impact, but I am

dedicated to solving problems in a way that sustains," she said.

"In everything I do, I bring my essence and as such, I will pursue my engineering passions with my current employment and explore different 'forks in the road.'"

She said CQU's training was vital to her current role with GHD Engineering.

"Throughout my course, there has been a high focus on sustainable development

from the very first subject to the last. This focus comes with the understanding and importance of my engineering practice to promote sustainable development. This teaching formed part of my decision to have a thesis topic focusing on sustainable futures," she said.

William Sloan is studying a Bachelor of Engineering Honours (Resource Systems) while he works for Kestrel Coal Resources as a gas drainage/mining engineer.

"As a mining engineer, I am directly involved with developing systems to make mining operations more sustainable, which is something I have become more appreciative of throughout the completion of my degree," he said.

"The Resource Systems Major provides a unique opportunity to learn about mining engineering, data science and electrical engineering, which is a good combination of skills where data science and automation technologies can be applied to mining systems to identify and develop automated systems that promote sustainable development in the mining industry.

"I am keen to utilise my unique skill set of mining engineering, data science and electrical engineering to enhance the safety, environmental and operational aspects of the underground coal mining industry in Queensland."

Renewables opportunities to be highlighted

From page 1

"Traditionally the supply chain from Mackay down to Gladstone mainly worked in the areas of coal and transport, but things are changing, the renewables sector is moving fairly fast due to the Net Zero targets the government has put in place.

"A lot of companies have diversified and are moving into these areas."

Connecting Industry, formerly known as Resources Industry Media, started off hosting face-to-face events before moving into the online post-Covid.

Since July 2020, they have hosted five online events, including last year's inaugural Queensland Renewable Energy Conference, which had about 260 attendees, including Andrew "Twiggy" Forrest from Fortescue Metals who made an impromptu presentation.

"We are passionate about developing the renewable energy generation required to deliver on Queensland's decarbonisation narrative, whether that is for the smelters, electrolyser manufacturing, or the many recently announced hydrogen production opportunities," he said.

"Our development approach reflects

that this energy transformation must be done in an open and measured way that is respectful as to the impact of the decline of some existing industries and jobs."

Mr Moran said most of the attendees at last year's online conference came from the Brisbane area, with many others from Central Queensland and around Australia, as well as some from overseas, predominantly the United States and England.

"While some of these projects will happen in six months, others will be two years from now, providing an opportunity for local businesses to start planning for the future," he said.

"Some businesses may not have the capacity at this time, but they can start putting those capacities in place over the next two years."

For more information and to register for the event go to connectingindustry.com.au

Registration will be open up until two days before the forum.

The Connecting Renewable Energy Conference Queensland will spotlight the region's renewable energy projects.

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Oz hydrogen's headstart

On behalf of the Australian Government, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has opened applications for the \$2 billion Hydrogen Headstart program.

Announced in the 2023-24 budget on Tuesday 10 October, the program aims to catalyse Australia's hydrogen industry to take advantage of Australia's unparalleled opportunity to be a global hydrogen leader.

Projects seeking to produce renewable hydrogen or derivatives at scale can apply for a production credit delivered over ten years to bridge the gap between the cost of producing renewable hydrogen and the market price.

ARENA and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) have designed the program following consultation with a broad range of key stakeholders, which involved 114 written submissions and three public forums with over 400 participants.

Renewable hydrogen is a promising zero emissions energy vector and feedstock with the potential to transform Australia's energy system, including in hard to abate sectors, but the emerging industry requires government support as it scales up.



The Australian Government has opened applications for the \$2 billion Hydrogen Headstart program. Picture: CONTRIBUTED

Hydrogen Headstart builds on ARENA's success as a leader in renewable hydrogen, having committed over \$308 million to 46 renewable hydrogen projects since 2017.

ARENA has been instrumental in the ear-

ly development of the Australian renewable hydrogen industry. Support for renewable hydrogen spans early-stage research deployment projects through to first-of-a-kind deployments including hydrogen refuelling

and hydrogen trucks, hydrogen for producing renewable ammonia, hydrogen for use in alumina refining and remote power.

ARENA CEO Darren Miller said Hydrogen Headstart represents a step change in Australia's renewable hydrogen efforts.

"ARENA has been there at every step of Australia's hydrogen journey, and we're thrilled to be delivering this transformative program," Mr Miller said.

"With Australia's abundant renewable energy resources, we're well placed to be a global leader in the renewable hydrogen industry."

"As other countries step up their ambitions, Australia is meeting the challenge and providing the investment we need to stay competitive in the global hydrogen race."

"This is the Australian Government's largest investment in renewable hydrogen to date and a critical step in unlocking Australia's renewable energy superpower."

Expressions of Interest are open now until 10 November 2023.

For more information on Hydrogen Headstart, including eligibility requirements and how to apply visit: <https://arena.gov.au/funding/hydrogen-headstart/>

Upgrades for Australia's soon-to-be-longest rail trail

The State Government is pleased to announce a further \$188,000 in funding towards major upgrades to the Boyne to Burnett Inland Rail Trail (BBIRT).

The funding will be used to repurpose the Slab Creek bridge including re-decking the bridge with handrails to improve accessibility and safety for trail users, removing the need to navigate the steep and challenging creek crossing.

These improvements will also build resilience into the trail by providing excellent weather-resistant infrastructure to withstand Queensland's heavy rain periods.

The BBIRT runs along the now-closed rail corridor from Taragoona to Gayndah which is owned by TMR.

The department provides a licence to the BBIRT Inc. community group to make improvements within the rail corridor with future plans to complete and open the full 270km rail trail.

In addition to the funding for Slab Creek bridge, TMR has purchased redundant rail bridges and provided 50 per cent funding contribution towards the cost of resurfacing the rail trail along with the installation of an accessible toilet at the Barrimoon tunnels.

TMR is also assisting with the rehabilitation works required to open the rail trail between Mundubbera and the Apex Ski



Patron for Boyne Burnett Inland Rail Trail Cr Desley O'Grady and Gladstone MP Glenn Butcher. Pictures: CONTRIBUTED

Park located 3km from the station yard.

Member for Gladstone, Glenn Butcher said this \$188,000 investment will improve accessibility and safety for trail users.

"This project has already proved to be a fantastic addition to our region, providing a tourism boost to local communities," he said.

"This comes off the back of previous investment from Gladstone Area Water

Board to create the trail from Four Mile Scrub to Boynedale Bush Camp.

"I know a lot of Gladstone locals love to strap on their helmets and head out to the rail trail, so I'm glad they'll see these upgrades become a reality.

"I'm proud to deliver another milestone for this iconic site which could soon be celebrated as Australia's longest rail trail."

Transport and Main Roads Minister,



Mark Bailey said active transport and bike tourism in particular are growing at a significant rate across Australia with many regions in Queensland benefiting from major infrastructure developments that the government is providing.

"We are committed to boosting local economies and driving tourism into regional Queensland towns, as well as creating unique and diverse tourism opportunities that link to already thriving towns like Gladstone and Bundaberg," he said.

"Completing what will be Australia's longest rail trail is an exciting project that will promote a healthy, active lifestyle and contribute to Queensland's economic prosperity, benefiting many generations to come."



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First turbine installed at Clarke Creek wind farm

Squadron Energy, Australia's leading renewable energy company, has achieved a major milestone, with the successful installation of the first turbine at Clarke Creek Wind Farm.

The turbine, which stands 207 metres tall and has three 76.2 metre blades, involves the installation of 13 components and has a capacity of 4.5MW.

The 450MW first-stage wind farm in Central Queensland, 150km north west of Rockhampton and 150km south of Mackay, will produce enough electricity to power 330,000 homes when completed.

Squadron Energy CEO Jason Willoughby said they are excited to have reached this important milestone in the development of our project.

"This turbine represents the first major step in our efforts to reduce power prices for businesses and households in Queensland as we continue to replace aging coal-fired power stations with clean renewable energy," he said.

"Seeing the first turbine of the project fully installed is a really proud moment for our team at Squadron Energy and all the crews involved. "We currently have around 170 workers on-site at any one time and our oversize over mass deliveries from Gladstone Port are now in place seven nights a week as activity ramps up on site."

Squadron Energy has committed to prioritising Queensland businesses as part of a 15-year offtake agreement with Queensland Government-owned power company Stanwell Corporation.

Stanwell will take 346.5MW of renewable energy capacity from the wind farm to sell



The first turbine in Clarke Creek has been built.

Picture: CONTRIBUTED

to commercial and industrial customers.

The first stage of Clarke Creek Wind Farm has created 350 jobs during con-

struction and is injecting \$110 million into the regional economy.

The second stage wind farm includes

564MW of capacity and a battery energy storage facility in addition to a planned 400MW (AC) Clarke Creek Solar Farm.

Sunshine is shortlisted

A Queensland business that has developed the technology for reliable, carbon-free energy around the clock and was shortlisted for the 2024 Telstra Best of Business Awards on Monday 9 October.

The company has developed a software solution that integrates wind and solar, pumped hydro, green hydrogen and methanol production.

Sunshine Hydro Chair Michael Myer said he was thrilled the team had been recognised by the Telstra Best of Business Awards.

"We set out to play an important role in decarbonising the Australian economy with affordable, reliable, renewable energy.

Today we believe our Superhybrid can provide the same energy security and reliability as a nuclear power plant.

"Our flagship Djandori Superhybrid project situated in Gladstone has developed a strong social licence, a partnership with tra-

ditional owners and a commitment to biodiversity.

"At this point in our company's growth, this recognition from the Telstra Business Awards – it is gratifying."

Sunshine Hydro's Djandori Superhybrid, combined with the Dumaresq Superhybrid in northern NSW, will be able to deliver 3.7TWh of 24/7 carbon-free energy and abate six million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually when incorporating wind and solar.

This is approximately 1 per cent of Australia's total annual emissions.

The prestigious Telstra Best of Business Awards celebrate small and medium-sized businesses and people building Australia's economic, social and cultural prosperity.

The State winners will be announced on 3 November 2023.



2023 Telstra Best of Business Awards in Perth.

Picture: CONTRIBUTED

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A tribute to those lost

Queensland's resources sector remembered the 1,506 lives lost at Queensland mines and quarries for Miners Memorial Day.

The event is held every year on 19 of September.

The date marks the anniversary of the state's worst mining disaster where 75 workers died in a coal mine explosion at Mount Mulligan in 1921.

There were no survivors.

Sadly, in the last year three workers have died at Queensland mines: Dylan Langridge and Trevor Davis at Dugald River in February 2023, and Ron Selig at an opal mine in November 2022.

Resources Safety and Health Queensland (RSHQ) CEO Mark Stone said the annual service is a chance to reflect, but also a sobering reminder of why safety must always come first.

