

# ANNUAL REPORT

July 2021 to June 2022



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# Foreword

The Training for the Future program is committed to building a culture that puts our program partners at the heart of everything we do.

The past 12 months has seen the Industry Capability and Inclusion team continued to deliver on our program platform despite the challenge of COVID-19 again. The team's ability to continue to deliver programs, to flip in person programs to online format has seen Training for the Future (TFTF) continue to deliver of its vital package of programs.

The Inclusion team has delivered programs to increase employment opportunities for disadvantaged communities to create respectful and inclusive workplaces across the transport sector. Championing Aboriginal businesses through ongoing social procurement, and the delivery of Department of Transport's (DoT) Women in Transport Mentoring program and Leadership Development Scholarship program, both of which are part of

the Women in Transport Strategy and aim to improve outcomes such as participation and earning for women.

Transport infrastructure work has not abated in the last year despite lockdowns. The need for a critical supply of talent in Victoria continues, as does the utilisation of our training facilities at Rail Academy Newport (RAN).

As part of our COVID-19 response, the RAN team worked closely with government and health authorities to determine and adhere to preventative measures, while navigating ever-changing restrictions in order the keep the facility open, and the supply chain intact. The responsiveness of RAN which remained open during the pandemic ensured the delivery of the skilled workers that are vital for TFTF suite of programs, State Government

infrastructure construction projects and ensuring coordination to achieve inclusion targets.

The Capability team continued to perform strongly, with the Rail Signalling Cadets Program, Fusion and a new program called Safety Starters proving the team never rests on its laurels. Its engagement with industry partners continues to be collaborative, bringing everyone with them on the journey to deliver value and develop opportunities to re-skill asylum seekers and refugees with relevant experience, as well as sourcing local talent for roles.

We are positive about the future and with COVID-19 restrictions now fully lifted our programs can be further developed and executed to support the vital skills our industry will need now and into the future.



**Caitlin Ryan**  
*Director, Industry Capability, and Inclusion*  
Level Crossing Removal Project

## Project Partners



CHAPTER 1

Our purpose

With our unprecedented transport infrastructure pipeline of projects underway, we are committed to assisting industry to address critical skills gaps to operate and maintain our expanded rail network into the future.

The dedicated team are working to address the shortage of highly skilled labour to industry by accessing labour segments that have been traditionally untapped by the rail industry. Our industry-led program is implementing the following initiatives:

Inclusion

Seeking to ensure opportunities are created and realised to drive economic development and improve diversity and social outcomes through job creation, re and up-skilling and social procurement in line with Victorian Government policy directions.

Capability

Providing an industry-wide strategic, coordinated approach to rail workforce development and capability resourcing to support the unprecedented pipeline of State rail infrastructure projects.

ICI Mission

To enable industry to sustainably develop an inclusive and skilled workforce to deliver infrastructure projects for Victoria.

ICI Vision

Build the future generations of Victorian Rail and Infrastructure talent.

ICI Value Proposition

- Provide and delivery the industry capability and inclusion strategy
- Partner with our industry to deliver high value outcomes
- Provide subject matter people and capability expertise
- Raise educational governance standards of industry
- Grow capability and capacity for our industry

CHAPTER 2

Our contributions

The value created from the ongoing delivery of the TTF program continues to build on previous years. This has only been achieved through industry collaboration and participation and commitment to up skill the sector for a sustainable future.

Our work continues to yield significant opportunities for the most marginalised and underrepresented cohorts of the Victorian community. Our Gain Real Opportunities in Work (GROW) program continued to provide access to training and employment outcomes, our program to date has resulted in over 156 employment outcomes.

It has been another significant year of improvement works at Rail Academy Newport, including the delivery of immersive training asset, High-Capacity Metro Train (HCMT) and Rail Academy station, with our first group of secondary students touring the new HCMT zone in May.

As part of ongoing efforts to attract young people to consider a career in rail, the Certificate II in heavy and Light Rail Fundamentals enjoyed higher-then-average retention with the pilot group due to graduate in November.

During the year, we made substantial progress on supporting the industry to address engineering rail skill shortages with the delivery of a second group of Engineering Pathways Industry cadets (EPIC). A total of 50 cadets from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds have commenced over the two programs run so far.

Taking effective action to ensure a pool of skilled engineers are in long-term development, the Rail Signal Engineer Cadetship continued, with a fourth cohort of 14 diverse candidates being welcomed in February 2021.

We continued to support and build our female workforce with the specialised Women in Transport mentoring program bringing together more than 261 pairs of mentors and mentees from across industry.

TTF diversity and inclusion efforts continued to gain momentum over the past year, with emphasis on building awareness about the complexity of LGBTIQ+ issues in the workplace and in the broader community. Of particular note was the delivery of the Gender Affirmation Guide and Resource for industry.

For a complete breakdown on TTF program results please refer to [Appendix A](#).

CASE STUDY

GROWing Aspirations for Careers in Rail

The GROW program works to connect marginalised communities to the range of opportunities in the rail and transport sector.

Betelhem Tibebu Zeleke arrived in Australia in 2013 from Ethiopia and came across the GROW program through a multicultural consulting service. She participated in GROW in 2019, which motivated her enter the rail industry, specifically Metro Trains Melbourne, with a highlight being visiting the Metro Tunnel project before it opened to the public.

With aspirations to become a train driver, Betelhem credits the GROW program with providing her with direction and changing her life. Betelhem is now working with Metro Trains Melbourne as an Authorised Officer, where she is developing her confidence and customer service skills.





CHAPTER 3

# Building a diverse talent capacity pipeline

Diversity and Inclusion ensures everyone has an equitable opportunity for participation, and that workplaces are a space where everyone can bring their full identity and experience to work. TFTF's inclusion programs work to increase employment opportunities for disadvantaged communities and create respectful and inclusive workplaces in the transport sector.

As COVID-19 restrictions are no longer, we have had the opportunity to provide hybrid event and networking offerings as part of our inclusion programs. This has allowed a range of engagement opportunities that consider how different event formats can impact or increase engagement and access across communities.

Our work with Women in Transport (WiT) aims to increase gender equity and empowerment in the transport

sector, as well as working towards the 2021-2014 Women in Transport Strategy. Over the past 12 months, the WiT Mentoring Program has seen its largest round ever, with 536 applications, resulting in 254 pairs. As part of the program, we delivered an online launch event and in-person networking event. These were both received positively by participants as important ways to engage and meet other women in the transport sector.

We also selected three women for the 2022 WiT Scholarship and look forward to inducting them into the program.

The GROW Program continues to develop, providing a meaningful pathway into employment in the rail and public transport sector. This past year GROW was delivered to 94 people, and we are working with Indigenous Employment Partners (IEP) to co-design a bespoke GROW program for First Nations participants.



## GEN 44 and GEN 8

The GEN44/GEN8 paid internship program hosted 13 interns at LXP this year, including five previous interns returning to continue their placements. Six interns secured ongoing employment.

The program provides meaningful work experience opportunities to students and mid-career professionals. Interns come from a range of backgrounds, including refugees & asylum seekers, people with a disability, young people facing challenging life circumstances, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

TFTF and industry partners hosted interns across a range of disciplines including procurement, human resources, finance, safety, engineering, and project development.

## GROW

GROW is a transport industry workforce program designed to introduce people from marginalised and disadvantaged backgrounds to employment and training opportunities.

GROW is delivered over four days to highlight the breadth of opportunities available across the rail and public transport network.

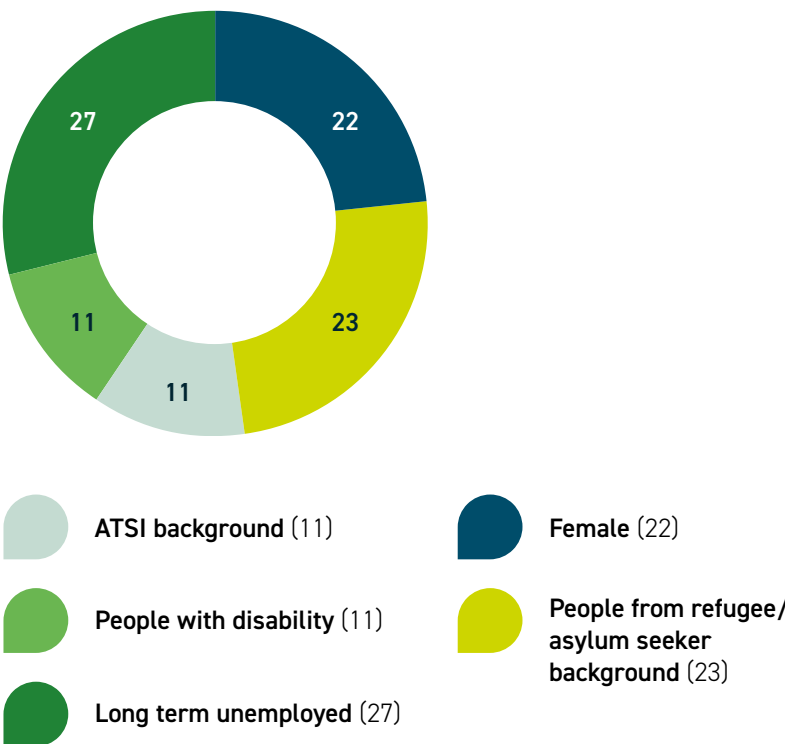
This year, GROW was delivered to 94 people, and 13 participants have gained employment. The program is currently sitting at 13% employment conversion rate.

After a COVID induced hiatus, we were excited to resume delivering GROW as an in-person program,

including a return to site tours, from March 2022.

Recognising the historical barriers faced by First Nations participants, we have also partnered with social enterprise Indigenous Employment Partners (IEP) to co-design a GROW program specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) participants. A pilot program was run in April, with a debrief and evaluation following to plan for future sessions.

Breakdown of GROW participants to date (Total 94)



## CASE STUDY

## GROW

### Transforming Lives and Changing Perspectives

Before taking part in the GROW program, Rejoice Dube had never worked in rail.

With a background in tourism, Rejoice struggled to find stable work when she arrived in Australia. "I came to Australia three years ago and struggled to get any employment with job security for up to a year, with most employers stating that they required Australian experience."

By participating in the GROW program, Rejoice was exposed to the opportunities available in the rail and public transport industry. She also received valuable training to help her find employment. "GROW gave me an insight about what potential employers are looking for, improved my communication skills and [I] quickly gained confidence through its mentorship programs, and connected me with potential employers."

Rejoice encourages anyone considering the GROW program to take part, describing it as a chance to connect with employers, improve your skills and learn about different career paths.

"I draw so much inspiration from this program, the support that I received from the facilitators, skill building from the industry experts and facilitators meeting people and potential employers."

Rejoice is currently an Authorised Officer for Metro Trains Melbourne.

"I look forward to opportunities to grow my skills and the chance to learn more leadership skills over time."



CHAPTER 3 - Building a diverse talent capacity pipeline

# Highlights

## Women in Transport

TFTF delivers the Department of Transport's (DoT) Women in Transport (WiT) Mentoring program and Leadership Development Scholarship program, both of which are part of the Women in Transport Strategy. The strategy aims to remove the barriers that have held us back from having diverse representation in the sector to improve outcomes such as participation and earnings for women, as well as our own business performance.

### WiT Mentoring Program

The WiT Mentoring program has continued a strong presence across the transport sector. The program is a six-month industry-wide initiative offering professional development and networking opportunities, plus regular guidance to structure mentee-mentor meetings. It is open to government and business sectors, across all transport disciplines. Mentees are women and non-binary, but mentors can be any gender.

Round 2 of 2021 saw 339 applications, with 121 matches made, resulting in 242 total participants. We also held a series of professional development sessions to supplement participants' development. On 15 July, we held the professional development 'Engage' with keynote speaker Tiffany Hunter from Nerdu Badji Education. The second session, 'Change and reverse mentoring' was presented by Michelle Batas from the International Associated of Public Transport (UITP). The session was attended by 105 participants.

