



Draft water industry skills and training action plan

Key challenges for skills and training

DEMAND

Low uptake of accredited training in NSW water industry

No clear expectation of what training is essential to LWU

Regional utilities have difficulty attracting and retaining skilled staff

Skilled and competent operators are vital in managing drinking water quality. There is a lack of trained operators in NSW. This poses a high risk to communities.

Establish a sustainable training market for water operations

Need to address both supply and demand challenges to increase skills of existing operators, attract more operators into the sector and increase employment

SUPPLY

Lack of registered training organisations (RTOs) offering water operation training

No pathway for trainers to maintain training and technical skills

Actions - Increasing demand for training

Barrier	Actions	Partners
Low uptake of accredited training in NSW water industry	Promote awareness of accredited training delivered by RTOs, where it is available and as it emerges	Training Services NSW LGNSW NSW Water Directorate
	Reduce cost barriers faced by LWU through increased Smart & Skilled subsidies to employers (or RTO) for regional operator training. Consider regional and remote loadings	Training Services NSW
No clear expectation of what training is essential to LWU	Raise awareness of criticality of accredited water operators to LWU risk management with councillors and LG executives	NSW regulators Local Government NSW
	Develop guidance for LWUs on appropriate skills and competencies for staff, including position descriptions and model training plans	Local Government NSW Water Research Australia Orana Water Utilities Alliance Water sector
	Investigate options to incentivise LWU to support training and accreditation of operators through recognition of accredited training in regulatory framework	NSW regulators Local Government NSW NSW Water Directorate

Actions - Increasing demand for training

Barrier	Actions	Partners
Regional utilities have difficulty attracting and retaining skilled staff	Develop Water Industry Skills Strategy that targets the attraction of new and accredited training of existing operators (following success of similar strategies in other industries)	Training Services NSW
	Increase marketing to attract new trainees to water sector through pilot	Training Services NSW Local Government NSW Water sector
	Make it easier and cheaper for LWUs to access traineeship programs by investigating pros/cons of Group Training Organisation model, test through regional pilot	Training Services NSW Local Government NSW Water sector
	Raise awareness of regional school leavers about opportunities as water operators through pilot	Training Services NSW Local Government NSW Water sector
	Investigate targeted incentives that attract skilled migrants to regions as water operators	Training Services NSW Local Government NSW Water sector

Actions - Increasing supply of training

Barrier	Actions	Partners
Lack of registered training organisations (RTOs) offering water operation training	Raise RTO awareness of the market opportunity with new data quantifying training needs across NSW and the scope of training delivery needed, particularly for regional and remote NSW towns	Training Services NSW NSW Water Directorate Local Government NSW Public Sector ITAB
	Reduce the costs of RTO market entry of by developing high quality training resources available to all RTO (potential for nationally approach)	Water Services Association of Australia Water Industry Operators Association NSW Water Directorate qldwater VicWater Public Sector ITAB
	Reduce costs of RTO market entry by a pilot program that reduce costs and facilitates access to well located existing water infrastructure for workplace based training (essential for Cert III)	Pilot local water utilities DPIE
	Incentivise entry of RTO by increasing the level of funding for remote and regional student training places (ie above current subsidy) and the number of places in recognition of impact of public health risks	Training Services NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
No pathway for trainers to maintain training and technical skills	Create pipeline of suitable trainers through pilot of a new program to identify and incentivise experts to be trained as trainers and available to RTO	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Pilot local water utilities NSW Water Directorate Training Services NSW