"We've made improvements to the systems to protect the safety and health of mine workers in recent years thanks to cooperation between industry, unions and government," Mr Stone said.

"But there remains a long way to go to ensure all workers come home safely to their families at the end of every shift.

"As the regulator, we continue to work on improving industry culture and practice around reporting high potential incidents.

"Maximising the learning opportunity from incidents before anyone is seriously hurt, is how we fix the unwanted but inevitable faults in our systems."

This year's Miners Memorial Day service was held at Mount Isa marking 100 years since the town was first established.

The Mount Isa region has recorded 502 mining fatalities over the years; more than



The memorial service on 19 September.

any other mining region in Queensland.

"Miners Memorial Day understandably attracts a very large crowd every year including the loved ones of workers who have

died at Queensland mines and quarries," Mr Stone said.

"I offer my sincere condolences to their family, friends and colleagues."

This year's Miners Memorial Day service was held at the Mt Isa Civic Centre.

Due to a power outage across North West Queensland, the livestream was unavailable.

Mine workers start to feel El Niño's wrath

Queensland mine workers are starting to experience the effects of hot weather conditions as summer approaches and the country enters an El Niño weather event.

El Niño events increase the risk of extreme temperature shifts, like heatwaves and hotter days.

Resources Safety and Health Queensland (RSHQ) is reminding safety officers at mine sites to effectively manage heat exposure and to protect workers from heat-related illness.

Thermal conditions and risk factors in the mine can change daily and not all mine workers respond to heat in the same way, so all factors must be taken into consideration when assessing heat exposure risks.

RSHQ Chief Operating Officer Rob Djukic said the strategies and techniques we use to reduce heat stress at mines are simple, but sometimes overlooked.

"Every summer there is a risk of workers suffering from heat-related conditions that the QLD Resources sites but particularly now that we are in an El Niño event, this issue is such a risk to workers," he said.

"That includes modifying the environment to suit the work, modifying the work to suit the environment, or sometimes a combination of both.

"Safety at Queensland mines is everyone's responsibility and we're here to assist the mines to ensure all workers feel safe."

Mine sites should consider the following measures to reduce heat-related illnesses:

- reduce radiant heat sources using insulation, spot cooling, or shielding.
- locate potable water and ice machines within easy access for workers to hydrate regularly.
- use mechanical aids where possible (e.g. using cranes and forklifts), to minimise physical exertion in the heat.



As the El Niño weather event fast approaches, Queensland mine workers are starting to feel its effects.

Picture: CONTRIBUTED

- plan work activities to include periods of acclimatisation for workers returning after a prolonged absence.
- implement regular rest breaks in cool areas such as vehicle cabins, crib rooms and control rooms.
- erect portable shades as refuge areas for temporary or remote work locations
- increase air movement by the installation of mechanical fans and introduce cooling fans where possible.
- reschedule high physical work activities to cooler times during the shift.
- select clothing options that offer ventilation openings and permeable fabric.

Partnership makes a difference for our safety

Supporting aeromedical services in Central Queensland is a clear-cut choice for one of the state's biggest mine operators.

Anglo American, which operates five steelmaking coal mines in the Bowen Basin, recognises the importance of bolstering critical health services in the communities around the mines.

The company is renewing its Blue Sky Partnership with RACQ CapRescue for the 5th year in a row to strengthen emergency service capabilities provided to Central Queenslanders who find themselves in dire medical circumstances.

Anglo American Social Performance Manager, Lynda Pollock, said RACQ CapRescue serviced both the Middlemount and Moura mine sites, ensuring employees and their families had access to full aero-



Anglo American and RACQ CapRescue teaming up for community safety.

medical facilities.

"We are committed to ensuring all Central Queenslanders have access to the best in aeromedical care, which is why we have renewed our Blue Sky Partnership with

RACQ Capricorn Helicopter Rescue Service," Ms Pollock said.

"Last year, the service completed 421 missions across Central Queensland, providing vital medical support to our commu-

nities when they needed it most."

Operating out of Rockhampton, RACQ CapRescue services an area of more than 350,000 sq km.

RACQ CapRescue operations manager Kirsty Wooler said, like Anglo American, the service aimed to make a difference in the community, and this was only possible with the support of locally based corporate partnerships.

"Continuing our life-saving service would be difficult without companies such as Anglo American generously donating to the cause," Ms Wooler said.

"In our five years of partnership, our Rescue300 crew have rescued more than 2000 people, and together, we will continue to make a real difference in the lives of the Central Queensland community."

EV switch help is here

The Federal Government is making it easier for businesses to switch their fleets to EVs by helping Melbourne-based company JET Charge launch the country's largest ever EV fleet charging project, simplifying EV charging at work and at home.

With more than \$12 million from the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), the initiative will see JET Charge provide a full-service charging solution and install, operate and maintain EV charging infrastructure for fleets, including for employees who use fleet vehicles.

This 'Charging as a Service' initiative helps drive EV uptake by making charging more convenient and accessible.

It allows businesses to charge vehicles at their premises and employee homes.

The project is expected to help drive the uptake of more than 3,100 EVs over the next 3 years.

Charging infrastructure will be installed in workplaces and at homes of employees, with JET Charge building on its Australian designed and built hardware and technologies.

Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen said the government was backing innovation to decarbonise transport while helping businesses save on running costs.

"Businesses can save a lot on running costs by switching their fleets to electric and we are seeing plenty of enthusiasm from fleet users to offer cleaner cheaper to run cars to their employees and cut down on fuel costs," Minister Bowen said.

"It's great news that a local business in Port Melbourne will be spearheading the move to more accessible clean energy. Electric vehicles are the future of transport in



Funding to boost EV accessibility for fleet vehicles.

Australia, and I welcome JET Charge's initiative in establishing Charge as a Service, which will assist more Australians to switch to EVs," local Federal MP Josh Burns said.

"Fleets account for 50 per cent of new vehicle sales in Australia.

"Greater uptake among fleets will help grow a second-hand market and help get more Australians behind the wheel of an EV.

"After a decade of policy inaction, including a ridiculous scare campaign about EVs 'ending the weekend' EV's have now jumped from 2 per cent of new car sales in May 2022

to almost 9 per cent today.

"With a petrol vehicle costing around \$2,400 per year to drive on average and an EV costing around \$400 a year to drive, increasing the availability and affordability of EV's can save households thousands."



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Coal mine rehab scholarship funding available

More than \$200,000 in post-graduate student scholarships is up for grabs to build on Queensland's reputation as an international leader in coal mine rehabilitation.

Two scholarships valued at \$40,000 a year over three years are now available through the Coal Minesite Rehabilitation Trust to post-graduate students studying at a Queensland university.

The Coal Minesite Rehabilitation Trust was established in 2007 and is overseen by the Queensland Resources Council (QRC), the Queensland Government and industry representatives.

Resources Minister Scott Stewart said the generous scholarships provide two university students with an opportunity

to pursue postgraduate studies in world-class environmental management.

"Mine rehabilitation is a key part of a company's life of mine planning cycle to ensure better environmental outcomes and help create more jobs for Queenslanders after a mine is no longer in use," Minister Stewart said.

"Good progress has been made in rehabilitation in Queensland and these scholarships contribute to research that will lead to even better practices.

"I support the industry's continuing efforts to improve rehabilitation methods to ensure mining is compatible with current and future land uses.

"The scholarships will support ongoing research to identify future improvements and ensure we can have confidence in the industry's ability to manage and reduce its impacts."

QRC Chief Executive Ian Macfarlane said the scholarships are a practical and innovative way to develop world-class expertise in Queensland to lead the resources sector's future rehabilitation practices.

"This scholarship program benefits the whole resources sector by encouraging more research and fresh thinking into how we can continually improve and refine land rehabilitation practices," Mr Macfarlane said.

"We are now seeing current and for-

mer coal mines working to transform to a range of productive and innovative post-mining land uses including agriculture, renewable energy infrastructure, native ecosystems and community development.

"The research conducted by postgraduate students over the years is making a significant contribution to understanding and implementing sustainable rehabilitation outcomes."

Applications for the 2024 Coal Minesite Rehabilitation Scholarships are assessed against key priorities that include sustainable post-mining land uses and addressing long-term water management.

Unlock hidden potential

Proudly sponsored by Gold Partners, MRA-EL, and Networking Event Sponsor, Frenchville Sports Club, Capricorn Enterprise's 2023 Major Projects and Industry Forum is the place to hear directly from project and industry leaders on Thursday 19 October.

This year's Forum features a full program, highlighting not just regional futures and major project updates but also health, education and energy projects and opportunities.

Reflecting our strategic location, our region has key strengths across several industries that position us positively as our state continues to grow.

Capricorn Enterprise Industry Engagement Manager Frank Edwards said the quality and range of our speaker program has always been and continues to be, a drawcard for delegates wanting to stay abreast of significant local and regional industry and development.

Included in this year's speaker line-up are local, regional, and state-wide presenters who will share their knowledge on a range of topics. Presented across three sessions, the packed program will deliver powerful insights into the economic outlook for Queensland's regions with popular presenter Gene Tunny from Adept Economics leading Session one on Regional Futures and Projects.

Session one will also offer compelling insights into three major projects in our region that are commencing (Rockhampton Ring Road), operating (Carmichael Mine) and finalising (Rookwood Wier).

With key leaders from Bravus Mining and Resources, the Department of Transport and Main Roads and Sunwater presenting the latest updates as well as participating in a panel session, attendees will benefit from being in the room to learn more and consider the opportunities available.



The 2022 Capricorn Enterprise Major Projects and Industry Forum.

Session two of the program will focus on two key drivers of our regional economy: health and education.

Discover more about how to exercise leadership (Rockhampton Grammar School); how the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service is building, growing and thriving; automation for the agriculture and horticulture industries (CQUniversity) and the Fitzroy Community Hospice Project.

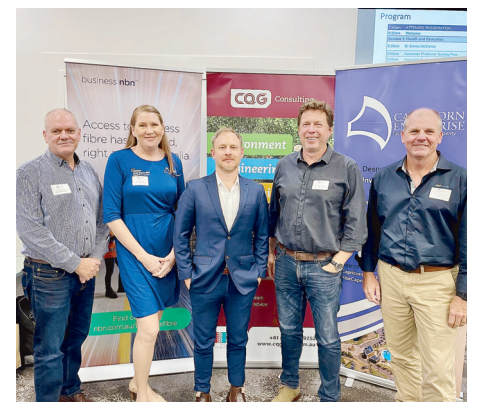
Session three is all about energy.

Hear directly from major organisations and corporations including Energy Queensland and Stanwell about the future

distribution grid as well as major projects (Clarke Creek Wind Farm and Energy Estate's Central Queensland Project) and what this will mean for future workforce and training requirements.

