national electrical and communications association

# Annual Review 2018

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# About NECA

The National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) is the peak body for the electrical and communications sector in Australia. The sector employs over 165,000 workers and maintains an annual turnover in excess of $23 billion.

NECA represents approximately 5,000 electrical contracting businesses across all Australian states and territories.

We provide advice and support to help our members and the wider industry to operate and manage their businesses more effectively while we represent their interests to the Federal and individual state and territory governments, regulators and principal industry bodies such as the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ACCI) and Standards Australia.

Working with our partner Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and Government Training Organisations (GTOs), NECA provides employment and ongoing skills development for approximately 4,800 apprentices across Australia. The majority of these apprentices get the opportunity to gain work experience with NECA's members through our group schemes.

Our training arm delivers training options for an additional 4,000 qualified electricians across the industry, providing technical advice and business skills training along with business development and marketing training for managers.

NECA also manages and promotes the industry-wide annual Excellence and Apprentice Awards, a scholarship program, the NECA Foundation and the Alternative Pathways Project.

The Australian Cablers Registration Service (ACRS) is a wholly owned and operated subsidiary of NECA, licensed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). ACRS is the second largest Registrar of Cablers in Australia.

NECA has been advocating for, and on behalf of, the Electrotechnology industry for over 100 years.

# National Report

2018 was another strong year for NECA and I would firstly like to thank our members who have volunteered their time and resources to NECA, as well as to all our dedicated staff Australia-wide.

Suresh Manickam
CEO, NECA

Another year has passed and our organisation continues to strengthen, employing over 60 staff in our various Chapter offices around the country. This does not include those working in the various GTOs, RTOs and controlled entities, which would be at least the same number again. NECA and its related entities now have considerable assets which exist for the benefit of the members and the industry.

NECA trains approximately 4,000 apprentices through our various RTOs and GTOs – a figure I am proud of, and the industry should be proud of as well.

Other headline items to be proud of include:

- Continual growth on membership, which exceeds over 5,300 – a record for NECA.
- The NECA Excellence Awards. Our industry's most prestigious awards, which have been well attended across the country and remain a benchmark for the industry.
- NECA has had a number of successes in the media as well as with stakeholder engagement, which has continued to grow year-on-year whether with Cabinet, Ministers, Opposition regulatory organisations or other industry and training bodies.

In 2017, NECA submitted a very detailed paper to the Murray Review of Australia's security of payments. A paper I am proud to say was mentioned by the final report's Author, John Murray, several times and who accepted the majority of recommendations we called for.

We have therefore established a strong springboard in which to lobby State and Territory governments to further the cause of harmonisation of Security of Payments laws and the implementation of statutory trusts that will protect subcontractors.

NECA was placed front and centre in meeting the Australian economy's training needs when it was chosen as one of the few organisations to deliver the Commonwealth Government's new Industry Specialist Mentoring for Australian Apprentices (ISMAA) program. This scheme has been designed to provide electrical apprentices with regular one-to-one contact with high skilled mentors, and will give our industry the ability to:

- increase apprenticeship retention rates;
- improve completion rates; and
- boost the supply of future electricians across the country.

NECA was one of ISMAA's largest grant recipients, which is a testament to both our advocacy efforts and the strong training capabilities we provide.

Our advocacy efforts were not only successful at a Federal level. 2018 saw NECA's pre-budget submissions to the NSW Government resulting in improvements for the state's apprentices. This was supported by our similar submission to the Tasmanian Government who agreed to a redevelopment of the TasTafe Clarence Campus for a Trades and Water Centre of Excellence.

The Tasmanian budget also saw the extension of 2017's payroll tax concessions for enhanced apprentice take-up, which we have actively campaigned for over a number of years.

Members, will recall that NECA was instrumental in advocating and lobbying for the reinstatement of the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC), which occurred in 2016. It is important that any winds of change from this year's Federal Election do not see a reverse in this achievement and NECA will continue to advocate in Parliament for the retention of this independent umpire for the construction industry. The ABCC's existence is vital as it maintains the rule of law within the building and construction sector.