On 18 November, our second session 'Inspire' featured keynote speaker Renee Cox, Driver Training and Development Manager by V/Line, which was attended by 71 participants. Feedback from attendees note the keynote speakers were "inspiring," and they enjoyed the opportunity to connect with other program participants.

### Combined Program Round

In 2022, for the first time, we will run only one round of the program for the year. The 2022 WiT Mentoring program opened for applications in February and received 536 applications (280 mentees and 256 mentors), more than double of any single round for the past three years. Applications were received from over 20 different employers across the transport sector, and we successfully matched 254 pairs.

#### 2021 Round Two: July to December 2021

- 339 applications
- 121 pairs
- 242 participants

#### 2022 Round: May to October 2022

- 536 applications
- 254 pairs
- 508 participants

### Kim Koelmeyer, WiT mentee

"The WiT Mentoring Program could not have come at a better time in my career. My mentor has been an invaluable sounding board and neutral voice as I contemplated my next move and was able to help me clarify my core values and tease out my worries. As an early career professional, she has also shared a plethora of professional and logistical knowledge I simply wouldn't have access to otherwise. Creating space to ask the silly questions is so invaluable, and I'm glad to have found that in the program."

"I was really pleased with the match, and with my mentor's skill at asking questions. I'm looking forward to my next session with them and the rest of the program. Thank you for your hard work and attentiveness to set up so many mentor-mentee relationships."

### A Hybrid Approach to Events

With the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, 2022 presented the opportunity to take a hybrid approach to engaging participants.

The 2022 WiT Mentoring Program online launch event was held on 3 May and was attended by 390 mentors and mentees. The session was facilitated by Wake By Reach, a social enterprise that delivers unique and engaging keynotes, workshops, and retreat experiences. The session also featured a panel of women in leadership across the transport sector: Belinda Ainley, Senior Manager Planning and Environment at LXP, Megan Hammond, Recruitment Manager for Kinetic and Vanessa (Ness) Ramirez, People Alliance Partner (WPA) at Metro Trains. The panel spoke on their experience and lessons learned in navigating the workforce as a woman and other intersecting identities, including parenthood, culture, and neurodiversity.

Surveyed participants showed an overwhelming positive response

to the event, particularly enjoying Wake By Reach's facilitation and the openness and honesty of the panellists in sharing their experiences.

The WiT Networking Event was supported by several social enterprises as part of our commitment to embracing the Victorian Government's Social Procurement Framework, which promotes using organisational buying power to generate social value. The historical Queen Victoria Women's Centre (QVWC) hosted the event in the Wayi Djerring Room. Participants received a delicious individual light lunch pack prepared by the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) Catering and Just Gold photography captured the essence of the day with some great shots of networking in action.

Upcoming events for the 2022 WiT Mentoring Program are planned for 27 July and 27 October, where we will continue our hybrid approach.

### WiT Leadership Development Scholarship Program

The WiT Leadership Development Scholarship Program provides high potential women the opportunity to rise to senior positions in the transport industry. Three scholarships up to the value of \$30,000 each will be awarded each year from 2022 to 2024 for leadership development courses at the Masters, Postgraduate or

executive level, related to a transport and infrastructure area. Scholarships are open to all women (including non-binary and gender non-conforming people) employed by the Victorian Public Service (VPS).

In 2022, the Scholarship Program received 26 high quality eligible applications, with three selected for award by the WiT Scholarship Panel.

## CASE STUDY

### WiT Networking Event – Social Procurement in Action

Underpinned by the Department of Transport's Women in Transport (WiT) Strategy 2021-24, which aims to remove the barriers to diverse gender representation in the sector and improve outcomes for women, the 2022 WiT Mentoring Program's first face-to-face Networking Event was held on Tuesday 7 June.

This event sought to strengthen participants' transport connections, raise their profile, and be exposed to fresh ideas while stepping out of their comfort zone, on the road to their hero's journey.

Despite inclement weather and capacity restrictions, over 80 WiT Mentoring Program participants joined us for a structured speed dating format, which promoted maximum opportunity to mingle with attendees. Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive, where 81% of surveyed participants would like to attend another similar event. Some specific feedback includes that the event "invited important/considered conversation which really helps with contextualising the reasons for the program." It was an "opportunity to network and meet likeminded people" with "varied discussions" and "valuable conversations," helped participants to "realise how many women work in transport and in such diverse roles!" And finally, "Awesome- I love being a part of this Program! Really enjoying it!"



CHAPTER 3 - Building a diverse talent capacity pipeline

# Highlights

2022 Scholars



Rhiannon Drummond-Clark

Rhiannon Drummond-Clark currently works as an Environmental Adviser at Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA). SRLA is committed to continually striving for improved environmental outcomes by establishing meaningful and practical sustainability targets. Rhiannon has always had a strong interest in environment and sustainability and is passionate about public transport due to its undeniable potential to help reduce emissions.

Rhiannon's approved course—the Masters of Environment and Climate Emergency at Curtin University—prioritises climate change emergency planning and response whilst developing multi-disciplinary capabilities such as economics, policy development, project management and urban and regional planning. This course will position Rhiannon as a leader in an emerging field, learning the most up-to-date strategies and developments in innovation for managing the environment, sustainability, and climate risk in transport.



Tamara Clare Preuss

Tamara Clare Preuss is a Principal Lawyer for the North-East Link Program (NELP), currently working on the Public Private Partnership (PPP) tunnelling package (Central Package).

Tamara's approved course, the Master of Laws at Melbourne University, focused on construction law subjects, will seek to cultivate her as an expert in infrastructure delivery and construction law. The course will provide the foundation for advancing Tamara into key leadership roles within Victoria's exciting portfolio of transformative transport projects and position her for advancement in delivery teams where there is commonly an under representation of women in the workforce.

Tamara is excited to be working in transport infrastructure in Victoria during a time of such growth and development.



Aditi Sachdeva

Aditi Sachdeva is currently employed as a Senior Engineer, Network Interface & Assurance on the North-East Link Project within the Department of Transport. Aditi aspires to lead teams, major state projects and put a value focus on 'customer-centricity' into practice.

Aditi's approved course, the Master of Professional Management will help her to develop customer-centric cultures while boosting her confidence to unleash her strategic leadership to navigate through change in mindsets, while harnessing the true potential of diversity and inclusion within the Transport sector.

By completing her course, Aditi's aim is to apply and promote best practice safe system guides to improve safety and accessibility of the transport system. Aditi also aims to contribute to the 'safety-focussed-culture' to better anticipate costs, risks and reactions, and plan countermoves relative to project options, subsequently, contributing towards the overall reduction in environmental impacts across major state projects.



CASE STUDY



## Esther Warren, 2018 Scholar

The Women in Transport (WiT) Leadership Development Scholarship program was first initiated in 2017 by the Minister for Transport Infrastructure, Hon. Jacinta Allan MP. Its aim is to support high performing women within the transport sector to secure more senior executive roles, thereby contributing to the building of gender equity across the sector.

Esther Warren, Executive Director of Strategic Projects within the Department of Transport (DoT), received this scholarship in 2018 and has since completed a Master of Business Administration (MBA) (Melbourne Business School). Esther acknowledges the financial contribution made by the scholarship directly helped her overcome the often-prohibitive cost of tertiary study.

Esther's MBA has strongly contributed to a steep career trajectory and the skills she has gained have enhanced her engineering problem solving, infrastructure delivery experience and have also been able to apply these learnings to a broader strategic lens of Victoria's transport sector.

"A highlight of my studies was an exchange to the University of California, Los Angeles where I was able to study

amongst some of the top MBA students in the world and also gain insight into the way the city of Los Angeles approaches infrastructure planning and place making" shared Esther.

"I am fortunate to have inspirational women working within our sector such as the newly appointed Deputy Premier Jacinta Allan".

Esther is a strong advocate for more women to enter the transport industry, highlighting this will ultimately result in a more diverse talent pool to achieve better outcomes for the Department and the sector. Esther also focuses time to support her fellow women engineers to navigate this industry and identify opportunities that will accelerate their careers.

While balancing full time work and part time study over four years was

challenging, Esther reflects on the many supporters at the Level Crossing Removal Project & within the Network Design and Integration Group who have contributed to her success, "There is a unique stress that comes with an upcoming exam week coupled with looming project deadlines. Having the support of my managers & senior leadership team was critical to gaining the most out of my studies".

Esther's advice for future scholarship applicants is to perform a 'skills mapping' activity against their mid to long term career goals to help identify how formal studies could both support their goals and the sector's needs. Esther encourages potential applicants to "give it a go" as a lot can be gained through the personal reflection required to participate in the application process.



CHAPTER 3 - Building a diverse talent capacity pipeline

# Highlights

BENT Rail

Everyone deserves to feel safe to bring their full selves to work. Our work with BENTRail aims to educate on the barriers and challenges faced by the LGBTIQ+ community and contribute to strategies to make the transport sector and Victorian Government at large a more inclusive space to work.

Education is the key to breaking down barriers and fostering understanding. Over the year, we delivered 24 of our LGBTIQ+ Cultural Awareness and Safety in Transport sessions to TTF partners, with over 408 employees across transport attending. These sessions help participants understand the definition of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer, as well as shines a light on the challenges and barriers faced by the LGBTIQ+ community. We've also worked with the North East Link Project (NELP) to assist with their practices around transitioning staff members, including reviewing policy and developing lunch and learn training modules.

We also brought the sector together to celebrate Wear It Purple Day on 27 August with a themed trivia night. Open to all those across the infrastructure and transport industry, 108 attendees gathered in their best purple to show their solidarity and support.

BENT Rail is committed to making the transport sector and Victorian Government at large more inclusive and representative of LGBTIQ+ voices. Across the year, we contributed to the Whole of Victorian Government (WoVG) LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy, Department of Transport (DoT) Working Group, and the Women in Transport Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). We contributed to the DOT LGBTIQ

Action Plan 2022-2025, which outlines the Department's key focus areas and actions to work towards best practice LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

Work has also been done within an inter-agency pride group, which includes voices across TTF partners and partners across the transport sector to align pride initiatives across industry.

We've also been working with the wider Victorian Public Service to provide lived experience feedback with InterBuild regarding all-gender bathroom options, which are not reflected in current Building Code requirements. We look forward to continuing this vital inclusion work in the coming years.

Aboriginal Action Plan

TTF continues to support our partners towards Aboriginal economic empowerment, working closely with community and industry to achieve positive outcomes for everyone.

Through our GROW program, we are working to create meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal employment. Work continues to deliver a GROW program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates. The team has partnered with Indigenous Employment Partners (IEP), an Aboriginal operated certified social enterprise to co-design and implement a tailored GROW program for First Nations job seekers. The co-design process is working to address barriers

First Nations participants have had with accessing the GROW program in the past, with the objective of increasing attendance rates and employment outcomes.

We continue to make an ongoing contribution to the DoT and Whole of Victorian Government (WoVG) Aboriginal Working group, working to achieve the Transport Portfolio Aboriginal Self-Determination Plan 2020-2023



Western Program Alliance – Indigenous Supervisor Program

Level Crossing Removal Project's Western Program Alliance (WPA) has developed an Indigenous Supervisor program to increase Indigenous employment and to increase the diversity of industry supervisors. The participants are employed via GOAL Indigenous Services, and they are enrolled in a Certificate III in Civil Construction with CCF. In addition, the Indigenous employees are participating in the Indigenous mentorship program run by Nerdu Badji.