The Forum provides delegates with multiple occasions to engage with industry leaders through panel sessions and networking opportunities. Delegates are invited to wrap up their very full day with a final networking session.

Capricorn Enterprise CEO Mary Carroll said they are certain that delegates will appreciate the diversity of speakers and pre-



sentations at the Forum, as well as take advantage of a prime opportunity to network with industry leaders and engage in conversations about our ever-evolving region.

Don't miss out on these dynamic discussions that unlock the potential for industry in Central Queensland.

Register for the event here <https://www.ivvy.com.au/event/C99Y94/>

For more information and the full program for the Major Projects and Industry Forum 2023 - <https://capricornenterprise.com.au/major-projects-and-industry-forum-2023/>

Look after your hearing

Construction workers, airport ground staff, farmers, F1 race car drivers, miners, musicians, Emergency Department staff – and even teachers – have some of the noisiest jobs.

And if you're a younger man with trade qualifications and live in rural or remote Australia, you could be at even greater risk of hazardous noise exposure.

This is why this National Safe Work Month Hearing Australia is urging us all – regardless of our occupations – to be aware of occupational noise and the risks it can pose.

Occupational noise-induced hearing loss is one of the most common yet preventable occupational diseases, with an estimated more than 1.1 million Australians exposed to hazardous noise in their workplace.

Hearing Australia Principal Audiologist, Karen Hirschausen said National Safe Work Month is the perfect time to commit to building safe and healthy workplaces for all Australians.

"This year's National Safe Work Month theme is 'For everyone's safety, work safely', which reinforces the importance for us as individuals and for Australian workplaces to take a preventative approach to hazardous noise exposure," she said.

In 2020-2021, 98 per cent of accepted workers' compensation claims for deafness were attributed to long-term noise exposure.

"However, there are likely many more workers who have noise-induced hearing loss, but they don't realise it until it's too late," Karen said.

"On average, it takes 10 years for people to seek help.

"Early detection can help prevent further damage.

"It's crucial to identify occupational noise-induced hearing loss as soon as possible and then take steps to reduce your noise exposure and prevent it from worsening.

"Hearing loss can have devastating effects on a person's well-being, contributing to mental health issues.

"It also has significant financial costs, with one study suggesting the total loss due to occupational noise-induced hearing loss was estimated to reach AUD\$29.7 billion."

The majority of compensation claims for occupational noise-induced hearing loss come from males aged 55-59 years, according to Safe Work Australia statistics.

Hearing Australia client Grant, who is in his mid-50s, spent years working in the construction industry, but prior to his recent visit to Hearing Australia, hadn't had a hearing test since high school.

"For some time, I'd been experiencing constant ringing in my ears, which was mainly noticeable at night when in a quiet room watching TV," Grant said.

"I went to see Hearing Australia for a hearing assessment, and they discovered



Hearing Australia Principle Audiologist Karen Hirschausen.



Grant Dylko.

some hearing loss.

"I tried some hearing aids and was amazed by the quality, clarity and hearing improvement I experienced.

"The tinnitus also reduced and that really surprised me.

"I'd recommend all tradespeople have their hearing tested regularly."

Rural, remote Australians at higher risk

According to the Making a Noise About Hearing report 2020/21 produced by NAL (National Acoustic Laboratories), Hearing Australia's research division, those living in rural and regional Australia are more likely to have hearing problems compared with those living in cities, with occupational noise exposure one of the biggest contributors.

The NAL report also reveals that hearing loss among farmers and agricultural workers is widespread, with statistics indicating that 65 per cent of farmers aged between 15 and 75 plus experience some degree of hearing loss.

"Compared to the general population, young farmers are around seven times more likely to have hearing loss than the general

population of the same age," says Karen.

"Almost 50 per cent of farmers report tinnitus."

To help raise awareness of occupational noise-induced hearing loss, Hearing Australia has released a suite of resources called 'The Prevention Toolkit'.

The Toolkit includes factsheets, posters, infographics, and social media content.

Kim Terrell, Hearing Australia's Managing Director, said Hearing Australia is committed to helping workplaces prevent avoidable hearing loss caused by noise exposure.

"Noise-induced hearing loss is avoidable, and more needs to be done to protect workers in high-risk industries such as construction, manufacturing, and agriculture," Kim said.

"No one should lose their hearing because of their job."

10 top tips to protect your hearing on the job:

1. Purchase equipment that generates lower levels of noise emissions.
2. Always wear appropriate hearing protection such as earmuffs or earplugs – espe-

cially in noisy environments.

3. Ensure noise reduction aids, such as mufflers, which are used on equipment or tools, are in working order; and report any faults to your manager/employer.
4. Limit the time you spend in noisy environments and take regular breaks in quiet spaces.
5. Use barriers or screens to block the direct path of sound.
6. Use remote controls to operate noisy equipment from a distance.
7. Participate in training programs about hearing protection and workplace safety.
8. Familiarise yourself with safety guidelines and procedures.
9. Report any hearing-related issues or discomfort immediately to your supervisor, safety officer, or HR team.
10. Get your hearing checked regularly, and if you notice any changes, see your doctor or an audiologist.

The Prevention Toolkit is available at Hearing Australia's website – www.hearing.com.au/safework

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Smart planting helps prevent those power outages

With storm season upon us, Ergon Energy Network's vegetation management crews have been out in droves trimming branches away from powerlines to reduce the risk of outages and they are urging the community not to plant tall tree species near the electricity network.

Trees and branches contacting the power network can be one of the most common causes of outages during severe weather according to Ergon's Tim De Vries.

"Severe weather often brings with it high winds that not only snap branches from trees and fire them like missiles into the electricity network, it can also cause large trees to fall over powerlines," Mr De Vries said.

"This is why our crews have been and continue to prepare the network for summer storms by trimming branches, and in some cases removing trees altogether, because if they don't, high-risk vegetation could cause significant network damage and prolonged power outages.

"We also work closely with councils when we carry out these tasks and only use

very experienced vegetation management teams and qualified arborists when more intricate jobs are undertaken."

Mr De Vries said the community can also greatly assist in preventing power outages by never planting tall plant species near or under the electricity network.

"Every year our crews have to attend power outages caused by a tall tree or fast-growing species such as bamboo that someone has planted too close to the network," he said.

"These not only take out power during severe weather, but they can also be a community danger if they bring down powerlines or a child climbs the tree and contacts the electricity network.

"Before people plant trees, we encourage them to take a look at our Plant Smart webpage which shows a wide range of safe species that won't affect the electricity network and won't require our crews to prune or remove them at a later date."

More information about safe species of trees can be found at www.ergon.com.au/plantsmart



Pictures: CONTRIBUTED



Scholarship success aid

A \$30,000 scholarship aimed at supporting regional university students to excel in their studies has opened for applications.

The QCoal Foundation Scholarship provides a James Cook University (JCU) student with \$10,000 each year for three years to offset the costs of studying.

First-year Bachelor of Environmental Science and Management (BESM) student and 2023 Scholarship recipient Jamie Ahearn said the scholarship had offered opportunities for him to thrive in the university environment.

"Receiving this scholarship has provided valuable networking and mentorship opportunities within the JCU community, which has allowed me to grow both personally and professionally," he said.

"One key aspect of my time so far at JCU that I have benefitted from would be the student mentor program.

"I really appreciated having an experienced student to chat to about university life.

"It made the transition into full-time study a lot easier."

Mr Ahearn said once he graduated he was keen to work in regional areas, such as his hometown of Mt Isa, where he could give back to the community.

"I'd love to be able to pass on my professional knowledge to those just starting in the field of environmental science," he said.

"I'd like to thank the QCoal Foundation for the opportunities that their scholarship has given me."

Mr Ahearn encouraged school leavers interested in applying for the Scholarship to give it a go and "believe in yourself".

"Sometimes the process of gathering

referees and writing application letters can be daunting, so it's important to plan your application out ahead of time so that you're ready to submit before they close," he said.

QCoal Foundation Chief Executive Officer Sylvia Bhatia said the QCoal Foundation was proud to again support students from regional and remote Queensland.

"The challenges facing many students who need to leave their regional and remote Queensland communities to attend University have not diminished over the years so we are pleased to again be providing this

scholarship opportunity," she said.

"We remain in touch with many former recipients of the scholarship and bursaries and we know first-hand what a difference this assistance has made to them.

"We also know many recipients remain committed to working in regional and remote areas and giving back to their communities after graduation.

"The QCoal Foundation is pleased to continue to partner with JCU and acknowledge their growing cohort of students from regional and remote Queensland and JCU's demonstrated track record of alumni returning to work in those communities after graduation.

"As always, we are looking for applicants with aspirations to work in regional and remote communities after graduation, as well as academic performance, extra-curricular achievements and community involvement."

Eligible students who are passionate about making a difference in regional and remote Queensland are encouraged to apply by January 31, 2024.



JCU Bachelor of Environmental Science and Management student and 2023 QCoal Foundation Scholarship recipient Jamie Ahearn with QCoal Foundation Bursary recipient and JCU Veterinary Science student Isabella Tritton. Picture: CONTRIBUTED

Coal workers take action

Mining and Energy Union members employed at Wiggins Island Coal Export Terminal (WICET) in Gladstone, Queensland took protected industrial action in September.

In a ballot conducted, there was 100 per cent support for various forms of protected industrial action such as work stoppages, bans on non-rostered overtime and bans on using various pieces of equipment, systems and tasks.

The industrial action commenced on Tuesday, 26 September.

MEU bargaining representatives were engaging in extensive negotiations to bring WICET remuneration closer to the industry standards and to keep pace with cost-of-living pressures.

However, following 15 meetings with company representatives over 8 months, the Union believes that not enough progress has been made.

MEU Queensland District Vice-President Jeff Scales said workers who operate and maintain fixed and mobile equipment at the Wiggins Island Coal Export Terminal receive pay far behind comparable coal terminals in Queensland.

“As an example, WICET Employees receive about 20 per cent less than the coal terminal directly next door in Gladstone with that percentage getting greater every year,” Mr Scales said.

“When considering the limited growth of WICET employees’ wages over the last four and a half years, our members believe that the 13 per cent pay increase over three years with a sign-on payment, will go some of the ways toward addressing what can only be described as wage suppression.

“What our members are seeking is more than reasonable.



Workers at Gladstone Wiggins Island Coal Export Terminal took part in a protected industrial action campaign.

Picture: CONTRIBUTED

“Wiggins Island Coal Export Terminal workers have been critical to the massive profits posted by some of largest mining companies that operate in Queensland and globally, yet we see a significant lag in the pay packets of their Employees at the coal terminal.”

Wiggins Island Coal Terminal is jointly owned by Glencore, Yancoal and Coronado.

All three companies have posted mas-

sive profits over the last two years, including Glencore’s 198 per cent increase in its 2021 profit.

