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Re., Jobs and Skills Councils - Industry Skills Australia - Maritime Industry 2024 Workforce Plan

I am writing on behalf of the Boating Industry Association Ltd (BIA) in Australia regarding the draft Maritime Industry 2024 Workforce Plan. We note the following:

- Deadline for responses - COB 5 April 2024 AEDT
- Feedback is quick via a five-minute feedback form

Please note we have completed the online form and submit this paper to reinforce our response to the draft.

Introduction

The BIA is the peak industry body in Australia that represents the interests of boating which includes designers, manufacturers, importers, brokers, insurers, retailers, charters, yacht and boat clubs, marinas, events, surveyors and trades from boat builders to riggers, and more. BIA is an advocate for boaters and the boating lifestyle and supports safe, responsible, and enjoyable boating. BIA has members in all States and Territories.

The boating economy generates significant benefits. The BIA last year reported industry national turnover of \$9.64 billion, directly employed more than 25,000 people with more than 7000 contractors. Seventy-five per cent are in small family businesses, employing local workers and supporting local communities.

In Australia, more than 85 per cent of the population live within 50km of the coast, so it is little wonder that almost 1 in 5 households can have a boat or watercraft and that approximately 5 million go boating each year. People of all ages, gender and ability participate in boating across paddle, sail and power for leisure and sport.

In 2023 BIA was invited to join the Australian Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance, which is funded by the Jobs and Skills Council, to represent the recreational marine sector especially regarding marine trades.

Overall comments:

The standout opportunity with the draft Plan is to incorporate the recreational marine sector which covers recreational boating and Class 4 DCV (eg., hire and drive, charter, share economy vessels). By incorporating this sector the draft would effectively double its relevance by taking total revenue to almost \$20 billion and people employed to 60,000.

It is also noteworthy that the current Australian Apprentice Priority List issued by the Federal Government in January includes 19 new occupations and two of those are in recreational marine, no other maritime trades were added. Of the full Australian Apprentice Priority List there are 14 mentions of marine specific Trade skills and numerous others, such as cabinet maker, which transfer directly into the domestic recreational marine sector's manufacturing base.

It is also noteworthy that of the occupations in Table 1., of the draft Plan only one of the four mentioned ie., Ship's Engineer is described as in Shortage on the national Skills Priority List. It is also worth noting the draft Plan seems to ignore the domestic marine manufacturing sector who build world-class recreational boats but also produce commercial vessels including government patrol boats, survey boats, charter boats, water taxis and ferries. This domestic boat building workforce is a critical element of the national marine industry capability along with the host of support skills and trades across the sector.

We also note the goal for the plan is captured in the plan's preamble information as follows:

Development of a national Workforce Plan for each of our four key industries, Transport and Logistics, Rail, Aviation and Maritime, is central to our role as a Jobs and Skills Council. These Plans set out the workforce development challenges and opportunities facing the industry and serve as a roadmap for the future by identifying what industry, the national skills system and governments need to do to build an agile, highly productive and resilient workforce.

The opportunity is to truly present a national maritime industry plan which incorporates a sector of equal economic value and jobs value as currently depicted in the draft. To reflect the full economic and jobs ecosystem in the maritime sector and its potential for growth in an inclusive strategic plan were skills and trades can interchange across segments. Where the final plan can be seen as truly representing a coordinated and

complete path forward for the collective maritime industry workforce from design and manufacture to operations and crewing.

To not include the recreational marine industry would reduce the plan's potential for success and cause confusion about what is in and what is out, and why.

See attached **2023 Marine Industry in Australia Stats Report** for a high-level guide to the sector, the **Issue Note Value and Demand Trades and Skills July 2023** and **Australian Apprentice Priority List**

Recommendation:

To work with the BIA to include an equally important sector in terms of economic and jobs consequence, and that is the national recreational marine industry, to ensure a more complete plan regarding jobs and skills for the Australian maritime sector.

The BIA is willing to assist and travel domestically if needed to support this work. My contact details are m., 0418 279 465 or e., neil@bia.org.au

Yours sincerely



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