Our national conference held in Fiji saw over 400 attending what was a productive and successful event. The 2019 event will be held back home at Hamilton Island where our Executive Directors and I will be looking to increase the impressive numbers who attended the Fiji conference.

NECA continues to modernise in order to meet and surpass the needs of current and future electrical contractors. This includes greater harmonisation and efficiency gains. To this end, the Secretariat has commenced the journey of harmonisation and should be credited for the advancements so far; however, there remains more to be done.

The next 12 months will see further changes. These include:

- Changes to NECA's Rules;
- Challenges in attracting and retaining new members;
- The implementation and bedding-in of our CRM system for the East Coast;
- Greater harmonisation of NECA's offerings and services around the country; and
- The adoption of one single NECA magazine.

These changes might present challenges, but they will also present great rewards for NECA, through greater membership and ultimately better value for members.

## VALE Alan Brown

It is with a heavy heart I let you know of the passing of one of the electrical industry's leading figures, and its outstanding President, Alan Brown.

Many of you will have known Alan, who was NECA National President and Deputy Chair of Fredon. In both roles, Alan made a considerable contribution to the electrical industry and beyond. His wisdom, knowledge and experienced voice will be sorely missed, not just by me, but also the members of NECA's Executive Committee as well as his fellow contractors throughout Australia. It was a true privilege working with him.

On behalf of NECA I thank him for all his advice and support, and most of all, his friendship. All our thoughts and condolences are with his family. NECA is a better place because of Alan.

**Suresh Manickam**
CEO, NECA

"On behalf of NECA I thank him for all his advice and support, and most of all, his friendship."

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# MEDIA AND ADVOCACY

This year saw over 25 media releases from welcoming Federal Government initiatives, raising concerns over political policy where appropriate and prosecuting an agenda to improve policy outcomes for Australia's Electrotechnology sector.

**Our media coverage included issues such as:**

- Apprenticeships;
- Phoenixing;
- Licensing reform;
- Security of Payments;
- 2018/19 Federal Budget;
- Industry Specialist Mentoring for Australian Apprentices (ISMAA) program;
- NECA National Excellence Awards Winners 2018;
- Non-conforming building products; and
- Better deals for Small Business.

NECA continued to be the leading voice of the Electrotechnology sector. We advocate on behalf of our members to deliver effective change and reform. Our 2018 Policy Statement contains 13 key policy themes and makes 52 specific policy recommendations. NECA actively pursued these themes with Parliamentarians and policy makers around the country. We also made a number of governmental submissions on behalf of members, including:

- Federal Pre-Budget submission;
- NSW, Tasmania, ACT Pre-Budget submissions;
- National Review of Security of Payment Laws Final Report (Murray Review);
- Effect of Red Tape on Occupational Licensing submission;
- Review of WHS Regulatory Framework in the Building and Construction Industry; and
- Fire Protection Qualification review.

We are proud to say that our actions and activities are having a positive impact with Parliamentarians and policy makers around the country.

# 2018 NATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

## NATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

NECA's Excellence Awards held around Australia, were a huge success attracting almost 3,000 people combined and with a record number of over 450 guests at the National event, held at the Grand Hyatt in Melbourne in November.

The Awards recognise and reward NECA members for the outstanding work demonstrated in the projects in which they enter. The quality of entries, was of such high standard, the judges awarded the most commendations in the Awards history, and NECA congratulates all entrants on their hard work and achievements. Congratulations to all our National and State winners and finalists, and keep those entries coming in for the 2019 Awards.