“It is ludicrous that these companies, whose representatives sit on the Coal Terminals board and determine what pay increases WICET Employees receive, can post such massive profits and not provide a wage that addresses the previous wage suppression and cost of living pressures for workers who are critical to delivering these

Companies record profits.

“By taking industrial action, workers are sending a strong message to WICET’s board, management, and the owner companies that they are willing to take a stand for a comprehensive enterprise agreement inclusive of pay increases to address previous wage suppression, cost of living pressures and working toward closing the gap on the industry standards for Coal Export Terminals in Queensland,” Mr Scales said.



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Skilled workers sought

A new report from the Queensland Resources Council (QRC) has revealed skilled worker shortages, government policy settings, rising costs and global economic conditions are among the main concerns for resources companies operating in Queensland.

They're among the key findings of QRC's quarterly check of industry sentiment on the future outlook for the resources sector in Queensland through a State of the Sector survey of company CEOs.

QRC Chief Executive Ian Macfarlane said the report reveals a number of key obstacles stand in the way of Queensland capitalising on emerging opportunities from the global push to a lower emissions future.

"The world is looking to Queensland, amongst other countries, to meet surging demand for critical minerals like copper and nickel to build the batteries, solar panels and electrical vehicles of the future, which will be central to achieving ambitious decarbonisation targets," Mr Macfarlane said.

"To meet global demand, however, significant new investment is required in Queensland but right now, that's under a cloud because of recent, sudden changes in economic policy.

"At the same time, member company CEOs are reporting increasing concerns over rising costs and global economic conditions are impacting business confidence."

That's why all levels of government need to do what they can to actively encourage the next wave of resource investment to keep the Queensland economy strong.

"Instead, we've seen the opposite, with the State Government's decision to impose the world's highest coal royalty tax rate adding to companies' rising costs and threatening future investment in Queensland proj-



QRC Chief Executive Ian Macfarlane.

Picture: CONTRIBUTED

ects," Mr Macfarlane said.

"Amid heightened concerns about the global economic outlook, a better approach would be for Queensland to offer stable and consistent policy settings to attract long-term investors in a competitive market in Australia and internationally."

While resources CEOs say the move to a lower emissions future will create opportunities for growth, the QRC report identified the skilled worker shortage as a growing concern for companies.

"More than half of CEOs say the move to automation and digitalisation will mean

more jobs, however, 95 per cent say a shortage of skilled workers will affect productivity and profitability," Mr Macfarlane said.

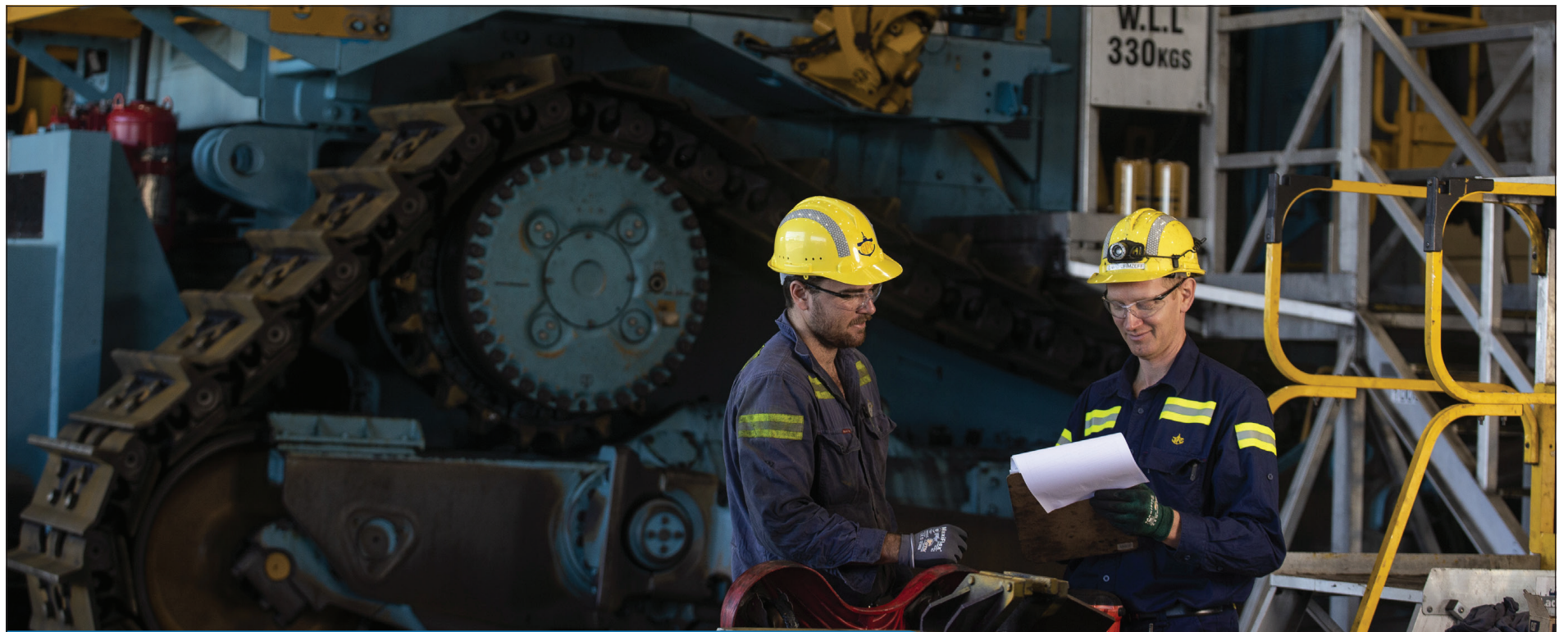
"With demand for graduates in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) related degrees forecast to increase by 25 per cent over the next five years, one positive is that companies are individually taking action to attract and retain workers.

"Along with their ongoing support for the QRC's educational arm, the Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy, which delivers workshops to promote career opportunities in resources almost 100 schools each

year, resources companies are increasingly conducting their own local campaigns to recruit new graduates to the sector.

"It's encouraging to see the industry taking action where it can support new opportunities for all Queenslanders from the growing global market for our new and traditional minerals.

"However, as this report reaffirms, there is an urgent need for the Queensland Government to improve its policy settings so the resources sector can continue to drive the job opportunities and economic success that benefits every Queenslanders."



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How's your mental health?

One in two Australian workers have experienced being bullied, harassed, or exposed to conflict or inappropriate behaviour in a new exclusive work survey.

The results of the disturbing survey (attached) find just as many report unrealistic workloads, poor training and exposure to traumatic events.

The survey, conducted in the lead-up to today, World Mental Health Day, comes even as Australian states synchronise new laws to hold employers responsible for psychological and psychosocial hazards in the workplace.

Psychological injury is the fastest-growing worker's compensation claim, with projections noting that these will form one in three claims by the end of the decade.

Workplace psychosocial hazards are psychological risks that arise from the design or management of work, the work environment and workplace behaviours that may cause psychological harm.

The most common causes of workplace mental health risks are:

- Work pressure and work overload
- Shift work and rostering
- Job insecurity
- Harassment and bullying
- Exposure to workplace violence or traumatic events

The survey, conducted exclusively for the AWU, contains responses from more than 1200 workers across multiple industries around Australia.

The largest responses were from the industries of Manufacturing, Mining, Construction, and Health and Community Services.

Psychological injury is an increasing risk, exacerbated by poor management of psy-



Statistics say one in two Australian workers have experienced bullying, harassment, or have been exposed to conflict. Picture: CONTRIBUTED

chosocial hazards, however recent legislative changes now increase obligations on employers to take preventative measures.

The results of this survey (attached) build

on earlier work which found 60 per cent of respondents were concerned about mental health and stress at work, with more than 23 per cent being extremely concerned.

Thirty per cent of members said they had sustained a mental health injury at work in the last 12 months, and this number is growing.

Research on Victorian suicides in 2012 found that 17 per cent of suicides are work-related.

Aside from the human cost, the cost to the economy of psychological and psychosocial injury is significant with The Productivity Commission estimating it costs the Australian economy \$12.2 billion and \$39.9 billion per year due to loss of productivity and participation (CEDA, 2020).

In addition, mental health claims cost \$480 million per year in workers compensation (Safe Work Australia, 2015)

Australian Workers' Union National Secretary Paul Farrow says the survey results are disturbing.

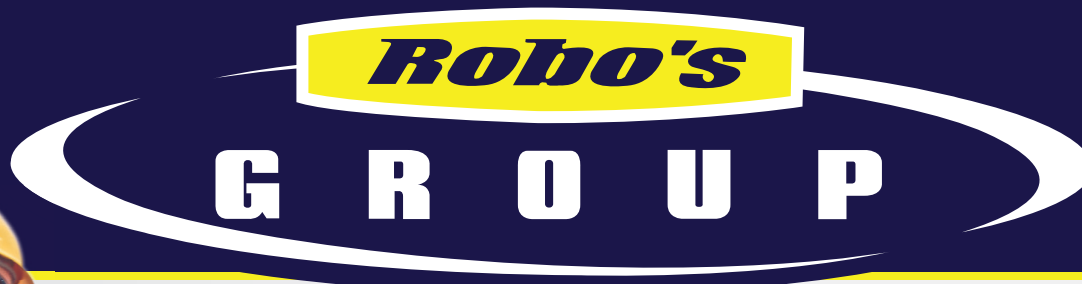
"To see in black and white one in two Australian workers have experienced being bullied, harassed or exposed to conflict or inappropriate behaviour in their workplace is disturbing," Mr Farrow said.

"We know Australians spend on average 90,000 hours at work in their lifetime, that's about 5,000 days or 13 years in total, it's a really big part of your life, so to see the level of unhappiness reflected in this survey is shocking.

"We are seeing chronic levels of unrealistic workloads, poor training and exposure to traumatic events.

"Last year all states in Australia brought in new laws to hold employers responsible for psychological and psychosocial hazards in the workplace, this survey is a wake-up call to them to start being proactive otherwise they will feel the consequences."

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OPINION

Specific skills in demand



The latest data from Jobs and Skills Australia shows that the August 2023 “Recruitment and Experiences report” reflects a somewhat mixed picture of the labour market in Australia.

Here are some key takeaways and their implications for the Central Queensland region:

While in general recruitment activity has somewhat declined, the report notes a slight increase in recruitment difficulty.

This suggests that employers are finding it challenging to fill open positions with qualified candidates.

For job seekers, this presents an opportunity to stand out in a competitive market by acquiring in-demand skills.

Significant variations in recruitment rates by industry are highlighted in the report.

Some industries, such as Accommodation and Food Services, have seen substantial declines in recruitment activity, while others like Retail Trade have also experienced challenges.