South Eastern Program Alliance – Cultural Competency Training

Level Crossing Removal Project's South Eastern Program Alliance (SEPA) offers Cultural Competency training to all its employees, many of whom hail from other countries of origin and are not aware of the history of the land that SEPA works on and why it is important to tread lightly and treat country with respect and care. The training is supplied by Outback Academy Australia, an Aboriginal-led, not-for-profit organisation. Presented by Uncle Neville, a Yorta Yorta Elder, the workshop content supports education, better retention, diversity & inclusion and eliminates potential bias and barriers to Indigenous participation.

North West Program Alliance (NWPA) – A2B Walker Group Partnership

Level Crossing Removal Project's North West Program Alliance (NWPA) has a longstanding partnership with A2B Walker Group which has resulted in a reliable and talented Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. Over 48,000 employment hours have been contributed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people since May 2021. The Alliance's cumulative spend on Indigenous suppliers reached over \$17M from 19 unique vendors, because of collaborating with Kinaway Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce and Supply Nation.





## CHAPTER 3 - Building a diverse talent capacity pipeline

# Highlights

### Transforming Transport

Through our calendar of events and communications, Transforming Transport aims to increase awareness of the importance of inclusion in transport and infrastructure.

To commemorate NAIDOC week, we held a week-long series of events in partnership with the Western Program Alliance. 143 participants attended across the week.

One in five Victorians have a disability, and COVID-19 has pushed workforces to find innovative ways to uplift

their “response-ability” towards an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable workplace. On 3 December, we delivered a webinar celebrating International Day of People with Disability, a United Nations Day to promote an understanding of people with disability and encourage support for their dignity, rights, and wellbeing.

The event featured guest speakers from social enterprise Ability Works and disability employment service providers, WISE Employment. 30 guests attended, and heard the panel share their game-changing ideas and their innovative best-practice approaches in building more accessible workplaces.

### Social Procurement

Our Social Procurement work aims to build the capability of Aboriginal businesses and social enterprises and increase their representation within infrastructure projects across Victoria.

To date, LXRP’s alliances have spent over \$425 million on social procurement, and we are excited to continue this work.

Social procurement is furthered in the Victorian infrastructure space by:

- The supply chain by procuring from Victorian Aboriginal businesses, Victorian social enterprises, or Australian Disability Enterprises (social benefit suppliers)
- Workforce diversity by employing, training, or supporting priority job seekers and people who are underrepresented in the industry
- Sustainability by decreasing negative environmental impacts and increasing positive environmental outcomes.

#### Looking beyond projects – WiT Mentoring Program

As part of our commitment to embracing the Victorian Government’s Social Procurement Framework, we engaged several social enterprises as part of our delivery of the Women in Transport Mentoring (WiT) Program.

Our Program Launch on 3 May was facilitated by social enterprise Wake by Reach, which helps workplaces build engagement amongst their most valued asset – their people. They delivered unique and engaging workshops and retreat experiences.

The WiT Networking Event, held on 7 June, was also supported by several social enterprises. The historical Queen Victoria Women’s Centre (QVWC) hosted the event in the Wayi Djerring Room.

Participants received a delicious individual light lunch pack prepared by the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) Catering and Just Gold photography captured the essence of the day with some great shots of networking in action.

The success of these events has demonstrated the opportunity for the sector to expand their social procurement impact beyond the project delivery space and increase the scope of social enterprises we can potentially work with.





## CHAPTER 4

# Building and supporting industry capability

### Capability Development Highlights

A fifth cohort of 13 Rail Signal Engineers commenced their TFTF-sponsored Cadetship in 2022, bringing the total number of Signal Engineer cadets employed since 2016 to 60. The program continues to address workforce scaling issues across Victoria's rail infrastructure projects by immersing cadet groups in real-life learning and industry rotations. Female recruitment continues to be a focus, two female cadets commencing in 2022, bringing to a total of 15 across the life of the program.

The second cohort of the Engineering Pathways Industry Cadetship (EPIC) program have completed the bulk of their 18-month cadetship over the reporting period. 100% of the cohort have been retained in the cadetship so far and cadet study results have been remarkable over the delivery of the Graduate Certificate of Infrastructure Engineering Management.

A major achievement over the period is the expansion of the EPIC program to Major Road Projects Victoria, known as EPIC Roads. This increase in scale is testament to the portable nature of program outcomes and offers the opportunity for even more qualified engineers from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds to participate actively in Victoria's Big Build (VBB).

A new program, the Safety Starters Traineeship, began recruitment for its pilot program in June 2022, with seven trainees to be appointed across Level Crossing Program Alliances. The Safety Starters Traineeship is vital as it tackles critical skill shortages in entry level Safety Adviser roles in industry, while promoting Safety as an interesting and varied career to a diverse range of job seekers. It's early days for this program, but it's shaping up to be a game changer in finding diverse talent pools and attracting them to the burgeoning and busy project Safety space.

The Fusion Communications Adviser development program continued to deliver strong outcomes to three different groups of entry and mid-level Communications Advisers over the period. The program is the only one of its kind in assisting Communications professionals in understanding the major transport infrastructure project space and has a strong reputation amongst MTIA project offices, particularly due to the broadly experienced and engaging communications professional who facilitates the program – Industry Capability and Inclusion's own Sofia Dedes.

Over the period, the anniversary of the delivery of two critical qualifications for the rail industry occurred – the Graduate Certificate and the Graduate Diploma of Railway Signalling Systems. Five years ago, these qualifications were accredited, filling a gap in signal engineering qualifications and enabling the Rail Signal Engineer Cadetship to commence.

Both qualifications were reaccredited for a new five-year period in 2022 by Victorian Registration & Qualification Authority (VRQA), showing the industry signalling professional shortage has not abated and there is still an immense need for suitably qualified signalling engineering professionals to deliver rail infrastructure projects.



### Rail Academy Highlights

The past year was an entirely disrupted and difficult year, with all major Rail Academy programs postponed multiple times from June onwards and then cancelled. Some eight planned programs were affected. Online events were not taken up by schools, who were experiencing exhaustion with online learning and were only willing to connect to events when face to face learning resumed.

However, with the resumption of school in February 2022 and a commitment by the Victorian Government to end lockdowns, Rail Careers events experienced a large resurgence, with schools eager to make up for the previous two years. The Rail Academy school engagement team delivered nine unique initiatives from March to June 2022, with a jam-packed calendar for the remainder of 2022.

The Rail Academy team have also made new connections with a range of different schools, Local Learn Employment Networks and TAFEs, and have pursued a renewed relationship with Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV) to promote the Rail Academy's unique offering all over Victoria.

At the end of 2021, the first graduating class from the two-year Certificate II in Heavy and Light Rail Fundamentals completed their studies. Through two years of lockdown learning, a tenacious group of 14 students successfully received their certificate, with the completion rate of the program at higher than the state average for VET in Schools programs at 67%. With this result, Hallam Senior College, a large multi-campus secondary school and Registered Training Organisation in Melbourne's South East, opted to add the Certificate II to their scope of registration to deliver the program in 2022.

An initial cohort of 19 students have enrolled in the two-year program. They have enjoyed four excursions and three special guest speakers to date, and we look forward to seeing their progress across the two years.

The legacy courseware products licenced by the Rail Academy to Victorian rail operators continue to deliver great training outcomes. V/Line's Registered Training Organisation commenced delivery of the Diploma of Railway Signalling Systems in 2021 with the support of TFTF, who completed the initial activity of both accrediting the course with the VRQA and paying for and developing the suite of materials. V/Line entered into an agreement with MTM to deliver training to their staff, which has seen the program grow from being delivered to a single mixed cohort of 11, to a second group of 11 in 2022. Collaborative efforts in this space benefit the broader rail industry by reducing costs and improving training delivery quality.





CHAPTER 4 - Building and supporting industry capability

# Deliver Critical Skill Shortage Programs

Critical Skill Shortage Programs

Who	What	When
Rail Signal Engineer Cadetship	Three-year cadetship. Fifth cohort of 13 cadets commenced in January 2022.	Delivered July 2016
Safety Advisors program	Two-year program that delivered a rail-specific Certificate IV WHS, Advanced Diploma WHS and Diploma Quality Auditing, plus Excelsior auditing qualification through Swinburne University.	Delivered August 2017  Program re-conception: June 2022
Signal Maintenance Technician/Supervisor program	This program was revised during 2022, with the program being refocused into being a Traineeship, with 7 Trainees anticipated to start a Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety across 4 alliances and LXP.	Delivered March 2018
Overhead Linesman program (Traction power)	Certificate IV in Rail Signalling and Diploma of Railway Signalling qualifications developed in conjunction with Metro Trains Melbourne and V/Line. The Certificate IV was completely rewritten and redeveloped, in March 2022. The Diploma will be reaccredited over 2022.	Delivered December 2018
Supervisors Program	Development of 9 x units of competency from UET30712 – Certificate III in ESI – Power Systems – Rail Traction.  Non-accredited program developed frontline leadership and technical skills. This program was changed into the Rail Corridor Construction Course (RCCC), which was developed in conjunction with Metro Trains. Program was licenced to Thomson Bridge to deliver to broader industry in 2021 and commenced delivery in 2022.	Delivered April 2018  Modified and redelivered: March 2022
Stakeholder Communications Advisor program	Non-accredited industry-specific communications and engagement development program. Sixth group commenced in June 2022.	Delivered July 2018







## CHAPTER 4 - Building and supporting industry capability

### Deliver Critical Skill Shortage Programs (cont.)

#### Rail Signal Engineer Cadetship

The Rail Signal Engineer Cadetship was the first major initiative launched TFTF in 2016, so the team celebrated in January 2022 by onboarding a fifth cohort of the program.

Some 13 new cadets commenced with some of TTF's long term program partners and supporters, such as MTM (six cadets), Jacobs (two cadets) and V/Line (one cadet). New partners such as Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) joined the program in 2022, showing their support for building capacity and capability in the industry in a time of increasing skill shortages in signalling.

As the program as in its sixth year of delivery, it is timely to reflect on program successes. The fifth cohort of the program has brought the total number of cadets employed since 2016 to 60. Some 15 (25%) of the cadets employed across the program life have been women, demonstrating the team's commitment to increasing gender diversity in rail and supporting young women in Science Technology Engineering & Maths (STEM) roles. Whereas 54 (90%) cadets across the program life have been retained in the rail industry, demonstrating the tangible and essential benefit the Cadetship provides both rail operators and LXR program alliances delivering major transport infrastructure works.

As the program completed its fifth year, the underpinning qualification for the program, the Graduate Diploma of Railway Signalling Systems, reached the end of its initial five-year accreditation.

The Capability team undertook the process of reviewing and reaccrediting both the Graduate Diploma and the Graduate Certificate of Railway Signalling Systems, through a process with Box Hill TAFE Engineering Industries Accreditation Management, the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and a range of industry subject matter experts, brought together to form an Industry Reference Group. Both qualifications have now been accredited for a further five years, ensuring the cadetship can continue with a reviewed and validated qualification.

However, it hasn't been a period without setbacks. As with most industries, COVID caused significant disruption to the onboarding process for both the fourth and now, the fifth cohorts of the program, with cancellations and rescheduling of events leading to a less-than-optimal initial experience. During this period, the ramp up of major transport projects has seen the talent pool for signalling squeeze even tighter, with TTF's signalling cadets in demand in industry. Program attrition has been affected, with five cadets from the most recent cohorts leaving the program to take up employment with other industry players outside the program partner group.

This had led to a drop in completion rates of the Graduate Diploma.

While the program has demonstrably increased signalling workforce resources in industry, lower qualification completion rates affect cadet capability and confidence. This has been a key focus area through an internal program evaluation conducted over the last year. This process has led to some program mechanic changes for the next run of the program, including moving to delivering the Graduate Certificate instead of Graduate Diploma, and investigating a reduction of the three-year term. Changes will be implemented for future groups.

To top the year off, the Capability team were pleased with the results of an MTIA-led Workforce Development Program Evaluation conducted in 2022. The Rail Signal Engineer Cadetship scored highly, with praise for detailed and effective data management, cadet management and care, successfully curated partnerships with industry, and a well-researched and designed program. Well, done to the team, and after a break year in 2023, the cadetship will come back even stronger with its new format in 2024.