# 2018 National Award Winners

## 2018 Excellence Awards

Winner

### Domestic Residence

**Argus Technologies (VIC)**
Private Residence Melbourne

### Energy Efficiency & Environment

**Greenstar Building Automation & Grosvenor Engineering Group (NSW)**
ALDI Store Energy Efficiency Upgrade Rollout

### Industrial Small

**Fibre Optics Design and Construct (NSW)**
Relocation of ITS services - M5 Motorway

### Industrial Medium

**Kerfoot (NSW)**
Parklea Correctional Centre Minimum Security Expansion

### Industrial Large

**Wilken Service (NSW)**
Huntingwood 132kv Substation Yard

### Commercial Small

**Insight Electrical Technology (WA)**
Perth Concert Hall

### Commercial Medium

**Kerfoot (NSW)**
Green Square Community Facility

### Commercial Large

**Nilsen (WA)**
Perth Stadium

### Voice/Data Communications & Audio Visual

**Intravision (ACT)**
Tuggeranong Office Park

### Lighting

**Next Generation Electrical (VIC)**
Melbourne Market Authority LED Lighting Upgrade

### WHS Management System (Project)

**Downer (WA)**
Wheatstone Project LNG Plant - Electrical and Instrumentation Installation

### WHS Management System (Company)

**Nilsen (SA)**
Nilsen (SA) HSE Management

### Small Contracting Business

**Automated Innovation (NSW)**
Belle Apartments Assisted Living Project

# 2018 National Award Winners

## 2018 EXCELLENCE AWARDS

### Commendations

### Energy Efficiency & Environment

**Suntrix Commercial (SA)**
Australia's Largest Floating Solar System - Lismore NSW

**Next Generation Electrical (VIC)**
Melbourne Market Authority LED Lighting Upgrade

### Industrial Medium

**Nilsen (QLD)**
Lakeland Solar & Storage Project

**RBD Electrical (TAS)**
Tasports Inspection Head Services Upgrade

### Industrial Large

**Downer (WA)**
Wheatstone Project LNG Plant - Electrical and Instrumentation Installation

### Commercial Small

**Shepherd Electrical (ACT)**
Essential Energy Tenancy Fitout

### Commercial Medium

**Fredon (QLD)**
The Wesley Hospital

**Martin Donnelly (ACT)**
ANU Building 145

### Commercial Large

**Stowe Australia (NSW)**
Gosford Hospital Redevelopment

**Shepherd Electrical (ACT)**
DSS Tuggeranong Office Project

### WHS Management System (Company)

**RBD Electrical (TAS)**
RBD Electrical

# 2018 National Apprentice Award Winners

## 2018 Excellence Awards

Winner

### Industrial Award

**Andrew Binnetti**
employed by NECA Education & Careers & hosted by NHP Electrical Engineering Victoria

### Commercial / Domestic Award

**Sam Morrow**
employed by Maladay Electrical Victoria

### Communications Award

**Luke Hentschke**
employed by PEER & hosted by Appex Communications Technologies South Australia

## National Apprentice Awards

NECA recognises the essential role apprentices play in the future of our industry, and these awards showcase the outstanding contribution an apprentice can make to the projects they work on and their employer's business. Congratulations to all the winners.

## 2018 National Trade Teacher Awards

This Award recognises the outstanding contribution made by trade teachers in continuously raising the standard of education and training in our industry.

Congratulations to Matthew King from College of Electrical Training, Swan Trade Centre for his commitment and dedication.

## 2018 National Trade Teacher Award Winner

**Matthew King**
College of Electrical Training,
Swan Trade Centre

Entries are now open for the 2019 NECA State Excellence Awards. If you have a project you're proud of and would like considered, visit www.neca.asn.au to find out more and get the recognition you deserve from your peers and the industry.

# 2018 National Conference in Fiji

BULA! The annual NECA Conference held in Fiji from 27–31 July 2018 welcomed NECA members, electrical contractors, wholesalers and industry specialists from all over Australia. The conference, attended by over 400 delegates and their partners, reflected on the evolution of our industry over the past 100 years, and what that means for the next century. It delivered world-class speakers focusing on business improvement and the popular 'buyer-meets-seller' sessions. Social programs included a Bollywood themed Gala Dinner and optional activities including off-the-road cave safaris, ziplining, Sigatoka River safari, Sabeto hot springs, fishing charters and Lawai Village shopping tours. NECA thanks its Business Partners for their support in making this conference the most successful to date.

# Queensland Chapter

Since re-opening its doors in 2010, the NECA Queensland Chapter has grown to 380 members, employing around 4,000 electrical professionals and purchasing more than $400 million of electrical equipment.

Peter Lamont,
Executive Director

## The Queensland Economy

During 2018, the Queensland resident population passed five-million people and continues to grow by almost 100,000 people each year.