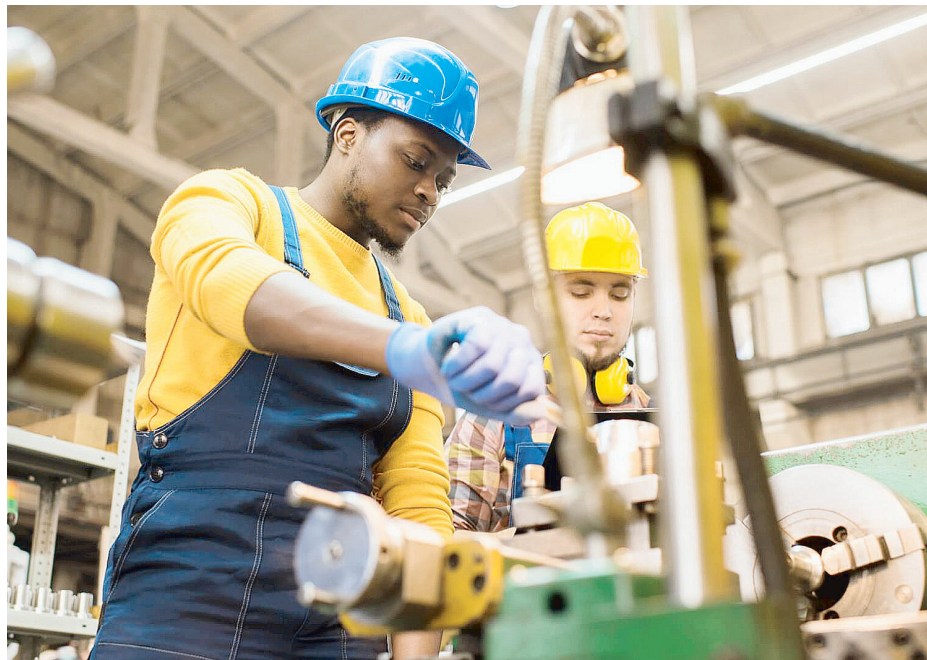
For job seekers, it’s crucial to consider these industry-specific trends when exploring career opportunities.

Despite short-term fluctuations, the report suggests that labour market conditions remain relatively favourable compared to previous years.

While recruitment activity may have decreased in the short term, it’s important to consider long-term trends and remain adaptable to the changing job market dynamics.

In our region, these findings imply that job seekers should continue to expect a competitive job market and acquiring skills in sectors experiencing demand, such as healthcare and technology, could enhance employability.

Additionally, employers need to be increasingly open to considering candidates from outside the region to alleviate their recruitment difficulties.



Picture: CONTRIBUTED

New Solar Farm approved, 40kms north of Biloela

The Minister for the Environment and Water has just recently announced the approval of a new solar farm in Smoky Creek, Central Queensland.

This solar farm is set to be a significant contributor to Australia’s renewable energy goals, as it will generate enough energy to power 200,000 households and reduce carbon emissions by one million tonnes annually.

The solar farm project includes plans to ensure that at least half of the jobs and procurement associated with the project will be sourced locally.

This commitment to local employment is likely to have a positive impact, providing job opportunities and some economic stimulus.

The approval of the Smoky Creek solar farm aligns with the government’s ambition to boost renewable energy capacity, reduce carbon emissions, and stimulate local job growth.

Boost to health and community services in Rockhampton

Seven organizations in Queensland are receiving over \$1 million in funding from the Queensland Care Consortium, a partnership

between Jobs Queensland and industry, to enhance the health and community services workforce.

By 2024-25, it’s expected that these sectors will employ 63,000 more people compared to 2020-21, totalling over 440,800 jobs.

The projects, including one by Central Queensland Indigenous Development in Rockhampton, aim to promote workforce development, attraction, and retention, with a focus on underrepresented groups such as First Nations people and young individuals.

This initiative positively impacts Rockhampton by fostering job opportunities and growth in its community services sector.

The Clean Energy Generation

The Australian Government has commissioned Jobs and Skills Australia to conduct a capacity study on the workforce needs for Australia’s transition to a clean energy economy.

The final report, titled ‘The Clean Energy Generation: workforce needs for a net-zero economy,’ offers 50 recommendations to ensure the country has the skills and workforce necessary to meet clean energy goals. The report emphasises that reaching the net-zero emissions target by 2050 will require a substantial workforce transforma-

tion, similar to past industrial and digital transformations.

This transformation will create new jobs, skills, qualifications, and training pathways. Significantly, the report highlights several key points of relevance to Central Queensland:

Skills Gap and Vocational Education

- The report warns of a potential shortfall in Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualified workers, particularly in trades like electricians.
- Addressing this gap will be crucial in ensuring the workforce is adequately skilled to support the clean energy sector.

Regional Opportunities

- It identifies emerging skills gaps in regional Australia, but also highlights opportunities for growth in regions where new clean energy industries will develop.
- As a region already embracing new technologies such as the Gladstone hydrogen plant, this reflects that our region will play a vital role in meeting the demand for skilled workers in the clean energy sector.

Inclusivity

- The report acknowledges the barriers and challenges faced by women, First Nations people, and migrants in participating in the sector.
- It emphasises the importance of ensuring that the workforce transformation is inclusive and provides opportunities for underrepresented groups.

Interconnected Workforce

- Rather than viewing clean energy as a standalone industry, the report recognises its integration into various sectors, including construction and research and development.
- This means that clean energy jobs are distributed throughout the workforce, potentially offering diverse opportunities for workers.

In summary, the report’s recommendations and insights are significant for the region as they highlight the need for upskilling, the potential for job growth in clean energy, and the importance of inclusivity in the workforce transformation.

These findings can inform regional policies and initiatives to prepare the workforce for the clean energy transition and ensure it benefits the broader community.

For more information and insights about local job opportunities and recruitment support visit JobsinCentralQueensland.au

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OPINION

Small yarns, big meaning



WITH WARREN ACUTT

If you were asked to nominate a club/organisation, team, or individual(s) to receive a sizable amount of someone else's money and give a succinct reason why them, who would you nominate and what would you write?

Central Queensland polyethylene tank manufacturer, Nu-Tank, recently offered the auction proceeds of a brand new 25000 litre water tank to a worthy cause in a regional Queensland community.

Rural merchandise stores throughout Central Queensland were invited to nominate a local club/organisation, team, or individual, and give a brief reason why.

The reasons why, gave an interesting insight into Central Queensland, its size, and its people.

One nomination started with, "imagine a classroom twice the size of Victoria."

The nominee was the Parents and Citizens Association of the Longreach School of Distance Education (LSODE).

They coordinate a bi-annual musical production, which gives every student the opportunity to be part of a full-scale musical production.

That is over 100 students spread across outback Queensland, being brought together to rehearse, and ultimately perform live on stage in Longreach. 2024 will be the 11-year musical.

How amazing is that?

When can I get tickets?

Another nominee was also school related, 2 students of Alpha State School, who were fundraising, by doing odd jobs around town, to help towards the costs of travel and uniforms after being selected to attend the Regional Athletics in Longreach, about a 500-kilometre round trip.

Hoping to then qualify for the State Championships, being held in Brisbane.

That is dedication, to not only put in the training but offering to do odd jobs to help cover the costs involved.

Talking about dedication to a sport,



Picture: CONTRIBUTED

imagine starting an AFL club in Moranbah, back in 1974.

How hard of a sell that would have been in rugby league heartland, to potential players, sponsors, and local Council.

The Brisbane Bears (now Lions) did not play their first AFL match till 1987.

In 2024 the Moranbah Bulldogs AFL Club celebrate 50 years.

Planning is currently underway to fund the anniversary celebrations.

Then there is Sam, who gives a lot of his time, and sometimes money, to keep the Blackwater Boxing Club going.

He sees boxing as a way of giving kids a positive start in life, teaching them self-defence, discipline and building their self-esteem.

Of course, travel to attend sporting fixtures in remote Queensland is just a given.

But, hats off to the parents in Lochington, Orion and Rolleston districts who each Thursday night bring their children into Springsure for swimming training.

Learning to swim is essential, but not always easy when the only swimming pool is hour(s) away.

The Springsure Swimming Club has around 114 members.

In November they take on more, hosting other Central Queensland swimming clubs at their annual carnival, in their not-quite 25-metre pool.

A busy time ahead for a small, dedicated committee.

The club that was randomly drawn to receive the proceeds of the tank sale (\$2500), was the Emerald Horse and Pony Club.

Formed in the 1950s, the club has had its ups and downs.

Not just with its members going over the jumps.

The grounds need aerating and top dressing, the original wood fence replaced, plumbing needs attention, and the list goes on, but so does the club, fundraising, recruiting, training, and competing; in the process producing state-age champions and more

competent riders. Three of their members recently travelled to Millmerran, to successfully compete in the state titles.

Each nomination was a succinct story.

The ones mentioned here are just a sample from those Nu-Tank received.

A story of vision and persistence; the characters (heroes) of which are typically dedicated volunteer(s), who could have easily said why to bother, but persevere despite the challenges.

The characters not mentioned though are the local business owners who support these clubs/organisations, teams, and individual(s) with their endeavours.

Most likely including the rural merchandise stores that nominated them.

The businesses you support shape how your town evolves.

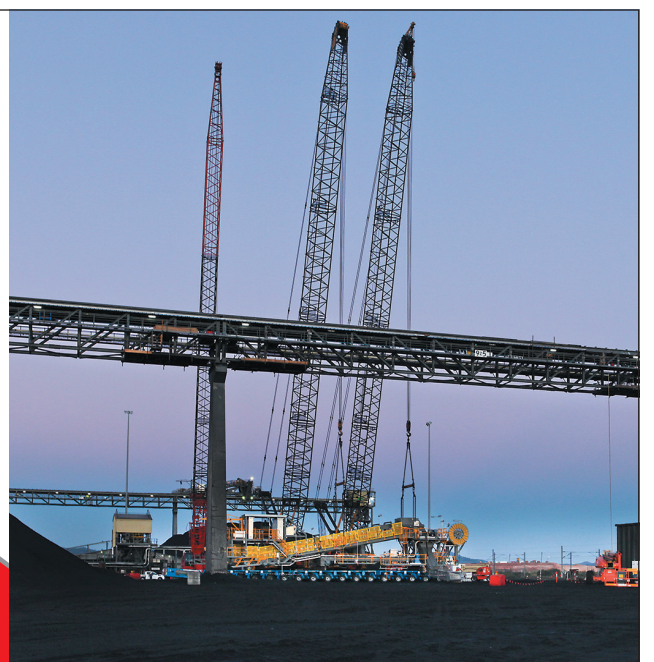
Which includes the clubs and organisations within the town and the members within the club.

A town is more than its buildings and a population figure.



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Harvest on home run

Queensland's 2023 sugarcane harvest has finally hit the halfway mark with over 50 per cent of the estimated 30.1 million tonne crop now cut and crushed at the state's 19 sugar mills.