*'The opportunities are endless – this is the best way to start in the rail industry!'*

Aiden,  
recent Rail Signalling  
Engineering Cadet



## CASE STUDIES

### An EPIC Graduation

In November 2021, the first cohort of the EPIC program celebrated their completion of the program.

EPIC is an 18-month cadetship for refugee and asylum seeker engineers that provides on-the-job training and access to industry networks. It aims to address the barriers faced by new Australians in accessing professional employment opportunities in infrastructure.

It has been a busy 18 months for the cadets who gained valuable work experience across MTIA's infrastructure projects, all while completing a Graduate Certificate in Infrastructure Management through Swinburne University.

The 30 cadets were invited to attend an online graduation ceremony to acknowledge their achievements.

The momentous occasion included speeches from LXRP Chief Operating Officer, Matthew Gault, as well as Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, Vicki Ward MP.

Ms Ward congratulated the graduating cohort on their resilience and determination over the last 18 months, overcoming online learning and lockdowns to get where they are today. The graduating cohort was represented by LXRP cadet Hayat Farah, who praised her fellow cadets on how far they have come in the past 18 months.

A total of 50 cadets have now been employed over the two programs, with benefits seen in cadet confidence, increase of employer openness to a diverse workforce and ongoing employment opportunities after the program finishes.

The Rail Academy is immensely proud of the ongoing achievements of these cadets, wishing them all the best as they enter the workforce.



### A tale of EPIC proportions

The Engineering Pathways Industry Cadetship (EPIC) program is an industry-first program that aims to bridge the gap faced by new Australians in matching their international qualifications to Australian workforce requirements.

This 18-month cadetship for refugee and asylum seeker engineers provides on-the-job training, support and mentoring while cadets complete a postgraduate Graduate Certificate in Infrastructure Engineering Management qualification, through Swinburne University.

EPIC cadet Ihab Qassab cannot believe how different his life is since escaping

Iraq after ISIS occupied his hometown of Baghdeda in 2014.

Ihab explains that before ISIS invaded, his town was a "paradise." Afterwards it was "chaos, there was no electricity and sounds of constant explosions were everywhere."

Migrating to Australia in 2018, Ihab commenced with the EPIC program

in December 2019. Ihab studied a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering in Iraq and is now a site engineer working for MRPA. He credits the EPIC program for his success.

The EPIC program continues to employ engineers from refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds and helps launch their careers on Victoria's major transport infrastructure projects.

## CHAPTER 4 - Building and supporting industry capability

### Deliver Critical Skill Shortage Programs (cont.)

#### Engineering Pathways Industry Cadetship (EPIC)

The EPIC program continues to go from strength to strength. It was an incredible year of achievements, where cadets attained excellent results in their qualification and gained confidence in their work.

The program also received recognition from The Age and Channel 9 News, along with countless online media stories from Engineers Australia, Swinburne University and MTM. Most excitingly, 50 total cadets have been hired by the program since 2019 – 50 refugee and asylum seeker-background qualified engineers, reconnected with their engineering careers and providing for their families and communities.

From the first cohort of EPIC cadets, we saw some extraordinary results that were stronger than anticipated. Some 31 cadets were hired in the initial group, with three leaving the program in the early stages. From the remaining 28, there was 100% successful completion of the Graduate Certificate of Infrastructure Engineering Management, the bespoke qualification designed and endorsed by Swinburne University in conjunction with LXRP, specifically tailored for the EPIC cohort. These 28 cadets completed the formal elements of the program in July 2021, with 27 either receiving extended employment contracts, or gaining full time employment.

LXRP celebrated this success with an online Graduation ceremony for the initial cadet group in November 2021, hosted by LXRP COO Matthew Gault and with guest speakers Vicki Ward, Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, and Professor Pascale Quester, Vice-Chancellor Swinburne University.

The ICI team are humbled by the perseverance and dedication of this

initial group of cadets, who battled working from home during COVID and completing a postgraduate qualification in their non-native language to ultimately succeed and be active participants on VBB.

Industry spoke and the Capability team delivered. A second EPIC cohort was greenlit and commenced in May 2021. This EPIC cohort of 19 cadets have achieved incredible results over the year, with their studies two-thirds completed at the time of writing and their academic results excellent, with many students overachieving standard Swinburne students in equivalent programs.

The second cohort are currently at 100% retention and are on track to all complete their studies – and the program – in October 2022. The groups received plenty of media attention as a result of their progress – see some examples of some of the ways print, online and news media talked about EPIC in 2021.

The success of the first two cohorts of EPIC has seen a dramatic shift of perception by employers working on VBB, with employers now lining up to take cadets. Thanks to these valuable program partners, and with the worldwide refugee crisis not abating, a third EPIC program is now being planned. Recruitment will occur in late 2022 and commencement of cadets in January 2023.

As mentioned earlier, thanks to the increased visibility and success of the program over two cohorts, Major Road

Projects Victoria (MRPV) ran their own stream of EPIC called EPIC Roads. Some 15 cadets commenced in the MPRV stream in January 2022, who are undertaking a two-year version of the program. MRPV were pleased to be able to port the EPIC program structure and redeploy in a roads and structures environment, with very few changes to the program. Their program launch was attended Victoria's Chief Engineer, Dr Collette Burke. By this collaboration enables Major Transport Infrastructure Authority to save resources and time and execute a unified strategy for project offices, to improve workforce capacity and development initiative outcomes.

The EPIC program has broad visibility across the Victorian transport sector. The program was evaluated by an external consultancy engaged by MTIA in 2022. EPIC was one of 19 programs delivered across MTIA that were evaluated for their efforts to build workforce capacity and capability, and pleasingly received the highest rating of all 19 programs. The result was a testament to the hard work of the TFTF team in ensuring the program has scalability and sound program design, data collection and evaluation processes in place. Beyond MTIA, the program has been formally enshrined in the Victorian Department of Transport's Women in Transport Strategy 2021-2024, for delivering outcomes specifically for women. DoT provided some forwarding funding for EPIC, to ensure MTIA can continue to reap the benefits of the program for years to come.

CHAPTER 4 - Building and supporting industry capability

# Deliver Critical Skill Shortage Programs (cont.)

## Fusion – Communications and Stakeholder Engagement development program

Fusion continued to be a program in demand in 2021 and 2022, for delivering high-quality training outcomes for a stretched and growing workforce in entry-level Communications and Stakeholder Engagement.

Three Fusion programs were delivered or started across the period – Groups 4, 5, and 6–to 41 participants. The program has true support from across MTIA, with Rail Projects Victoria and Major Road Projects Victoria enrolling significant numbers from their workforces to take part. Fusion has also seen increased uptake from non-government employers, including principal contractors on LXP alliances such as Fulton Hogan and John Holland, and other employers in broader industry like MTM and Symal.

Fusion has now been in delivery for four years, with 94 communications and engagement junior staff completing Fusion training. We continue to waitlist for new classes well in advance, with groups 7 and 8 already fully allocated, despite their delivery not occurring until 2023.

This proves the capacity and skill shortage issues in Communications and Stakeholder Engagement were well predicted by the TFTF team in 2016. During this four-year period, some of the participants of Fusion have been promoted to senior communications advisers and even communications managers, which realises a key outcome when the program was initially designed – ensure entry-level talent could move into higher roles and reduce attrition and turnover in staff.

After delivering classes fully online over periods of 2020 and 2021, Fusion moved permanently to a blended delivery model of both face to face and online classes. This enabled the team to leverage the “best of both worlds” by facilitating valuable discussion and networking through face-to-face classes and using online

delivery for classes with less group work. Participants have appreciated the blended model but are particularly happy to meet in person again after a long two years of online consultation through their work.

Feedback for the program continues to highlight the benefits participants get out of the program, and the relevance to real comms work and real major project workplaces. The presence of expert guest speakers continues to be highly valued by participants, providing insight into such areas as major comms plans (Director of Communications, MRPV), resilience (Stakeholder and Engagement Manager, LXP) and customer service (Customer Service Manager, LXP). Feedback reports from Groups 5 and 6 rate satisfactions with workshop facilitator and workshop examples used as “very high”.

## Safety Starters Traineeship

Ongoing shortages in trained talent in Safety on major projects has seen a reconceptualisation of a previous TFTF program in 2022.

The Safety Starters Traineeship has been designed to attract and develop new talent into entry-level Safety Adviser positions in LXP Program Alliances, while enabling Alliances to comply with Major Project Skills Guarantee and Social Procurement spend targets built into their contracts.

The program is an 18-month traineeship, where trainees are employed by four of the five LXP Program Alliances. They will undertake a customised Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety in three training blocks over the 18 months, funded by LXP. They will also undertake one major rotation to another alliance and have an LX Safety Adviser allocated as a mentor for the 18 months for additional support.

The TFTF team arranged a curated talent pool sourced from five different sources for Program Alliances to choose from:

- Rail Projects Victoria's Aboriginal Talent Pool
- TFTF Platform, with candidates sourced from GROW
- Previous graduates of the Certificate II in Heavy and Light Rail Fundamentals, run by TFTF
- Jesuit Social Services
- Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES)
- Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Two special online recruitment centres were conducted in June 2022, where candidates undertook special safety-related assessment activities to test

their critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork and communication skills.

Health and Safety Managers at the Program Alliances have so far given feedback on the excellent quality of the talent pool and praised the ability to be able to meet the candidates in an intensive setting before moving to offer or second interview.

The program is formally due to start in August 2022 with a three-week induction period, incorporate special learning activities with the LXP Safety Team, a series of “ride-ons” with senior LX Safety staff, gaining their required training competencies through Metro Academy such as White Card and Train Track Safety Awareness, and the first block of training for the Certificate IV.

## CASE STUDY

### FUSION: Bringing together real work experience and practical application.

Heading towards its sixth iteration, the Industry Capability & Inclusion (ICI) team have continued to offer the popular FUSION course for early to mid-level communications staff working for Major Transport Infrastructure Authority (MTIA).

This program addresses and bridges essential skills gaps,

creates a valuable peer network and offers a glimpse across transport infrastructure communications teams.

Participants work through six modules over a six-month period, each delivered in the context of working at MTIA.

The modules are delivered by ICI Team Adviser, Sofia Dedes.

As a journalist, political adviser, and communications professional with over 20 years' experience, Sofia's skilled and energetic delivery of the content makes for an engaging, and often hilarious, learning experience that should not be missed.



“Sofia was an AMAZING facilitator” and “interacting and learning with colleagues from other MTIA groups was excellent”.

Previous participant



CHAPTER 4 - Building and supporting industry capability

# Deliver Critical Skill Shortage Programs (cont.)

## Signal Maintenance Technician – Certificate IV in Electrical Rail Signalling

The Certificate IV in Electrical – Rail Signalling was identified as a required qualification by the rail industry in 2017 with the courseware development project being completed in March 2018. The first group of trainees at V/Line commenced in 2019.

During 2021-2022, another 2 groups commenced the qualification. The first group of 11 participants will complete the qualification in 2023. V/Line have experienced significant cost savings, flexibility and improved training quality since delivering the qualification in-house. They have also experienced lower apprentice attrition, with apprentices now less likely to leave the company before completing the four-year program.

An intensive review and almost complete rewrite of the qualification occurred over 2021, conducted by Discover Learning. V/Line subject matter experts assisted as the material was updated and rewritten to incorporate improvements identified from the first time the courseware was utilised in training. Due to the budget being underspent, further improvements and updated diagrams are being embedded into the courseware, with work due to complete in July 2022.



## Signalling Supervisors – Diploma in Railway Signalling Systems

V/Line added the TTF-developed Diploma of Railway Signalling Systems to their enterprise Registered Training Organisation (RTO) scope of registration in 2020.