2018 saw construction activity valued at $41 billion with 38,000 new dwellings, largely apartments in South East Queensland (SEQ).

A strong pipeline of government projects will make construction a $50 billion industry in 2019; however, residential construction in SEQ will contract, but we will see a period of growth for Regional Queensland.

## New Developments

2018 has seen a number of changes impact on our industry.

- The Electrical Safety Office (ESO) has tightened the rules around contractor licensing so that all new Qualified Technical Persons (QTP) and Qualified Business Persons (QBP) need to undertake new training courses;
- NECASafe is now on our website, so we can keep it up-to-date for NECASafe members to always access the most current documents;
- The Industry Specialist Mentoring for Australian Apprentices (ISMAA) program is assisting our future electricians by providing them support to boost apprentice completion rates and provide our industry with skilled workers; and
- The new Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act commenced operation. This Act makes significant changes to both claimants' and respondents' rights and obligations in respect of payment claims under construction contracts.

## NECA Group Training

We now have around 150 apprentices in the NECA Group Training Scheme in Queensland. Many of Queensland's major contractors now use NECA GT as their preferred supplier for apprentices.

It is also rewarding to see so many of our former apprentices graduate to become well trained and competent tradespeople.

## Key Industry Events

We injected new life into our showcase NECA Queensland Excellence Awards with a sell-out event.

We also introduced our NECA North Queensland Inaugural Gala Dinner to celebrate the outstanding achievements and contributions of our valued members in North Queensland.

## Advocacy and Community Work

In 2018, we put member views to government in relation to licencing changes, security of payments, apprentice issues, industrial action, electrical safety and WHS.

NECA presented submissions to Parliamentary Committees on legislative proposals relating to workers compensation, and reviews of telecommunications customer cabling.

## Council Members and Sponsors

I would like to thank our Council members for the significant time and effort they dedicate to ensuring the success of NECA and the improvement of the industry. It is also encouraging that we now have two new female regional Councillors.

I would also like to thank our sponsors for their ongoing support that provides valuable assistance to NECA and the industry and supports us in providing a range of enjoyable events.

## The Year Ahead

2018 was a productive year for NECA Queensland, and 2019 looks promising as we continue to grow our membership and expand our services.

NECA Queensland is helping members in current EBA negotiations.

2019 promises to be exciting with the 2019 NECA Conference being held on Hamilton Island, and the NECA National Awards hosted in Brisbane.

**Peter Lamont**
Executive Director

"We now have around 150 apprentices in the NECA Group Training Scheme in Queensland."

## Winner of the Industrial Medium Project Category, 2018 NECA Queensland Excellence Awards.

## And 2018 Commended NECA National Excellence Awards

Nilsen (Qld): Lakeland Solar & Storage Project, Far North Queensland

# New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory Chapters

Oliver Judd,
Executive Director

## Economic and Business Environment

In 2018 we saw the slowest growth rate in four-years for the Sydney property market, which has started to cause concerns related to a general slowdown in the NSW Economy.

While NSW continues to have a strong unemployment rate of 4.4%, spending remains at subdued levels, largely attributed to weak growth in wage rates.

Fortunately for members, the Construction Industry was the largest contributor to growth (6%) in NSW gross state product. An increase in infrastructure expenditure is being credited with the favourable growth results in the last financial year.

The outlook for the Construction Industry for the next financial year remains strong due to continued strength in the infrastructure market, despite falls in new home approvals and housing construction generally.

The ACT economy is also showing signs of growth as a consequence of growing population driving retail growth. The economy has also benefited from growth in International Education expenditure and tourism.

## Advocacy

2018 was a challenging year for our advocacy efforts. Three of the major areas of concern related to the rollout of Smart Meters, the marking of Electrical Cables, and Security of Payment.

Following extensive advocacy by NECA, which included meetings with Hon. Josh Frydenberg, the NSW Department of Fair Trading, the Competitive Metering Industry Group, representatives for the Hon. Don Harwin, NSW Minister for Energy, and the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC); the AEMC has now introduced maximum timeframes for the installation of smart meters.