Rain early in the season, combined with below-par mill performance, had delayed the crush in some districts, but the long-expected El Nino has brought ideal harvesting conditions, enabling many districts to make up ground in recent weeks.

Tableland district, which kicked off this year's crush on 21 May, is now on the home stretch, as is Bundaberg, with both districts having crushed more than 75 per cent of their crop.

Meanwhile, Burdekin, Queensland's biggest cane-growing region, has crushed around 65 per cent of its estimated 8.2 million tonne crop.

Some regions such as Innisfail and Plane Creek are yet to hit the halfway mark, however, while the problem-plagued Rocky Point district is struggling to get its season up and running.

Canegrowers Chairman Owen Menkens said it's a bit of a mixed bag across the industry.

"After falling behind early in the season, the dry weather has helped us make up ground and, if the weather holds and the mills perform as they should, we're expecting most districts will finish crushing in late November or early-December," he said.

"There are a few mill areas, however, where crushing is likely to continue into the Christmas curfew period.

"Rocky Point in particular is really struggling due to ongoing problems with the mill's co-generation plant.

"It's an infuriating and frustrating situa-



The 2023 Queensland sugarcane harvest has officially hit the halfway mark with over 50 per cent of the estimated 30.1 million tonne crop now cut and crushed at the state's 19 sugar mills. Picture: CONTRIBUTED

tion for growers in the district, and sadly it seems to be a perennial problem."

On a positive note, Mr Menkens said 40 per cent of Queensland's cane-growing area is now accredited in the industry-led, and government-funded, best management practice program, Smartcane BMP.

"This is a real success story of the indus-

try, especially when you consider that the uptake of similar programs in other Australian ag sectors is significantly lower, often not even in the double digits," Mr Menkens said.

"Smartcane BMP is recognised by global sugar sustainability gatekeepers Bonsucro, ProTerra and VIVE as meeting their sustainability criteria."

That means 40 per cent of the raw sugar exported from Australia is certified as sustainably produced.

"This is a huge selling point for Queensland sugar at a time when consumers are actively seeking out sustainable products," Mr Menkens said.

Mr Menkens said growers are putting a lot of time, money, and effort into proving their sustainability credentials, and Canegrowers have worked with KPMG to develop a blockchain platform that can trace sustainably grown sugarcane from the paddock to the packet.

The onus is now on sugar marketers to do their part and make sure growers receive the true value of their product, he said.

"For several years Canegrowers have encouraged growers to become certified, not simply to improve their farming systems and increase the efficiency, productivity, and profitability of their businesses, but also on the promise that accreditation would one day attract a premium for their sugar," Mr Menkens said.

"It has taken a lot of time and effort, but we are finally on the cusp of realising that goal, as the recent shipment of sustainably grown sugar to the UK proves.

"The government is playing its part, opening new markets for Australian sugar, and the growers are certainly doing their bit, adopting sustainable farming practices and seeking Smartcane BMP certification.

"But if we want to build on the momentum of the Smartcane BMP program and revitalise the industry through diversification, for the benefit of the entire supply chain and the communities in which we operate, then growers must be recognised and rewarded for their efforts."

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Roasted chooks for all

To meet the needs of a growing population of chicken meat lovers, with the average Australian now consuming 1kg of chicken a week, the new AgriFutures Cultivate Traineeship Program aims to build the poultry workforce one student at a time.

AgriFutures has partnered with the chicken meat industry to launch the traineeship, which provides an unparalleled opportunity to launch a career in a thriving sector for people in their early careers who are interested in animal welfare, innovation and sustainability.

As well as a Cert III in Poultry Production, successful participants will be guaranteed a full-time role in the industry, engage in professional development and mentoring and complete the program alongside a passionate network of peers.

Executive General Operations Manager at Inghams, Susy Klein said Inghams was proud to back the initiative.

"We are delighted to partner with AgriFutures on this program. It is an important collaboration that provides the industry with a new way of growing our workforce capacity," Ms Klein said.

"There are diverse career options in the chicken meat industry as it has a vastly different structure compared to other agricultural industries.

"Chicken companies directly provide farmers with one-day-old chicks, feed, veterinary expertise and farm management support, which creates an industry rich in opportunities to progress."

Managing Director of AgriFutures Australia, John Harvey said the Cultivate Program is a unique pathway into the agricultural workforce that aims to catch the attention of those who may not have considered a career in the chicken meat industry before.

"With a new focus on strengthening the agricultural workforce, at AgriFutures we recognise that young people have a key part to play as future workers and leaders of the agricultural industry. We need to support them, listen to them and invest in their development," Mr Harvey said.

Baiada Poultry General Manager, Technical, Nutrition and Feedmilling, Katherine Balding agreed that the opportunities in the chicken meat industry are little known but plentiful.

"I know a number of professionals in the chicken meat industry who began their career in a hands-on role on-farm and have progressed to supervisors and management at some of Australia's largest food production companies," Ms Balding said.

ACMF CEO, Dr Mary Wu said this is a hugely exciting initiative for the industry and provides an excellent entry platform for people to explore the diverse and rewarding roles the industry has to offer while attaining a formal qualification and having a full-time job at the end of it.

"What a winning combination," he said. The AgriFutures Cultivate Program aims to shine a spotlight on a livestock industry that holds an enormous amount of potential for young people - applications are now open to people looking for an early career opportunity and no prior experience is required.

For those seeking more information about the AgriFutures Cultivate Program, AgriFutures Australia is hosting a live Q and A session on Monday, 16 October 2023.

During this session, attendees will have the opportunity to have their queries addressed and gain deeper insights into various aspects of the traineeship, including eligibility, the application process, program details and the diverse roles on offer.



Picture: CONTRIBUTED

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CQU's trade-to-teach program has been expanded

Queensland tradespeople have even more opportunities to progress into studying teaching at CQUniversity, with the Queensland Government expanding the Trade-to-Teach Internship program.

After a successful pilot program in 2022 that involved CQU, the State Government is set to support more tradies to become teachers.

Education Minister Grace Grace recently announced an expansion of the Trade-to-Teach Internship program, through an additional \$10 million investment, to support qualified and experienced tradies to transition to teaching careers.

Trade to Teach offers successful applicants a \$20,000 scholarship, a paid internship, and a guaranteed permanent teaching position specialising in Industrial Technology and Design in a Queensland state secondary school.

Launched in 2022, there are currently

38 participants in the pilot cohort of the program.

Tradies started their education degrees this year at CQU or the University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ) and will head to the classroom as an intern with a half teaching load from 2024. Successful applicants in this round will start their studies in 2024 and head to the classroom in 2025.

CQU Head of Course for the Bachelor of Education and the Diploma of Secondary School Teaching, Dr Corey Bloomfield, said the renewal of the Trade to Teach Internship program was a win for CQU and the trades industry.

"Last year the pilot program was very successful. Out of the 38 tradies in the pilot, CQU took on 22 and those participants have progressed into further tertiary education at CQU," he said.

Dr Bloomfield encouraged any tradespeople looking to move into teaching to

consider applying for the Trade to Teach Internship program.

Trade to Teach Internship participant Daniel Parslow decided he needed a career change after 18 years as a fitter and turner and an electrician.

"I've always enjoyed teaching people new things and with a young family it suits this stage of life whilst presenting a new challenge," he said.

"My ultimate goal is to have a rewarding new career that provides a better family balance with my children."

He said the biggest incentive for tradespeople to consider joining the Trade to Teach Internship program was the guaranteed wage in years 2-4 of study.

"Most tradies are taking a pay cut once they are qualified so very few could afford to transition with four years of study and only part-time work, so the guaranteed

wage with this program is a big-ticket item," he said.

Applicants may be eligible for recognition of prior learning (RPL) based on their trade qualifications and relevant industry experience. Talk with Central Queensland University (CQU) about RPL.

Selection of applicants will be based on those who specialise in and are available to teach Industrial Technology and Design (ITD) subjects, including Engineering Skills, Furnishing, Building and Construction, Industrial Graphics, Industrial Technology Skills, and other materials and technologies specialisations.

Applications for the Trade to Teach Internship Program close on Monday 2 October. Qualified tradespeople can visit the Teach Queensland website at www.qld.gov.au/tradetoteach to apply.

ATSE calls for net zero

The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) has called on the Federal Government to commit to an ambitious target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 on 21 September.

In a new position statement, the organisation which represents nearly 900 of Australia's most distinguished engineers and applied scientists, recommends immediate, substantial and concerted action to rescue the dwindling window for limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

In the face of increasing catastrophic weather, and as the UN Climate Ambition Summit gets underway in New York, the Academy has stated that Australia and the world are at a crossroads.

Scientific evidence must be heeded, and more ambitious targets are needed to drive technological innovation, catalyse regulatory change, upskill the workforce, roll out the necessary infrastructure and spur a massive boost to investment across the economy to support decarbonisation.

ATSE President Dr Katherine Woodthorpe AO FTSE said the Academy is calling for a national effort across all Australian sectors, governments, and industries to set an ambitious benchmark for innovation which will equip the nation to become the renewable energy superpower it aspires to be.

"The science is unequivocal, the climate-induced catastrophes are irrefutable," Dr Woodthorpe said.

"ATSE calls for leaders across every Australian sector to join us in making Australia a frontrunner amongst global peers, in setting an ambitious target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.



Picture: CONTRIBUTED

"This science-based target will set a critical benchmark for Australian action, incentivising investment and giving a clear signpost to industry and governments to drive the rapid deployment of existing and mature low-carbon technologies, as well as rolling out emerging technologies and exports.

"To meet this ambition, with the Federal Government in the driver's seat, Australia should prioritise upskilling our workforce, and develop and urgently apply evidence-based solutions across all industry sectors - particularly in energy, transportation, manufacturing, construction, minerals and agriculture.

"Meeting this target will be a monumental challenge, but with immediate and large-scale action to invest in skills and infrastructure, as well as political, policy and regulatory support at all levels, it is achievable."

The position statement also calls for a national net zero emissions policy and implementation framework that prioritises the challenge and addresses the opportunity to transform Australia's economy; a zero-waste approach to supply chains; and reduce the impacts of human activity on biodiversity.

"We congratulate the Federal Government on the significant progress to date," Dr

Woodthorpe said.

However, we are making up for lost time and the pace of our low-carbon transition today, determines our tomorrow.

Setting an ambitious target, based on science, which will act as a lightning rod for urgent government, industry and academic collaboration, is a no regrets step toward a net zero future," Dr Woodthorpe said.

ATSE commits to working across government and industry leadership to advise on best practice policy settings and supports urgently reducing Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

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Builders respond to map

The peak building and construction industry association, Master Builders Australia, welcomed the release of Jobs and Skills Australia's Towards a National Jobs and Skills Roadmap.