While COVID restrictions saw delays to the commencement of training delivery, the program finally started in June 2021. 11 participants will complete the first delivery of the program in late 2022.

MTM and V/Line developed an agreement for V/Line to deliver training to their employees, which has been a successful enterprise, with another group commenced in February 2022 consisting of both MTM and V/Line employees. Demand has been so great that a third group is projected to commence in October 2022.

The two operators can ensure highly contextualised training delivery by incorporating procedures and document examples relevant to their separate workforces. The Signalling and Communications departments at both MTM and V/Line have reported a more cohesive environment and great gains made from their collaboration on the training delivery of the Diploma.

The Diploma is due to be reaccredited in December 2022.



### CASE STUDY

## Mark McKay, Senior Competency Specialist, Signals and Communications, V/Line

The ICI team accredited a new Diploma of Railway Signalling Systems in 2017, in conjunction with Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) and Box Hill TAFE Engineering Industries.

This qualification fills a vital gap in the qualifications market for Signal Maintenance Supervisors, which was a critical training need for rail operators.

Thanks to a landmark agreement between two of the rail operators, the first group of Signalling Supervisors commenced the qualification in 2021. An initial group of 11 supervisors from both V/Line and Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) came together to undertake the qualification, delivered by inhouse specialists at V/Line.

This type of training collaboration between the rail operators had never occurred before in Victoria, which opened a new way for the companies

to work together to achieve economies of scale, reduced duplicated effort and high-quality and relevant training delivery from network experts.

The first program was a great success, with a subsequent second mixed cohort of 11 commencing in March 2022, and a third group planned for late 2022.

Mark McKay, V/Line's Acting Senior Competency Specialist said the format of the eight units of training is four face-to-face workshop sessions.

"The units provide the opportunity to collaborate as a part of their learning. The mix of individual and group activities include practical scenarios

using signalling equipment in a training environment. Other activities are conducted within the rail corridor to add an element of realism to the learning tasks," Mark said.

The structure of the Diploma delivery lends itself very well to engage supervisors who learn in a kinaesthetic way.

The Diploma is important for the whole industry because it is responsible for identifying and training the next generation of signalling supervisors. Thanks to the efforts of industry experts like Mark, and the cross-collaborative approach, the future for vital rail skills is set.



## CHAPTER 4 - Building and supporting industry capability

# Rail Academy

### Promote and market the Rail Academy

The past 12 months was a disappointing year for the Rail Academy School Engagement program, with only two activities taking place across the entire year.

COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns not only forced many events to endlessly postpone and/or cancel but saw trepidation from schools to initially commit to events scheduled for face to face. Restrictions in delivering training at RAN to large groups and lack of vaccination availability for school students until late 2021 had really stalled rail career advocacy for the longer term.

However, times change, and school events have come roaring back to life in March 2022. Starting with a few events catering to smaller school groups and through implementing sensible changes to delivery (not mixing schools, breaking schools into smaller groups, checking vaccination status and continuing to utilise blended delivery). With the use of these tools, the Rail Academy team delivered nine events in the term from March 2022 to June 2022. With a very full calendar of events for the remainder of 2022, the Rail Academy team are confident that these gains will continue.

A range of incredible subject matter experts have helped the Rail Academy team deliver their events and lent their passion and commitment to outlining fulfilling career pathways for young people. The team would like to thank the following people who inspired young people at our events this year:

- **Nicolle Nazaretian**, Program Manager, Metro Trains Melbourne
- **Lisa Hogben**, Package Director Melbourne Airport Rail Link, Metro Trains Melbourne
- **Pauline Fairclough**, Signalling and Communications Manager, John Holland
- **Mark Mackay**, Senior Competency Specialist – Signals and Communications, V/Line
- **Tyston Huang**, Graduate Systems and Controls, LXP
- **Athan Giuliani**, Graduate, Sustainability, LXP
- **Alex Wilder**, Leading Station Assistant, Metro Trains Melbourne
- **Alex Peters**, HCMT Training Specialist, Metro Trains Melbourne
- **Kyle Maclean**, Senior Talent Leader, Metro Trains Melbourne
- **Lea Scharenguive**, Recruitment Advisor, Metro Trains Melbourne
- **Katherine Ripp**, RTO Compliance Officer, V/Line
- **Adam Winder**, Industry Capability and Inclusion Manager, John Holland
- **Emily Scott**, Recruitment Advisor, John Holland
- **Peter Moschou**, HR and Training Manager HCMT, Downer
- **Peter Rimkevics**, Signalling and Commissioning Program Manager, Metro Trains Melbourne
- **Kuljit Singh**, Depot Train Driver Manager, Metro Trains Melbourne.

As always, the team would also like to thank the team at Metro Tunnel Education, who delivered their excellent Voluminous Matters activity at Rail Careers in May and have acted as speakers at online excursions for the Certificate II students in 2021.

Programs and engagement activities delivered by the Rail Academy School Engagement Program in 2021-2022 were:

- **Careers in STEAM event** at Yarra Ranges Tech School, Lilydale – 23 March 2022
- **Rail Careers Local Employers Tour** to RAN, John Holland Spotswood and Downer Newport with students from Victoria University VET in Schools – 31 March 2022
- **Koorie Aspirations Day** for years 9-12 students, Geelong-4 and 5 April 2022
- **The Trades Fit Expo** shared stall with MTIA, promoting trades careers for years 9 and 10 girls – 16 and 17 May 2022
- **Rail Careers Day** at Rail Academy Newport-18 May 2022
- **Discovering Careers in Rail Online Session** for teachers and careers coordinators – 19 May 2022
- **Metro Tunnel Careers in Rail event** delivered to students at Wodonga Secondary College-25 May 2022
- **Tomorrow Bound Careers Fair**, Bendigo – 26 May 2022
- **Assumption College Kilmore Careers Fair** – 27 May 2022.

It is estimated that across all events Rail Academy have delivered or participated in across 2021-2022, approximately 1396 students, teachers, parents, industry stakeholders and community members have attended. This is a staggering achievement considering ongoing COVID outbreaks and lockdowns over this period, and that all events were cancelled from July 2021 until March 2022.

### Rail Academy (RA) Governance Framework

All Rail Academy governance activities continued as normal throughout the challenging extended lockdowns periods of 2021, into 2022.

All meetings ran as scheduled, despite some significant resourcing challenges in the ICI team across 2021.

Activities managing the Rail Academy Governance Framework were as follows in 2021-2022:

- Rail Academy Advisory Panel: four quarterly meetings held-19 August 2021, 18 November 2021, 17 March 2022, 30 June 2022
- Course Advisory and Development Council: two biannual meetings held 15 September 2021 and 16 March 2022.

The Course Advisory and Development Council held a brainstorming session in the March meeting, working through ideas on current issues in workforce development and training delivery at the rail operators. The rail operators have maintained they will continue to commit to aligning their delivery to accredited outcomes. Through this, they established a few accredited units, skill set and qualification outcomes they would like to see developed. This list will be tabled at a future Rail Academy Advisory Panel meeting, upon the finalisation of the new budget for the new term of TTF.

At least 16 Rail Academy training products are still licenced to either MTM, V/Line, Yarra Trams or multiple operators. The first licences have expired, and the Rail Academy have provided an interim agreement to continue licencing "as is" until a new agreement can be formed.



### CASE STUDY

## Supporting a diverse future workforce

On 4 April, our ICI Capability team attended Koorie Aspirations Day 2022, which provides an opportunity for Victorian students from Years 7-12 to hear from inspirational young Indigenous role models and learn about post-school career and education pathways.

More than 150 students took part across the two days, interacting with a diverse range of stall holders, including MTIA, local TAFEs and employers, Jobs Victoria, Headstart and Apprenticeships Victoria.

The day highlights the variety of options Koorie students can take advantage of as they consider their career options, as well as hearing inspiring messages about how to pursue success and happiness in life.

The Rail Academy, which partners with LXP, had a stall on the day on behalf of MTIA, promoting the broad benefits of careers in rail to young people.

Students heard about the 15-year pipeline of work in rail infrastructure, the great benefits of roles in rail, the availability of jobs across of all Victoria and the diversity of roles across entry level roles and after university and TAFE pathways.

The Rail Academy also promoted rail infrastructure as a diverse employer, with great interest in increasing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.





# CHAPTER 4 - Building and supporting industry capability

## Rail Academy

### VET in schools – Certificate II in Heavy and Light Rail Fundamentals

The cornerstone of the Rail Academy School Engagement program continues to be the delivery of the Certificate II in Heavy and Light Rail Fundamentals, a VET delivered in secondary schools (VETDSS) program for Year 10 and 11 students.

The two-year qualification is designed to offer students a detailed overview of the rail industry in Victoria, with the aim of allowing them to develop an area of interest for a future career. The program is highly experiential, with the Rail Academy team offering access to the Rail Academy Newport for multiple visits a year, and access to special guest speakers from and excursions to rail industry employers across the state. The program also allows students to gain credits toward the completion of VCE or VCAL. The Rail Academy team developed the program in conjunction with Swinburne and commenced delivery of the pilot program at the beginning of 2020.

The initial group of 14 students successfully completed the qualification in November 2021. The final student cohort had travelled from all over Victoria to come to Newport to take part in the program and had endured extended periods of online learning due to COVID, which is a testament to their extraordinary achievements and their passion for the rail industry. The Swinburne training and assessment team pivoted to online learning quickly and successfully, ensuring students were well supported and took part in engaging classes. The group also toured the Bombardier (now Alstom) facility in October 2021 and took part in a range of online excursions with Metro Tunnel HQ

and PTV Hub during online learning phases at the end of the qualification in late 2021. Swinburne opted not to continue delivery beyond the initial 2020 – 2021 group – we thank Swinburne for their support during the pilot run of the program.

The Rail Academy team were pleased to source a new training provider for the Certificate II in 2021. Hallam Senior College is a large senior secondary school in Melbourne's South East, who offer one of the most substantial VET in Schools offering in Victoria. Hallam agreed to take students from other schools and areas of Melbourne to come together for the first in-school offering of the Certificate II. The 2022 group consists of 19 students, who are so far enjoying their experience. The student group have been on excursions to the Rail Academy Newport, Southern Cross Station PTV Hub and MTM Westall Maintenance Depot. They have also heard from a host of special guest speakers, including Fiona Love – General Manager Workforce Capability from Australasian Rail Association, Joe Sala – Rail Safety Manager from MTM and Peter Rimkevics, Signalling Support Manager from MTM.

Due to the success of the first cohort through the College in 2022 so far, Hallam have already confirmed that they will continue to provide the Certificate II for new students in 2023, which is an excellent result and speaks to the valuable

partnership between Hallam and the Rail Academy. The Rail Academy team have committed to continue to provide resources for the delivery of the Certificate II, including a full kit of PPE for each student, access to buses for excursions, free public transport travel on Certificate II class days, access to the Rail Academy Newport, and participation in a range of curated excursions and speaking events.

We thank Hallam Senior College for agreeing to deliver the program, providing an excellent learning environment for the new cohort, and for their support with exposing secondary students to exciting careers in rail.

- ICI ran a promo session in August 2021
- Recruitment event run for graduating group in March 2022



CHAPTER 5

# Rail Academy Newport (RAN)

## Rail Academy Utilisation

Victoria’s rapidly growing rail industry is one of Victoria’s largest employers, and Rail Academy Newport continues to be a dedicated supporter of apprentices, trainees, cadets, and new entrants to the industry.

Since 2019, Metro Academy have trained over 42,000 new entrants and existing workers in ‘Safely working in the Rail Corridor’ (SWIRC) at RAN (Rail Academy Newport), a notable example of the facility being used as intended, a tangible and practical environment for participants to fully immerse themselves in.