In relation to Security of Payment, NECA participated in the Federal Government's review of the National Security of Payment Laws, and we were pleased to see several of our suggestions taken forward including.

- A single approach to claims, not the two-tier approach currently in use in Queensland;
- Prohibiting pay-when-paid clauses in construction contracts;
- A period of 10 days for the default payment period; and
- Making it an offence to use coercive or threatening conduct to discourage claims.

We continue to work with the Government to ensure they are implemented, so members are protected and paid on time.

NECA successfully negotiated an extension to new Building Wiring Cable requirements earlier in the year with NSW Fair Trading.

Building Wiring Cable became a declared electrical article in NSW in 2017, required to carry an electrical safety approval mark from 29 January 2018.

NECA members and industry suppliers raised concerns about the practicality and ability to stamp products with the Mark by this date.

Negotiations between NECA and NSW Fair Training reached an agreement to extend the time to 1 July 2018 for suppliers and wholesalers to ensure cable in the marketplace is approved and stamped.

NECA also managed to secure several exemptions for speciality cables including:

- Halogen-free cables;
- Cables with a Fire Rating;
- Supply Flexible Cords;
- Cables where the insulation of the conductors are not individually coloured;
- Cables with a conductor flexibility of Class 5 or greater according to AS/NZS 1125; and
- Cables not captured by the scope of AS/NZS 5000.1 or AS/NZS 5000.2.

## 2018 Highlights

In 2018, we undertook a massive project to modernise NECA's IT infrastructure. We implemented a new CRM, an accounting package, and created a member portal together with a third-party payment collection service. This project was designed to achieve the following:

- Move toward a paperless business;
- Improve the accessibility for members to NECA and its products and services; and
- Safeguard the personal and private information of our members.

The rollout has been completed in NSW, VIC, ACT, TAS with Queensland currently underway.

Our membership numbers have continued to grow across both ACT and NSW. The Wiring Rules Roadshow brought out a large number of contractors, and exposed them to products and services that are a part of NECA membership. The uplift was strong.

The NSW Chapter also positioned itself to become the leading training organisation for Electrotechnology in 2019 and beyond. We purchased and fitted out training facilities in Chullora, NSW and Fyshwick, ACT and will be commencing the training of apprentices in both facilities in 2019.

In the first instance, training will be limited to the employees of our Group Training Schemes, but once established, the intention is to make our training facilities available to the wider market.

NSW members had strong representation at the National Excellence Awards in 2018, taking out a number of coveted prizes.

To all the members of NECA, sponsors and valued stakeholders, the team at NECA thank you for your valued support and we look forward to working with each of you in 2019.

**Oliver Judd**
Executive Director

# Winner of the Industrial Large Project Category, 2018 National Excellence Awards

Wilken Service (NSW): Huntingwood 132kv Substation Yard, Huntingwood, New South Wales.

# Victoria Chapter

"I can comfortably ask teachers questions outside of class as well as discuss aspects of working in the trade."

James Keegan,
Executive Director

## Education and Careers

Our reputation for quality training has seen the number of apprentices and tradespeople choosing to undertake training with us continues to increase in 2018.
During the year we have:

- Lengthened our pre-apprenticeship course to ensure students get more time developing their hand skills, and communication and teamwork skills to make them more "job ready";
- Invested in computerised testing boards to ensure all apprentices are provided with extensive installation testing training during their apprenticeship;
- Expanded the data communications training provided to apprentices to ensure they are eligible for the structured cabling and coaxial endorsements in addition to open registration; and
- Reintroduced the Diploma in Project Management, as well as the Certificate IV in Project Management practice to meet the growing demand for project management skills in the industry.

Another major focus has seen us partner with an organisation called NIRODAH to deliver a series of workshops to all apprentices to increase awareness and understanding of behaviours as well as techniques to build resilience, emotional intelligence, and reduce violence. Our objective is to train tradespeople who are not only technically proficient but are also well-rounded individuals.

## ISMAA

In 2018 we launched the Industry Specific Mentoring for Australian Apprentices (ISMAA). While our apprentices have continued to receive support though NECA Education and Careers, the ISMAA mentors have focused on industry specific issues apprentices are facing.