Master Builders Australia CEO Denita Wawn said this roadmap is a valuable vehicle for the Government's ambitious skills and workforce goals and what is needed now.

"Vocational education and training (VET) is central to skills and knowledge development in the building and construction industry, more so than any other sector in Australia," she said.

"A VET qualification is the highest level of education attained for over 600,000 building and construction workers.

"This is 54 per cent of the total workforce and 80 per cent of workers that have a post-school qualification.

"Analysis of current skills shortages shows that 36 per cent of occupations assessed were in national shortage in 2023.

"50 per cent of the occupations in the category assessed as being in national shortage are technicians and trade workers.

"Ensuring the VET sector delivers high-quality training that is occupation- and industry-relevant and valued by employers and the Australian population more broadly is critical to meeting current and future workforce needs in the building and construction industry.

"The Government needs to take an approach to ensure that policy levers are being pulled in the same direction to ensure we don't find ourselves in a position of one step forward, two steps back.

"The proposed industrial relations legislation currently before parliament will counter efforts made in the skills space and make it harder for employers to create new jobs.

"It will sap productivity.

"If Australia is to meet Housing Accord and Net Zero targets, we need better incentive people to join and stay in these occupations now and in future."

Jobs and Skills Australia's analysis reveals that gender imbalance is a feature of many skill shortage areas.

"Occupations that have a highly gender-skewed workforce are significantly more likely to be experiencing shortages than occupations where the gender balance is more even," Denita said.

"More work needs to be done to remove gender imbalances and in particular, support women in the workforce.

"The construction industry attracts more male than female workers.

"Improving the attractiveness of the industry to women presents a massive opportunity to increase the pool of potential workers.

"Initiatives such as Master Builders Aus-



Master Builders Australia CEO Denita Wawn.

Picture: CONTRIBUTED

tralia's Women Building Australia program are supporting retention through mentoring, helping to dispel misperceptions about the industry, encouraging more women into construction, sharing the stories of women in the industry, and nurturing career progression and business resilience.

"The Women Building Australia program is one example of an industry-led initiative to provide appropriate mentorship and support for women entering the industry which has helped see an uptick of female participation over recent years.

"The perception that higher education is superior to VET needs to be quashed and the tertiary system better aligned to meet future workforce needs.

"Completion rates of VET courses are a

concern to the industry and Skills and Workforce Ministers have identified as a problem.

"The early stages of an apprenticeship are the most tenuous. Private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), like those run by our members, have higher retention and completion rates than TAFE with better pastoral care and support in place.

"Governments should look to RTOs such as those provided by Master Builders members as examples of best practice."

Ten Jobs and Skills Councils with a deep understanding of the VET sector and industry needs have been established to support the VET sector in meeting needs and providing a stronger voice.

"Master Builders Australia looks forward

to working closely with BuildSkills Australia to identify skills and workforce needs and to promote the building and construction industry as a rewarding career path," Denita said.

"Master Builders has long advocated for a range of changes to the journey of an early career worker in the building and construction industry.

"These include better career education and advice, starting in early high school years; extinguishing the bias towards higher education over VET; providing detailed and realistic information to prospective apprentices to help them make informed choices; better pastoral care and mentorship; and restructuring the wage subsidy for employers."



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Spotlight falls on NWQ

The emerging economic and job opportunities from the resources sector in North West Queensland were the focus of a Queensland Resources Council (QRC) event in Mount Isa.

Around 80 people gathered at the Mount Isa Civic Centre for a chance to discuss the region's growing importance to the state's resources sector and economy, particularly as companies branched out from mining traditional minerals.

QRC Chief Executive Ian Macfarlane said the QRC was very pleased to host the event and bring together local government, industry, business and community representatives along with a number of parliamentarians.

"We also appreciate the support of event sponsor and major regional employer Glencore Queensland Metals in bringing together people who share the common goal of charting a sustainable pathway forward for our industry in this region," he said.

"In the 2021/22 financial year, the resources sector contributed \$1.1 billion to North West Queensland's economy, which is a quarter of the local gross regional product.

"Our industry directly and indirectly supported close to 7,500 jobs, accounting for nearly half of all local employment. Resources companies also spent \$385 million supporting local businesses, charities and sports clubs.

"Here in Mount Isa specifically, the resources sector generated \$810 million for the local economy and supported more than half of local jobs, accounting for a third of the gross regional product of \$580 million."

On top of that, our industry supported 700 jobs and spent almost \$200 million with local businesses, charities and sports clubs



Glencore Zinc Australia Chief Operating Officer Sam Strohmayr, Mount Isa Deputy Mayor Phil Barwick and QRC Chief Executive Ian Macfarlane. Picture: CONTRIBUTED

over that one-year period, which demonstrates how important the community is to the resources sector.

"With abundant reserves of the resources the world needs to develop technologies of the future, particularly in energy storage, there is significant potential for the resources sector to bring even greater economic

benefits to this region," Mr Macfarlane said.

Glencore Zinc Australia Chief Operating Officer Sam Strohmayr said the company has a strong connection to the region and was delighted to support the QRC's first Resources Roundup in Mount Isa.

"We're proud to be a part of Mount Isa Mine's iconic 100-year history, contribution,

and achievements," Mr Strohmayr said.

"The Resources Roundup was a great opportunity to bring people together to talk about how we can work together to make the most of the North West's potential in the region's future resource development to benefit local communities and Queensland.

Industry *TODAY* partnering with



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CQU-CQIC link explored

Earlier this month members of the Central Queensland Industry Collaborative (CQIC) met with representatives from Central Queensland University.

The purpose of the meeting was to explore ways in which the University might help CQIC in its quest to identify and support major infrastructure projects that would attract more public infrastructure funding for our region.

The CQIC representatives highlighted the little-known fact that significant Federal and State funding, e.g. over \$50m, is not in either level of government's Budget statements for the longer term future.

The meeting agreed that the region needed to identify a list of the top three major projects, for example, that all local industry organisations and representa-

tives could get behind.

It would then require all those organisations to collaboratively put all their energy behind advocating for these projects at both levels of government, to support economic sustainability in the region.

So far, some members of the CQIC group have been canvassing the Federal, State, and local government representatives on the importance of collaborative efforts to agree on and obtain funding for larger projects in our region.

The CQIC group was encouraged by the response from the University's representatives that it could provide expertise where possible to identify the most deserving major infrastructure projects, as well as subsequent advocacy.



Kim Harrington CQU, Susan Kinnear CQU, John Rolfe CQU, Phil Henry CQIC, Delwar Akbar CQU and Marcus Lang CQIC.



Nigel Hutton speaking with Mark Gwynne.



Corey Smith, Graham Sheppard and Gregg Chapman.



Stephen Smith from the Manufacturing Hub.

Local business members got together for a networking opportunity at the Alley in Yeppoon on Friday 6 October. See who was captured at the breakfast.

Down networking Alley



Lachlan Busby with David Cook.



Corey Smith, Alison Sheppard and Steve Schravemade.



Thomas Searle and Brendan Pettersen.



Matt Lawless introducing himself.



The Wex brothers Matt and Rory.



Carl Carter and Phil Henry.

Safety: Stopping the drop

A dropped object, no matter its size, weight, or the height it falls from, poses a safety risk on the worksite.

Any inherent hazards of this nature can also have a detrimental impact on productivity, which in turn can hit an asset's bottom line.

Whether it's a mine, offshore oil and gas platform, refinery or power generation plant, road, rail or infrastructure project, or a food processing facility, dropped objects present a constant danger, particularly when working at heights.

Unfortunately, many companies often overlook or underestimate the damage caused by falling objects, their impact force, and the potential likelihood of death that can result.

According to Safe Work Australia's 'Key WHS Statistics Australia 2022' report, a total of 169 fatalities occurred in 2021, nine per cent (16 deaths) of which were the result of workers being hit by falling objects.

Implementing appropriate safeguards to protect your people and assets from dropped tools and equipment has therefore never been more important.

Although companies have employed various types of systems, debris nets, safety mesh, and other drop containment devices for years, the quality, reliability and longevity of these systems are questionable as many do not comply with industry or safety standards.

In industrial environments, these systems are not always designed to not only withstand constant exposure to corrosive chemicals, salt water, high winds, flames, and UV rays but also safely intercept or deflect falling objects.

That's where innovative protective structures such as the Stop Drop™ come into play as a practical way to manage the risks associated with dropped objects and keep workers safe.

Invented by BLH Safety over 13 years ago, the patented technology supplied to 16 countries across many industry sectors has also redefined dropped object prevention.

It has since become a common installation as major companies recognise BLH Stop Drop products as best practices on the world's largest mining, oil and gas companies, and infrastructure projects.

BLH Safety's products have been independently tested and comply with all the required industry safety standards to meet the harshest conditions.

The company is always looking for more opportunities to innovate and evolve alongside client needs in different industry sectors globally.

Safety barricades engineered to perform

BLH Safety founder and Stop Drop inventor Shane Gill, says the innovative design utilising advanced polymer technology featured in its Stop Drop safety barricading™ system offers a new level of protection from above, and a smarter way of containing dropped objects.

"Our unique Stop Drop system is specifically designed and engineered to minimise the risk of falling objects from work areas such as platforms, scaffolding, access walkways and stairways. It is quick and easy to install and remove, and the flexible polymer material is lightweight," Shane said.

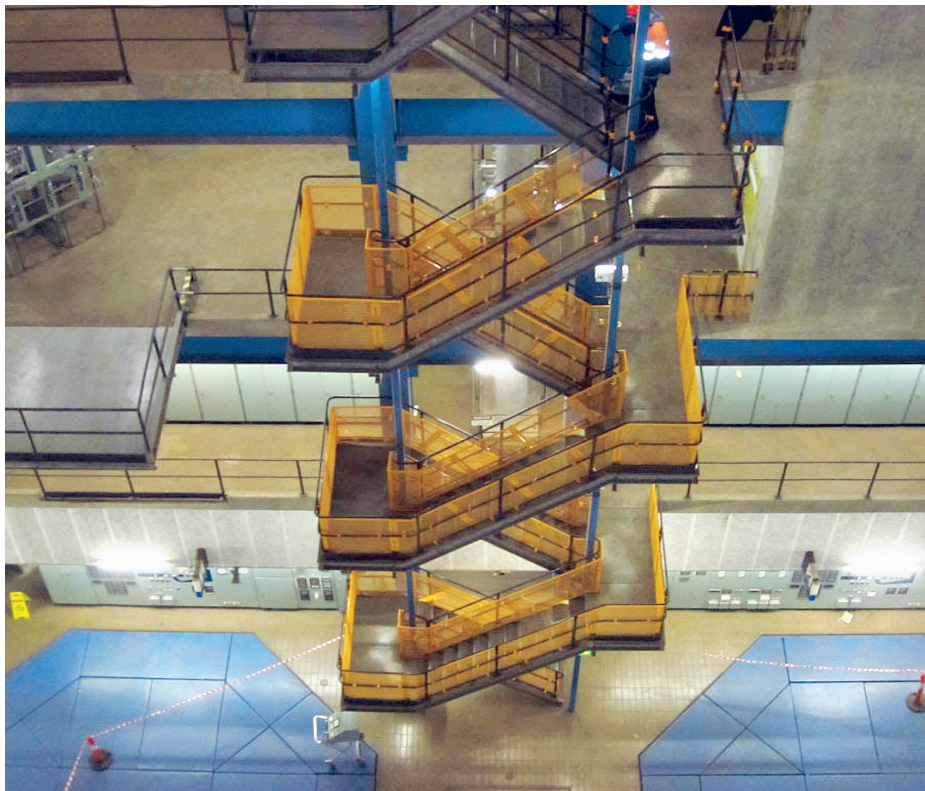
Aside from Stop Drop being the only system available in the market with a 10-year lifecycle warranty, which provides significant cost savings over the long term, Gill explained their product offers many other competitive advantages.