As with many industries, lockdowns for much of 2020-2021 continued to see RAN operate in sleep mode, with small periods of outdoor critical training that was required being undertaken. The centre reopened in late October 2021

for all outdoor training primarily for signalling, hand signaller, national rail labour and rail tractions apprentices. In late November, the centre opened to full capacity, with COVID-19 rules including the requirement of full vaccination status to enter RAN being introduced. With this change, classroom booking utilisation jumped almost immediately by 80% as. This was due to a large backlog in need for training across the industry. In high demand was the Safe Working in the Rail Corridor (SWIRC), Signaller Safeworking, Track Vehicle Operator (TVO).

## COVID-19 Restrictions

In total RAN was closed for a total of 90 days from July 2021- Nov 2022. During this period RAN was fully compliant throughout with all State Government directives. The QR code system was fully optimised for sign-in and contact training. All industry trainers and assessors assisted were cooperative with RAN requirements and diligent with fitness for work and rules for mask wearing and vaccination document checks.

We continue to ensure vaccination statuses are confirmed by trainers and assessors and maintain good ventilation throughout all classrooms and where practical, doors and windows remaining open during use.

## Facility Management

As part of our continued commitment to social procurement at RAN we continue to support YMCA ReBuild for Garden and Ground maintenance at our facility. In addition, in February 2022 WISE Employment were awarded the cleaning contract at RAN with their program under Clean Force Property Services. With a social purpose to provide employment for people with disability, including mental illness.

An independent commercial building inspection report was completed, the report estimates \$40,000 per annum for general facility maintenance.

## Centre Facility Improvements

To ensure Victorians have access to industry standard training facilities, and to support training delivery that matches existing and emerging workforce needs, TFTF (Training for the Future) is managing the largest ever investment in history.

RAN continued to finance maintenance projects with general revenue and made significant facility improvement to the administration area.

Subject matter experts were engaged to from a committee focused on Rail Signalling. Members have informally met throughout the year and have been key in providing technical advice on the renovation of an existing space to support forecasted training needs, and the installation of new signalling field asset equipment. RAN site will be receiving a relocatable equipment building (REB) to house the field assets. Training will commence September 2022.

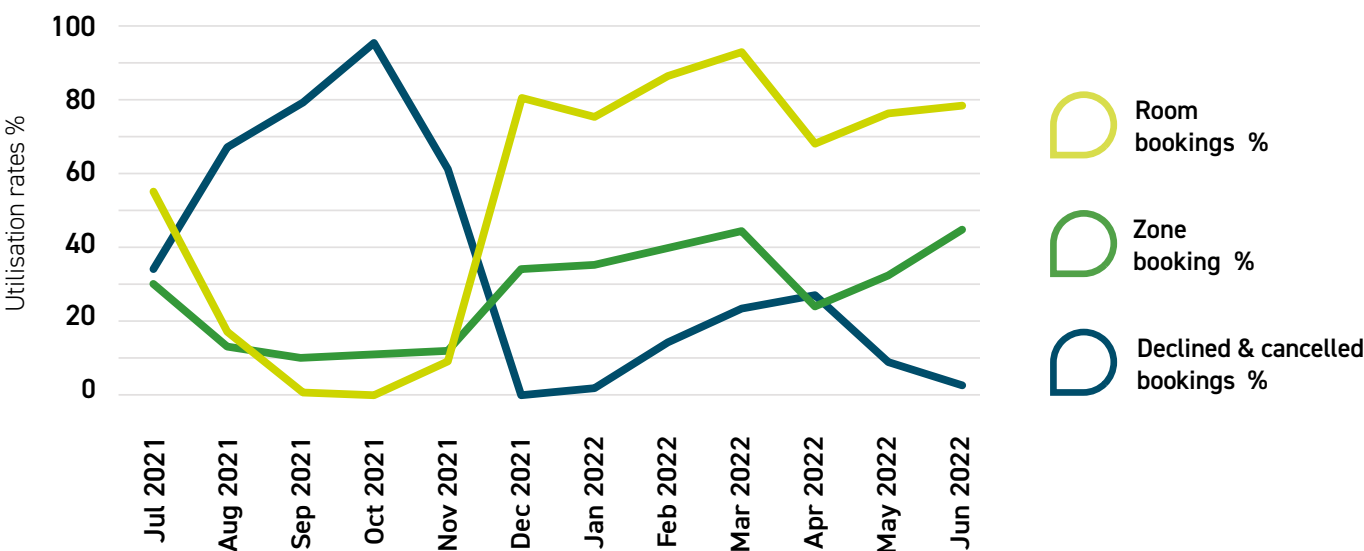
A Substation committee will be formed in the latter half of 2022 to assist with the installation of substation equipment, a project that has had plans in the draw for eight years since the substation was built.

RAN has provided a 13-ton excavator placed adjacent to the rail lines within the construction training

zone to further develop a simulated rail construction environment and shore up Metro Academy SWIRC program. The aim of this asset is to help learners to understand the relationship between construction hazards and rail transport operations, giving the tools and knowledge in how to effectively mitigate these hazards. High-Capacity Metro Train (HCMT) and Rail Academy Station has now been fully completed with the addition of a built platform and all design additions to complete Rail Academy Station. In addition, platform screen doors have been installed to assist with the planning and design as Metro’s Tunnel’s five new underground stations will be fitted with floor-to-ceiling walls along the length of its platforms and platform screen doors.

Next year will see Major Transport Infrastructure Authority’s ‘Strategic Signalling Taskforce’ access RAN to deliver signal design and testing courseware, including Verification tester, Function Tester, Principles Tester, and Tester in Charge.

Yearly Utilisation July 2021 - June 2022



## Highlights

- High-Capacity Metro Train (HCMT) and Rail Academy Station has now been fully completed
- Engagement with infrastructure users of the centre to complete substation equipment installation
- Rail Network Alliance (RNA) have submitted a proposal to install next generation signalling equipment at RAN to support High-Capacity Signalling as part of Metro Tunnel Project
- MTIA (Major Transport Infrastructure Authority) Signalling Strategy Taskforce (SST) to install signalling equipment upgrade and will develop and deliver a suite of courses aligned to design and testing roles
- Classroom 3 is back in service, and work is being done with VicTrack to have the 'disaster recovery room' located at back of the meals room added to our lease to create another classroom
- Routine review of RAN-Metro Trains Melbourne Safety Interface Agreement
- Commercial building inspection to help inform future total operations and maintenance costs of the facility
- Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) coordinated a photo shoot at Rail Academy Newport for their SRLA Graduates



CHAPTER 5 - Rail Academy Newport (RAN)

# Highlights

Rail Network Alliance will be utilising Rail Academy Newport to deliver Signal Maintenance Training due to the fair amount of new equipment being installed as part of the Metro Tunnel Project. Floating in a relocatable equipment building (REM) housing the field assets. Training will commence September – December 2022 and a continued need for February 2023 onwards.

Metro Trains Melbourne also have requested utilising Rail Academy Newport as they develop signal design and testing courseware as part of the Signalling Strategy Taskforce. Up to eight courses commencing in 2023 including Verification Tester, Function tester, Principles Tester and Tester in Charge. To accommodate the need RAN has developed a new classroom space to support Signal Maintenance Training.

Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) coordinated a photo shoot at Rail Academy Newport for their SRLA Graduates.

Rail Network Alliance planning to deliver training to the Signal Maintenance staff during September – December 2022 in new assets and technology as part of the Metro Tunnel Project.

RNA will also install several signalling assets for practical training.

MTM enquired to place X-Tropolis 2.0 mock up full cab simulator for train driver feedback and scopes of ideas. Minimum of 6-month period and would be accessed by user groups including Alstom, MTM and DoT.

## CASE STUDY

### Empowerment through Employment

Backed by a 20-year history and a reputation for providing exceptional service, Clean Force now employ over 220 permanent and casual cleaning staff who provide high quality services at more than 300 premises across metropolitan Melbourne, including Rail Academy at Newport (RAN).

Different to other commercial cleaners, operating as a social enterprise, they provide employment for Victorians from disadvantaged and marginalised backgrounds.

Vera Georgiou, Rail Training Centre Manager said keeping the facilities clean at RAN is fundamental as thousands of people attend training there every year.

"We maintain the highest standards across the whole centre and cleaning

is no different. Clean Force have understood our needs and delivered," Ms Georgiou said.

Clean Force leads the way for other social enterprises, through best practices of having an integrated workforce, paying award wages, ensuring staff are trained and supported, maintaining high standards of work health & safety, delivering superior customer service, and creating a sustainable and growing social enterprise.

They train and motivate employees to work towards achieving a richer lifestyle by working in a team-oriented atmosphere which rewards effort and develops creative input while delivering quality cleaning services with outstanding social benefits.

Level Crossing Removal Project, Industry Capability and Inclusion team are proud of the ongoing relationship with Clean Force and look forward to a continued partnership.



## CASE STUDY

### RAN: A training ground for Victoria's transport network

Rail Academy Newport (RAN) provides a valuable space for the rail and public transport sector at large to administer training to help our transport network run smoothly.

RAN serves as the training ground for the Certificate III in Rail Traction, which is delivered through Yarra Trams to its overhead lines persons and apprentices.

Carlo, who has been working with Yarra Trams since 1987, is a Yarra Trams trainer, providing overhead traction training to second year apprentices.

"My role in Yarra Trams is being part of a team to deliver safe and healthy environment in the training of overhead application and linework's in which RAN plays a big part of that training," Carlo said.

Adam is an overhead lines person with Yarra Trams. Adam describes his work as unique in its variety of capabilities and responsibilities.

"There is no day that is the same which makes the job unique which I really enjoy... The best part is the people you work with and seeing Melbourne in all its glory."

Adam has just completed his Certificate III in Rail Traction through Yarra Trams. He notes that training at the RAN provided great practical learning opportunities, directly related to his work.



Main image: Carlo, Yarra Trams  
Small image: Adam, Yarra Trams



CHAPTER 6

# The Year Ahead

## Deliver Critical Skill Shortage Programs and EPIC

With the renewal of TFTF for a new term, the following programs are in planning, projected for or will be completed in the next year, 2022 – 2023:

EPIC	3rd Cohort, January 2023	Recruitment will commence in August 2022
Rail Signal Engineer Cadetship	6th Cohort, February 2024	Recruitment planning will commence in June 2023
Fusion	Groups 6, 7 and 8, June 2022 – December 2023	Group 6 will complete in December 2022 Group 7 will commence in February 2023 Group 8 will commence in June 2023
Safety Starters Traineeship	1st Cohort, completion due February 2024	Needs analysis for 2nd cohort in April 2023

## Rail Academy Governance and School Engagement Activities

Some of the events lined up for the rest of 2022 include, but are not limited, to:

- **Dandenong Secondary College Careers Fair** in July 2021;
- **South East LLEN Careers Expo** in July 2021;
- **St Joseph's College Echuca tour the Rail Academy** in July 2021;
- **STEMinist Day** at Citadines Melbourne in August 2022;
- **Everything You Wanted To Know about Communications online webinar** in August 2022;
- **CEAV and Goulburn Murray LLEN event** at Rail Academy Newport in August 2022;
- **Discovering Careers in Rail online webinar** for teachers and careers coordinators in August 2022;
- **Everything You Wanted to Know about Sustainability onsite field trip** in September 2022;
- **Discovering Careers in Rail** face to face event for teachers and careers coordinators in September 2022;
- **Rail Careers Day** event at Rail Academy Newport in October 2022.

Events will continue to be promoted through the Rail Academy's established school network and mailing list, CEAV hubs, Learn Local Employment Networks and through the Rail Academy website.

The team will grow in the next financial year, with the appointment of a Senior Adviser, Industry Programs role able to expand the program offering, as well as investigate further opportunities for the growth of the VET in Schools program (Certificate II in Heavy and Light Rail Fundamentals).

Rail Academy Governance activities will continue as normal, in line with the signing of a new TTF MOU and confirmation of budget.