Strong support and partnerships with TAFE has been reflected by the ISMAA program and NECA being granted access to first and second-year students exclusively at some campuses. Working together has been key, and since launching the program in March, more than 850 apprentices are now participating in the program.

## Tools and Programs

During 2018, the Health & Safety Department undertook a strategic review of its member service offering, and suite of products. Over the next 12 months, an upgraded version of the HSEQ Management System will be rolled out, including a number of seminars and workshops designed to enhance members' knowledge and use of their HSEQ systems.

ElectricianXchange has grown to become a preferred tool used by the industry to hire permanent and full-time employees.

The job board features over 100 industry specific jobs and almost 800 job seekers browsing the site regularly for jobs. Employers, are turning to ElectricianXchange because they are receiving 5-10 applications per job. The labour module helps with temporary placement of staff. Employers have the ability to hire in/out staff depending on their needs.

## Celebrating Excellence

2018 marked the 30th anniversary of the Excellence Awards, to celebrate this momentous occasion, a keepsake 30-year pin and an Excellence Awards memory book showcasing the winners from the last 30 years was given to the 750 industry representatives that attended the event.

- Michael Purnell was awarded Life Member;
- John March & Co Pty Ltd celebrated 100 years of membership at NECA;
- $10,000 was raised towards Electrician with a Mission; and
- 12 Excellence Awards, two Apprentice Awards and six Commendations were handed out on the night.

Four of our VIC Excellence Awards winners were recognised as the best in their category at the National Excellence Awards which took place in November.

- Next Generation Electrical – Lighting;
- Argus Technologies – Domestic Residence;
- Sam Morrow, Malady electrical – Commercial/ Domestic Apprentice Awards of the Year; and
- Andrew Binetti, NECA Education & Careers – Industrial Apprentice of the Year.

## Events

Over 2,500 industry workers joined us across 18 locations at this year's roadshow. NECA took an active role on the committee developing the new AS/NZS3000 Wiring Rules. Working with key industry players, we educated the industry about these changes through a roadshow, seminars, and small-groups sessions.

The increase in calls from members seeking HR advice promoted us to offer seminars on Recruitment, Selection and Managing Employees and Workplace Performance, Conduct, Termination and Redundancy. New topics will be introduced in 2019.

## Thank you

Without the loyalty of our sponsors, we could not offer all the services we do to our members. I would like to thank our NECA Victoria sponsors for their active support and engagement.

I would also like to thank our Council, which remains unchanged going into 2019, for their participation, support and governance – we are grateful for all your support.

To our members, thank you for your support.

**James Keegan**
Executive Director

## Winner of the Domestic Residence Category 2018 NECA National Excellence Awards

Argus Technologies Pty Ltd: Private Residence, Melbourne, Victoria

# Tasmania Chapter

As Tasmania's economy has gone from strength to strength, NECA Tasmania has been working hard to take advantage of these opportunities for contractors.

We continue to take advantage of the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) pathway established by the Tasmanian Government in July 2016. 1000+ electrical workers are participating in this program as they maintain and develop their skills. The State government's commitment to training was amplified by its decision to redevelop the TasTafe Clarence Campus for a Trades and Water Centre of Excellence, something NECA had been calling for.

We continue to be in consultation to improve the CPD scheme and 'Power of Choice' rollout. The latter is a national reform driven by the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC), which has seen TasNetworks no longer being responsible for the installation of new electricity meters, and the installation of advanced meters via a Metering Coordinator and a Metering Provider now being with the retailer.

The Tasmanian budget also saw the extension of 2017's payroll tax concessions for enhanced apprentice take-up that we had also actively campaigned for. These steps will enable a high-quality environment and improve the education on offer for apprentices to develop their skills. This includes, being trained on the latest equipment, which will provide our valued membership with a better trained and higher quality workforce.

Through proactive engagement, NECA has also developed good relationships with government departments and organisations including Consumer, Building and Occupational Services (CBOS), and Tasmania's building and consumer regulator. We are represented on several committees and are often the first 'port of call' for many issues affecting the electrical and communications sector in Tasmania.