"Our product is not only fully recyclable and chlorine-free, but the polymers are manufactured in a state-of-the-art, climate-controlled facility that meets the highest quality environmental standards, with lower emissions in the manufacturing process. It has been tested for both extreme heat/cold in one system, therefore there is no requirement for two systems like others in the market," he said.

"The innovative snap lock and clip-on



According to Safe Work Australia's 'Key WHS Statistics Australia 2022' report, a total of 169 fatalities occurred in 2021, nine per cent (16 deaths) of which were the result of workers being hit by falling objects.



Pictures: CONTRIBUTED

design eliminates the need for bolts or additional fasteners, plus the smaller, lighter panels streamline installation with less manual handling involved. The panels can be easily attached to any railing configurations of different sizes, thicknesses, and shapes."

In offshore oil and gas platforms, high winds and turbulent weather conditions can wreak havoc on exposed structures.

Stop Drop is non-heat conductive, and UV stabilised with a 10-year UV rating and is corrosion, chemical, fire, impact and glare

resistant, and can be supplied with static resistance upon request.

It is also free of sharp edges, pinch points, or catch points, and does not obscure the line of sight or block out illumination.

"Our barricading system is a proven, cost-effective solution for both permanent and temporary installations, and many of our clients now manage installation themselves to save money," Shane said.

"You don't need a hot work permit as no onsite design or fabrication work is re-

quired, and the quick installation minimises downtime.

Although we have dedicated technicians available to install the product, we also offer installation training to our clients so they can utilise their own personnel."

Physics of dropped objects

People often don't realise the impact forces that are generated when an object is dropped at height. Even with some form of protection, the result of being struck by an item of relatively low weight can be significant.

Shane highlighted that dropped objects can quickly accelerate and build up a considerable impact force.

"As the expression goes, 'what goes up must come down,'" he said.

Dropped objects from heights are no exception to the laws of gravity.

For example, a 2kg hammer dropped from a height of 5m will have an impact force of over one tonne.

"There's also the issue of deflection when an object's vertical path is obstructed, whereby it is deflected, turning it into a dangerous projectile," Shane said.

For instance, an object that has fallen 37m (100ft), hitting an obstruction at 6m (20ft), can be deflected over 66m (218ft) away with a travel speed of up to 100km/h (60mph)."

Establishing a safe exclusion zone that provides sufficient distance for deflections is rarely practical, so it's essential to deploy the correct drop prevention system before a potential impact can occur.

"Our barricade mesh and fixtures have been uniquely designed to provide shock absorption, so at the point of impact, the shock is contained and does not deflect or pass the energy through the structure it is affixed to," Shane said.

BLH Safety's pioneering spirit continues to this day with the company researching new and innovative ways to protect workers.



Yellow brings a sigh of relief

Central Queenslanders can let out a sigh of relief when they get a glimpse of a yellow truck or helicopter making its way to them.

For RACQ CapRescue's naming rights sponsor, the 'yellow truck feeling' has been more visible than ever.

The latest figures from the State's largest roadside assistance fleet revealed RACQ patrols have responded to more than 2,000 calls from motorists every day over the past financial year.

RACQ Chief Executive Assistance Glenn Toms said Queenslanders can always count on the RACQ roadside fleet to come to their rescue.

"RACQ responded to an average of 87 jobs per hour across Queensland, 755,000 in total during the year, and helped get 92% of drivers back on the road," Mr Toms said.

"If you've ever been broken down on the side of the road, you'll know that feeling of relief when one of RACQ's patrol officers arrives to help. We call that the 'yellow truck feeling'."

The feeling is more than mutual for the almost 400 rescues performed up to September 2023 by the RACQ CapRescue helicopter.

Operations Manager Kirsty Wooler said the figures for the lifesaving service have also been on the rise, with the average

increasing to 1.4 rescues per day.

"It appears that Rescue300 heading to the skies 50 times in January at an operational cost of \$1.1 million set the scene for what the year would bring," said Ms Wooler.

Past patient Andrea Bielenberg remembers that the time waiting for the Rescue300 helicopter to arrive was the longest hour of her life.

Andrea and her daughter Audrey were stung by Irukandji jellyfish on Great Keppel Island, and whilst in excruciating pain, it was only RACQ CapRescue flying overhead that brought some mild relief.

"In addition to my gratitude, the reassurance the service provides for friends and family cannot be overstated.

The mere sound of the approaching helicopter was instant relief for my husband and our friends on GKI, knowing that medical support was close. My concerned parents in Rockhampton were also relieved as the helicopter passed over their home on the way to retrieve us and again at the hospital as it returned with Audrey and I." Andrea recalled.

From motor vehicle accidents and rural incidents to inter-hospital transfers and search and rescue missions, more than 10,000 people have seen the yellow RACQ CapRescue helicopter and felt hope.

Together with the RACQ Roadside Assistance team, both are available 24/7, 365 days a year to help Queenslanders in need.



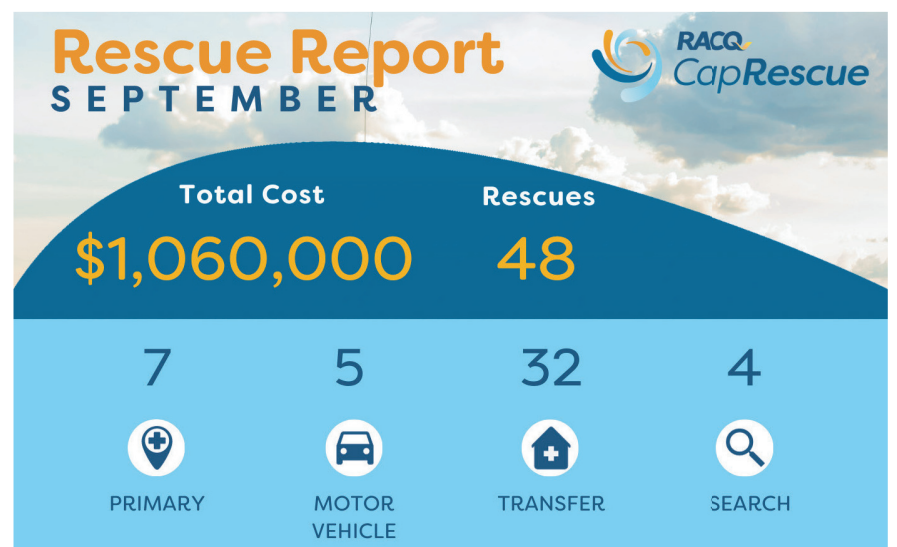
Rural needs inspire support of rescue helicopter service

Living on a property in Theodore that has been in the family since the 1950s means the Hewitt's are no strangers to life on the land. Personally experiencing the need for RACQ CapRescue earlier this year, the Hewitt's decided to utilize Caitlyn's Business to donate back. As a result, Hewitt Consulting & Communications are delighted to release the special edition RACQ CapRescue caps, which are now available for purchase through the organization itself.

From medical episodes to horse falls and beast altercations, as well as quad

bikes and machinery accidents, RACQ CapRescue is often the life-saving bridge to treatment for residents across 350,000km².

The special edition caps serve as a symbol of gratitude and support for the vital services provided by RACQ CapRescue. If you would like to purchase a cap, please contact the RACQ CapRescue office on 4922 9093 or visit their online store at www.caprescue.org.au/shop. Your contribution can make a difference in saving lives across the region.



RACQ CapRescue

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\$2

1st Prize - \$1,000 Seafood Voucher
2nd Prize - \$700 Seafood Voucher

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Rosslyn Bay FISH MARKET

Action on remoteness

During Mental Health Week, the National Rural Health Alliance welcomed the launch of the National Mental Health Workforce Strategy 2022-2032 by the Australian Government.

The Alliance is pleased to see that the issues of mental health workforce shortages in rural and remote locations and options to address the specific needs of communities to attract, retain, maximise, support and train a rural workforce are given due consideration in this strategy.

Alliance chief executive Susi Tegen said they know mental illness in rural and remote Australia is more prevalent than in major cities and tragically, rates of self-harm and suicide increase with remoteness.

"We are particularly pleased to see the reference to the need for home grown professionals as the Strategy notes that people originating from rural and remote areas often have a preference to undertake training and employment in their own or comparable communities," Susi said.

"The Strategy rightly notes that there needs to be a focus on developing, growing and sustaining the regional, rural and remote mental health workforce through providing localised education, training and placement opportunities for students.

"Funding support needs to be provided to local clinicians to take on students as well as support those who work long hours in their communities, as their contribution often goes unnoticed until they burn



The National Rural Health Alliance welcomed the launch of the National Mental Health Workforce Strategy 2022-2032 by the Australian Government during Mental Health Week from 7 to 14 October. Pictures: CONTRIBUTED



Alliance chief executive Susi Tegen.

out and leave.

"We're pleased that many of the Alliance's recommendations to the National Mental Health Workforce Strategy Taskforce have been incorporated as it acknowledges that a universal workforce approach is not viable for the unique and varied challenges in rural and remote areas.

"The Strategy includes an action item to incentivise the use of place-based approaches to training and professional de-

velopment to help attract and retain a workforce in rural and remote areas in the next three to five years."

The Alliance believes place-based solutions need to be actioned now as rural communities cannot wait any longer.

Place-based solutions are needed now to deliver primary health care including mental health care to our rural communities.

"We welcome the reference to wrap-

around service delivery models that adopt a person-centred approach that includes their family and carers which have demonstrated the potential to improve health outcomes, particularly in regional, rural and remote areas," Ms Tegen said.


"But we now need to see the resources and commitment by all levels of government to ensure the actions in the strategy become tangible responses to this area of critical need."

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