

National Cadet Engineering Program

IPWEA NSW is recommending that the Australian Government play a role in incentivising Local Government to directly engage Cadet Engineers within Councils across Australia.

The delivery and on-going stewardship of critical infrastructure will require qualified and skilled professional Engineers to ensure value for money.

IPWEA NSW undertook a skills audit across NSW Councils and collated data from recent membership surveys. The trend is very clear.

With 53% of Engineers responding now over 50 years of age, and a skills shortage already evident, it is clear Governments across all levels must act now to immediately incentivise investment in new skilled and qualified Engineers for the future.

Only 53% of NSW Councils have a Cadet Engineering program. This is a self-fulfilling prophecy and unless addressed the skills shortage will develop into a crisis scenario.

The Government has introduced excellent incentive programs for Civil Construction trainees and apprentices, but how is the shortage of qualified Engineers being addressed.

With the right incentive programs, Councils can offer a breeding ground for future professionals to deliver high quality infrastructure and services to their communities. In regional areas of Australia, this offers the opportunity for employing and retaining young innovators of the future within regional townships.

We urge the Australian Government to adopt a policy setting that offers support to Councils through a National Cadet Engineering Program. This program should offer initial funding support, and graduated retention payments to Councils to train and grow people for the future. The Australian Government should also investigate ways to partner with Universities and professional associations to deliver fit for purpose training and on-going development.

We also urge the Australian Government to support a universal national registration scheme for Engineers for the whole of Australia, and to encourage all States to incorporate this into their own jurisdictions through appropriate legislation (eg NSW Roads Act).

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