2019 is the year the new wiring rules AS/NZS 3000:2018 come into effect. During 2018 NECA representatives attended events and presentations to help CBOS and their technical advisers to explain the impending changes.

Wayne Hobson,
President, NECA Tasmania

Innovation and excellence across the Electrotechnology industry were recognised at NECA Tasmania's Excellence Awards held on 18 August last year. Congratulations to Degree C, Ulverstone who took home two awards: one for their innovative lighting installation for new Phanos Wing at MONA, and one for their retrofitting of the iconic Silos Hotel in Launceston, as joint winners with Stowe Australia, in the Commercial Medium category. Stowe's award came with their fitout in the redevelopment for the Myer and Iron complex in Hobart Central.

I would also like to congratulate RBD Electrical for winning the state awards and their commendations for both Energy Efficiency & Environment, Australia's Largest Floating Solar System and Industrial Medium, Tasports Inspection Head Services at the NECA National Excellence, Apprentice and Trade Teacher Awards 2018.

Lastly, I would like to thank our sponsors who remain instrumental to NECA Tasmania's success, and without whose efforts would not be possible.

**Wayne Hobson**
President, NECA Tasmania

## Winner of the Lighting Project Category, 2018 NECA Tasmania Excellence Awards

Degree C: MONA Pharos, Hobart, Tasmania

# Western Australia Chapter

NECA Western Australia welcomed more than 280 new members in 2018.

Carl Copeland, Chapter Secretary

Electrical Group Training (EGT) inducted 93 new electrical apprentices and produced 126 graduate tradespeople for industry, and the College of Electrical Training (CET) provided training to more than 6,500 people.

It was a significant year for regulation changes with the launch of the new Wiring Rules, the introduction of the Code of Practice for Persons Working on or Near Energised Electrical Installations law, and the associated changes to supervision requirements for electrical apprentices and workers.

In the second half of the year, NECA WA appointed a new Chief Executive Officer, Carl Copeland. Carl was previously the General Manager of CET, and during his six-years in this position, CET became the largest private provider of electrical training in Australia.

## Membership Reaches Record Levels

For the first time in NECA WA's history, membership exceeded 1,400 members. This growth has led to a substantial increase in demand for our technical, legal and safety services.

The services of our Technical team continue to be popular among members, with the Technical Hotline receiving more than 12,000 calls in the past 12 months, in addition to 8,150 searches and 32,500 article views on our Technical Knowledge Base.

NECA Legal WA provided 900 hours of free legal advice to NECA members, and collected more than $300,000 of outstanding payments for members free of charge.

The Safety team launched SafetyPLUS, an innovative platform that allows businesses to automate their safety, legislative compliance and general business requirements. 200 free 'Working Live Packs' were sent to members to assist with adhering to the new working live regulations, and we achieved a retention rate of 90% among our HSEQ clients.

## Advocating on Behalf of Members

NECA WA is continuing to be proactive in its state-based advocacy efforts on behalf of members. In 2018 we lobbied government, regulators and other industry associations on:

- Synergy's entry into the retail solar market;
- Protection of the Electrical Licencing regime;
- Security of Payments;
- Removal of DC isolators from solar installations;
- Changing the requirements for Notices of Competition on large projects;
- Safe Working guidelines for electrical workers and apprentices;
- Changes to the Apprenticeship Supervision Guidelines;
- Equipotential bonding of swimming pools; and
- Effective fire sealing for open framed switchboards.

## Events and Awards

2018 was a fantastic year for member engagement through our industry events.

- 1,500 people attended the 2018 Wiring Rules Roadshow, where 38 sessions were held in 16 locations across the state;
- We held the first annual WA Industry Weekender event in Bunker Bay, providing members with local industry updates and insights; and
- We launched 'Risky Business – the IR & HR seminar series', designed to help members reduce risks in their business and learn about the most common IR and HR practices.
- Congratulations to the WA members who won national awards at the 2018 NECA National Excellence and Apprentice Awards.
- Nilsen WA - winner of the 2018 Commercial Large Project category for Perth Stadium;
- Insight Electrical Technology WA – winner of the 2018 Commercial Small Project category for Perth Concert Hall;
- Downer WA – winner of the 2018 WH&S Management System (Project) for Wheatstone Project LNG Plant; and
- Matthew King - winner of the 2018 Trade Teacher Award, from the College of Electrical Training and the Swan Trade Training Centre.