## Rail Industry Capability Project (RICP)

In 2019, the ICI team undertook the Rail Industry Capability Project (RICP), which delivered vital courseware programs and materials to support the rail industry to deliver critical learning to their workforces.

Some 15 qualifications comprising of 200 units of competency were issued to Victorian rail operators during the project, to assist with building their established learning offerings and further develop their educational maturity. The RICP project represented a 4.1-million-dollar investment in critical rail skills by the Victorian State Government.

The ICI team worked with industry partners Metro Trains, V/Line and

Yarra Trams, Swinburne University and Chisholm Institute to develop these courses. In addition, the project delivered 10 e-learning courses for the Certificate III Rail Customer service, to support the training of V/Line staff who are regionally located.

By supporting the growth Victorian Rail Industry, the two-year 'Rail Industry Capability Project' (RICP) won gold at the LearnX 2020 Awards for the Best New E-Learning Adopter Initiative.

The RICP was an enormous success. Through collaboration, RICP is proactively addressing critical skill shortage areas and closing the industry capability gaps by offering more dynamic, sustainable, and cost-effective training products for the rail industry.





CHAPTER 7

# Five Year Reflection

This year marks five year since Training for the Future (TFTF) was born. A first of its kind program, unlike any other in the country, it harnesses the power of information on skills gaps and finds the talent to fill it. Moreover, it brought social procurement and social enterprises into the procurement fold and made them part of “business as usual.”

Working with industry, we have shared immense success and changed the face of transport infrastructure as we had known it.

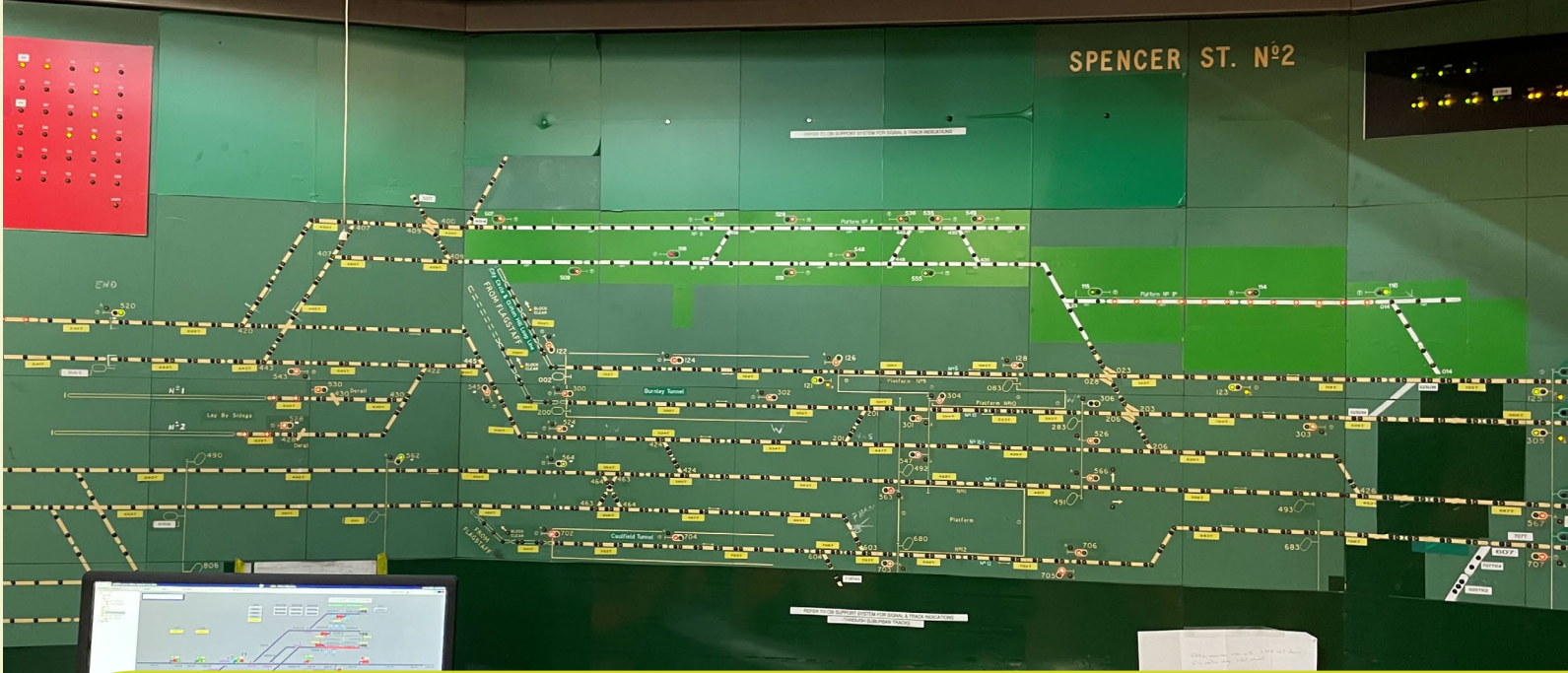
These are strange times. All organisations go through evolution, renewal, refresh, and ensure they are always fit for purpose given the context and needs of the world. But the evolving part never feels good. There is always uncertainty and discomfort in the unknown. Training for the Future is not different. It has evolved enormously since its inception, and it is in a strong position with strong partnerships across industry and an impressive reputation. We have achieved what the original strategy outlined and TFTF is ready for its next evolution.

Over the last five years, we have had the absolute privilege of working with, growing, and learning from an incredible leadership team, Executive Steering Committee, Advisory panel, talented colleagues, amazing partners across the industry, hundreds of employees, and people from all parts of life’s tapestry.

There is much to be proud of in what has been collectively achieved and besides the industry shifts and the remarkable achievements throughout COVID, it is the social impact and capability skill building work that should be in the top of our favourites.

**Our Current industry partners and supporters:**

- **Bradley Giddins**  
Director Inclusion and Diversity, Department of Transport (DoT)
- **Kevin Devlin**  
Chief Executive Officer, Level Crossing Removal Project
- **Shannon Roma**  
Director, People, and Inclusion, Rail Projects Victoria (RPV)
- **Kristen Georgakopoulos**  
Executive General Manager People & Culture, VicTrack
- **Ann-Michel Greenwood**  
Executive Director People, and Integrity, V/Line
- **Peitta Dyball**  
Chief People Officer, Yarra Trams
- **Rob Duvel**  
Executive Director Safety & People, Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM)



CASE STUDY

## Amandeep, Rail Signalling Engineer

Rail signal engineering is a skill area of high demand in Victoria. Identifying this skill gap was key for Victorian Government creating the Rail Signalling Engineer Cadet Program. The program provides a fully paid, three-year cadetship at a range of Australia’s biggest rail and construction operators.

With Victoria delivering an unprecedented amount of rail network infrastructure, the need for well-trained and qualified professionals is high.

Amandeep Buttar is a part of the 2021 cohort. She commenced the program after spending several years out of the workforce to focus on raising her children.

“I always wanted to work in the rail signalling industry but lacked the skills to do so. The cadetship presented me with an excellent opportunity to get back in the game and build my career,” Amandeep said.

Her first rotation was spent working with the Major Roads Project Alliance (MRPA) at Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP), where she had the opportunity to work and explore across a range of different skill areas of rail signalling.

Amandeep spoke fondly of the support she has received during her first rotation and the ability for her to learn and contribute to the teams she is a part of.

“I know rail signalling is a highly specialised field, but I have found the variety of tasks helped to enhance my skills,” she said.

The program not only supports her journey into a rewarding career but also serves as way for her to give back to community. She recalls being approached by an elderly woman and her granddaughter while working in Melbourne’s south-east.

“The little girl Amandeep thanked me for our work and told me she will love to help us build bridges when she grows up” said. That was something I will remember for my lifetime.”

Amandeep is not alone in her experience with a total of 47 cadets having been employed over the program’s life. Recruitment for the 2022 program is currently underway with applications set to close on 29 August 2021.

Amandeep said the cadetship was a lifechanging opportunity and urged others thinking of applying to take up this life changing opportunity.

“You’ll have a promising career in a supportive community, where people are willing to share their years of experience and knowledge with you.”

“Looking back in 20 years’ time we can proudly say we contributed to making Victoria a safer place,” she said.



CHAPTER 7

# Five Year Reflection

## Building a diverse talent capacity pipeline

TFTF's inclusion programs work to increase employment opportunities for disadvantaged communities and create respectful and inclusive workplaces in the transport sector. Since 2017, we have provided a range of opportunities for marginalised communities to participate in the rail and public transport sector.

Our GEN 44 and GEN 8 programs have provided 192 paid internship opportunities amongst TFTF partners, with many returning to continue their placements or find ongoing employment. The GROW program has helped educate about the range of opportunities available in rail, and foster motivations to enter and thrive in the sector, resulting in a 31% employment conversion rate. We have also matched over 2000 women as part of the Women in Transport Mentoring Program.

The launch of BENTRail in 2020 saw the beginning of some exciting initiatives to raise awareness, educate and advocate for change for LGBTIQ+ communities.

We have made great strides in Aboriginal economic empowerment, including longstanding partnerships with Aboriginal businesses on our Alliances, fostering Aboriginal participation in GROW, and incorporating Aboriginal design at LXRP projects.

Social procurement has also been a key priority, with a total of \$425 million spent on social procurement to date. We also developed a range of resources to establish best practice on social procurement, specifically for our industry partners.

We are incredibly proud of the work achieved in the inclusion space in the past five years and are looking ahead to broaden our impact and continue to build a more robust, diverse workforce.

## GEN 44 and GEN 8

The GEN 44/GEN 8 Program places university students and mid-career professionals from disadvantaged backgrounds in paid internships across TFTF partners.

As part of creating a new generation of diverse and capable talent for the rail infrastructure industry, Training for the Future has developed partnerships with CareerSeekers, CareerTrackers, the Australian Network on Disability and DOXA Youth Foundation to open opportunities to people from marginalised and/or disadvantaged backgrounds.

### GEN 44/GEN 8

Over the last five years, the GEN44/GEN8 hosted 192 interns across a range of disciplines including procurement, human resources, finance, safety, engineering and project development.

### GROW

Gain Real Opportunities in the Workforce (GROW) has been delivered as part of the TFTF program since November 2017. To date, the GROW program has been delivered to 537 participants, including 94 in the past year. 169 participants have since accepted employment, representing a 31% conversation rate.

We strengthened our referral capabilities through the launch of the TFTF Talent Platform in April 2020. The platform has continued to capture all referrals coming to the GROW program and provide a diversity recruitment tool

to ensure those most in need are given opportunity to apply for roles available. The TFTF Talent Platform now has 7 new employment referral agencies directly referring candidates to enrol in upcoming GROW programs.

Recognising the unique barriers faced by First Nations participants, we have also worked to develop a tailored Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GROW program.

## CASE STUDY

### Hannah Schwerdt, 2020 FUSION Alumni

"I started at Level Crossing Removal Project in 2018 as a Social Media Officer, helping to create content across our channels and organise our social media queries.

I was eager to expand my skillset and soon added other online communications such as our website and email updates to my repertoire.

After spending time as both Digital Advisor and Senior Digital Adviser roles – and seeing around 30 level crossings removed – I have recently been promoted to Digital Manager, leading an awesome team of digital

advisers to produce high quality content for our online communities.

LXRP and Training For The Future provides so many opportunities for staff to learn from industry leaders. My experience in completing Fusion in 2020 and being a mentee in the WiT Mentoring Program helped build my confidence to achieve great things in transport communications."







## INTERVIEW

### Heba Mansour Civil Engineer, North East Link Program (NELP)

#### **Tell us about your history, how did you find your way to your current job?**

I arrived at Australia 5 years ago as a refugee due to the crisis in my country home Syria. I worked as a civil engineer in Syria and had a successful career, but it wasn't easy for me to start from the scratch with my professional career and my life in Australia. However, as I always strive to develop my knowledge in Engineering especially the engineering field in Australia, I decided to do a master's degree in environmental engineering at RMIT University and I was able to complete it with Distinction. After graduation, all my efforts to find a job failed until I heard about EPIC program, and I was able to secure a place for myself within North East Link Program (NELP).

#### **How do EPIC contribute to your success? What were the best parts and what didn't you expect?**

EPIC is a program that is led by the Level Crossing Removal Project and helps the professional refugee and asylum seeker to get into the engineering field in Australia. EPIC Program introduced me to the employers across the transport infrastructure industry who signed on to support this program where I was successful to sign a job offer with NELP. I have been also provided with a mentor who supported me for 18 months in addressing my work questions and queries. The program provided me with the opportunity to

participate in the grow program that introduced me to major infrastructure projects and transport operations which included a series of site visits, training and safely work on site certifications. Moreover, as part of EPIC program, I had to complete a graduate certificate in Infrastructure Engineering Management which assisted me in gaining a great understanding of the Rail and Road construction Industry requirement and management. The best part was working with other participants as one team helping each other every day to grow professionally. All the support and guidance I received with the other participants from the people who were leading this program was out of the expectation and heart-warming.

#### **What has been your biggest professional challenge so far?**

The biggest professional challenge was understanding the work system in Australia as it is different from the one in my country home.

#### **And your greatest success and hopes for the future?**

My greatest success was getting the job offer with NELP as a project engineer after I finish my cadetship period. My hopes for future are to be seen as someone with deep expertise in the engineering sector. I am also excited to take on more management responsibilities in the next few years and potentially even take the lead on some projects.

#### **What's your message to others looking to follow a similar path?**

I encourage everyone to follow this path and do their best in getting the opportunity to be part of EPIC Program. The skills you will build up on the Graduate Certificate combined with your international qualification and the workplace experience with one of the transport infrastructure engineering industries will bring a big benefit for your future professional career in Australia

#### **What is your favourite thing about your job?**

As I was working at NELP for the last three years now as an Engineer Cadet, I got to learn a lot about transport infrastructure project engineering. I enjoyed working with other engaged individuals towards common goal, and that what excited me about my job. Being a project engineer at NELP will get me to collaborate with lots of different teams of people, stakeholders, contractors and suppliers and I particularly enjoy the challenge of influencing people and motivating them to complete the job on time.

Finally, being a project Engineer with NELP requires me to work in an environment where I have many responsibilities for the completion of challenging projects. I thrive in high-pressure situation where I am required to use my knowledge and expertise to achieve certain objectives.



CHAPTER 7

# Five Year Reflection

## BENT Rail

BENTRail was launched in January 2020, designed to build support, advocacy, networking and employment opportunities for LGBTIQA+ employees in industry through targeted awareness campaigns, training sessions and community engagement.

Working towards understanding and education, BENTRail has delivered 42 LGBTIQ+ Cultural Safety in Transport training sessions, to 899 participants across TFTF partners.

The Gender Affirmation Resource, the first of its kind in the transport sector, was launched March 2021, endorsed by non-for-profit Pride in Diversity and the office of Ro Allen, Gender & Sexuality Commissioner.

## Women in Transport

TFTF delivers two Women in Transport (WiT) programs on behalf of the Department of Transport, pursuant to the Women in Transport Strategy 2021-2024: the WiT Mentoring Program and the WiT Leadership Development Scholarship.

### Mentoring Program

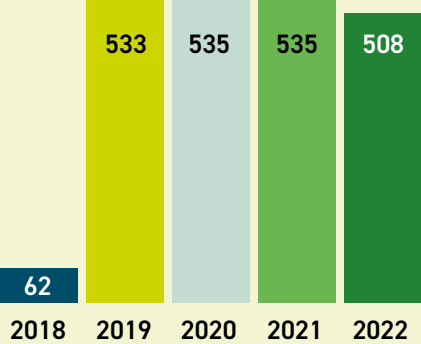
The WiT Mentoring Program has gone from strength to strength. Over the past five years, applicant and participant numbers have steadily grown, indicating the strong need for space for women in the transport industry to connect and uplift each other.

### Leadership Development Scholarship Program

The WiT Leadership Development Scholarship program is designed to increase the pipeline of women ready to take on leadership roles in industry.

Since 2017, 15 women have been awarded scholarships to support their study in transport-related fields, with many moving into positions of influence since completing their study.

Participants to date



### What our participants are saying:

*"So far it has been great. Set up goals and having open conversations that leave me feeling inspired to make a shift."*

*"Now we have met online once and in person once and are meeting again this week, my mentor has already opened my mind up to potential career development directions"*

*"It has been going well. My mentor is very knowledgeable, professional, successful, friendly and non-judgmental—all that I inspire to be!"*

## Aboriginal Action Plan

Training for the Future has developed various initiatives to increase Aboriginal participation in employment and training opportunities in rail.

A key focus was on building progression opportunities for Aboriginal people within transport infrastructure projects

Work continues to deliver a GROW program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates, in partnership with key First Nations organisations.

We also recognise the power of partnerships to increase Aboriginal participation, which is reflected in LXR Alliance's practice.

LXR's North West Program Alliance (NWPA) has a longstanding partnership with A2B Walker Group

which has resulted in a reliable and talented Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. Over 48,000 employment hours have been contributed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people since May 2021. The Alliance's cumulative spend on Indigenous suppliers reached over \$17M from 19 unique vendors, because of collaborating with Kinaway Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce and Supply Nation.

LXR's South Eastern Program Alliance (SEPA) has also demonstrated commitment to growing their spend with Indigenous businesses, and one example of this is through their capacity building efforts with Djurwa,

a waste management company. SEPA holds formal monthly meetings with Djurwa to identify and resolve issues, provide commercial feedback on reports and invoicing, and forecast potential upcoming work. SEPA understands that winning work with a LXR Alliance could open many doors and that mixed performance could close them just as quickly.

Aboriginal design has also been incorporated in projects at LXR, showcasing culture and heritage of the Aboriginal people in the area. Most notably, Carrum station's design incorporates local Aboriginal totems and a yarning circle in the public space.

## Social Procurement

TFTF is helping drive social procurement through its rail infrastructure projects through providing resources, advice and coordination.

TFTF launched the Social Procurement Innovators Network in 2019, with our key subject matter expert partners, Social Traders, Kinaway Victorian Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce and Supply Nation. Created to explore innovations in social procurement within the transport infrastructure industry, this network brought together industry leaders and innovators to explore how social procurement could be used to create a strategic advantage.

We also developed resources to educate about Social Procurement best practice. Launched in November 2019,

the Social Procurement in Practice resource booklet was distributed as a strong introduction to social procurement and how to achieve it. It includes a poster illustrating just 20 of the broad range of goods and services that social benefit suppliers have provided to worksites and offices across industry.

To support the Social Procurement in Practice print resource, a 30-minute eLearning module was created and launched in March 2020, including video case studies and a short assessment. The intended primary

users are government, project offices, contractors and their subcontractors. This e-resource has also been used in shaping social procurement resources to be rolled out across all Major Transport Infrastructure Authority (MTIA) projects, valuable in keeping momentum growing for social procurement across Victoria.

In addition to supporting industry to broaden their social procurement impact, LXR's alliances have spent over \$425 million on social procurement to date, an incredible increase from \$26 million as of May 2018.



CHAPTER 7

# Five Year Reflection





APPENDIX A  
ICI Dashboard

Rail Academy Newport	Average Occupancy YTD	No. of participants TOTAL FY21/22	No. of participants TOTAL
Rail Academy Newport - Classrooms	53%	5,883	36,217
Promoting Rail Careers - School Engagement	Total No. of Events scheduled Jul 21-Jun 22)	No. of programs delivered YTD (21-22)	No. of participants YTD (21-22)
Rail Academy - Discovering Rail Careers (Teachers/Careers Coordinators) workshop	1	1	7
Rail Academy - Rail Careers workshop (secondary/vocational/university students)	6	4	1404
Rail Academy - Excursion (secondary school expo or special event request)	4	2	52
Rail Academy - STEM workshop (secondary students)	1	1	15

APPENDIX A  
ICI Dashboard

ICI Program Initiatives	Total No. of Programs scheduled (Jul 21- Jun 22)	No. of programs delivered YTD (21-22)	No. of participants YTD (21-22)	No. of employed TOTAL
Inclusion - TRANSIT	0		2	*
Inclusion - GROW *	10	10	94	184
Inclusion - BentRail	25	24	408	
Inclusion - GEN44	1	1	7	28
Inclusion - GEN8	1	1	5	9
Inclusion - Women in Transport Mentoring Program	2	2	750	
Inclusion - Women in Transport Scholarships (DOT Women post graduate scholarships)	3 Scholarships	1	3	
Capability - Rail Signalling Cadets Grad Cert and Grad Dip	1		13	73
Capability - Rail Signalling Certificate IV	2		32	32
Capability - Rail Signalling Diploma	3		12	
Capability - Safety Advisors	1	0	6	10
Capability - Stakeholders & Comms Advisors (Fusion)	3	3	41	
Capability/Inclusion - Engineering Pathways Industry Cadetship (EPIC)*	1		19	47
Rail Academy - VET (is) Cert II in heavy and light rail fundamentals (pilot)	1	1	18	0
TOTAL				377

\* includes 24 GROW participants who secured employment in EPIC cohort 1 and 2 (employment outcome counted once in No. of employed TOTAL)



## APPENDIX A

### ICI Dashboard

Summary - TFTF and RICP courseware licence agreement	Rail Operator	Light Rail Operator	Rail Operator	TFTF Funded	RICP Project Funded
UEE41211 - Certificate IV in Electrical Rail Signalling	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne	✓	
22327VIC - Graduate Diploma of Railway Signalling Systems	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne	✓	
22326VIC - Graduate Certificate in Railway Signalling Systems	V/Line			✓	
22458VIC - Diploma of Railways Signalling Systems	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne	✓	
TFTF Certificate III in ESI Power Systems Rail Traction (Heavy Rail)			Metro Trains Melbourne - Holmesglen	✓	
Certificate II in Shunting and lead shunter skill set	V/Line				✓
Certificate III in Rail Yard Coordination	V/Line				✓
Certificate II in Rail Infrastructure	V/Line	Yarra Trams	Metro Trains Melbourne		✓
Certificate III in Rail Public Transport Customer Service and Compliance	V/Line				✓
Certificate III in Rail Customer Service (Conductor)	V/Line				✓
Certificate III in Rail Customer Service (Station staff)	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne		✓
Certificate III in Rail Customer Service e-learning modules	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne		✓

## APPENDIX A

### ICI Dashboard

Summary - TFTF and RICP courseware licence agreement	Rail Operator	Light Rail Operator	Rail Operator	TFTF Funded	RICP Project Funded
Certificate III in Rail Signalling	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne		✓
Certificate II in Rail Infrastructure - Track work and Tram/Rail Light	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne		✓
Certificate III in Rail Infrastructure	V/Line				✓
Certificate III in Rail Structures			Metro Trains Melbourne		✓
Certificate IV in Rail Infrastructure			Metro Trains Melbourne		✓
Certificate IV in Rail Network Control	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne		✓
RICP Funded Certificate III in ESI Power Systems - Rail Traction (Light Rail)		Yarra Trams - Holmesglen			✓
High Voltage Electrol			Metro Trains Melbourne		✓
HV Power	V/Line				
TLIG2007 Work in a socially diverse environment (unit from Certificate III in Public Transport Customer Service and Compliance)		Yarra Trams			✓
Digital Assessment App	V/Line		Metro Trains Melbourne		✓



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For more information please visit  
**[levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/about/  
training-for-the-future](https://levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/about/training-for-the-future)**



Department  
of Transport

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