## EGT – Supporting the WA Workforce

Given the difficult market conditions throughout 2018, we appreciated the support of more than 260 host employers who provided placements and valuable work experience for apprentices in 2018.

EGT is continuing to recruit apprentices based on demand, which is strongly influenced by the WA economy. We are optimistic about the opportunities for 2019, and will be ready to welcome the economic uplift that industry groups are predicting.

## CET – Training the future

CET continues to maintain a dominant position in industry training, with award-winning instructors, and systems and resources that are in demand not only in Australia, but internationally too.

In 2018, CET trained almost half of WA's electrical mechanic apprentices and achieved an apprentice completion rate of 90%, well above the industry average. More than 4,000 students enrolled in CET's expanding range of general and post-trade courses.

We look forward to continuing to support members and the greater industry in 2019 with a strong line up of services, courses and member events in the coming year.

**Carl Copeland**
Chief Executive Officer

# Winner of the Commercial Small Project Category, 2018 NECA National Excellence Awards

Insight Electrical Technology (WA): Perth Concert Hall, Perth WA

# South Australia and Northern Territory Chapters

Larry Moore,
Executive Director

The past year has seen continuous development of initiatives established in 2017, and in particular our associated group training company, NECA Careers and Apprenticeships, which is without doubt one of the most significant projects undertaken by NECA SA/NT for many years and one we firmly believe will provide significant benefits to our members, the NECA SA/NT Chapter and industry more generally. Those benefits include the provision of an adequate supply of well trained, competent tradespeople to meet our industry needs for both now and the future, but also, and possibly more importantly, we now have far greater control on the management of that process to improve the quality and breadth of training available to apprentices and trainees.

Our membership numbers have remained consistent over the last couple of years, and while still at low levels, reflect the continuing low level of project activity particularly in the commercial sector which thankfully, now appears to be showing signs of increased activity. We again remain committed to making membership a major focus of our activities in the coming year by constantly improving our products and services to ensure members get value for money.

We have spent considerable time and resources growing membership in the NT, and while some success has been achieved, the Territory business activity is also extremely slow which does present difficulties in membership growth. Notwithstanding, we have committed to growing membership through greater activities in the territory such as the sponsorship of the electrical projects in the MBA Excellence Awards event and participation in industry partner events with NHP, Clipsal, Hager and Rexel.

The NECA SA/NT Chapter has also been instrumental in the establishment of a new industry sub-contractors association, Specialist Contractors SA (SCSA), as founding members and holding the important positions of Secretary/Public Officer and Treasurer, providing secretarial/financial responsibilities for the organisation. The SCSA, which includes all like trade-based associations in the building and construction industry, has already seen significant change in the responsiveness of government and its relevant departments to submissions made in regard to security of payment and contractual matters where sub-contractors continue to be negatively affected by the reassignment of risk by principal contractors.

The NECA SA/NT Chapter has also taken a lead role in the resolution of a major problem in our industry since the introduction of “Metering Choice” which has caused significant disruption to the electrical connection process in South Australia. The recognition by AEMO and electricity retailers of the major role played by NECA SA/NT in this matter has been rewarding and hopefully duly acknowledged by industry generally.

The year has seen the continuing rise in the work associated with the new training package development system, which is of critical importance to our industry with the Industry Reference Committee (IRC) that has carriage of the development and maintenance of our trade training programs for our sectors.

Our industry representation has included the position of Director of the National Industry Skills Council, Energy Skills Australia (E-Oz), Director of the Australian Refrigeration Council (national licensing regulator for the refrigeration and air conditioning industry), Director of the SA Portable Long Service Leave Board, and Deputy Director of the Construction Industry Training Board, and Chair of the national Industry Reference Committee (IRC) for the Electrotechnology sector.

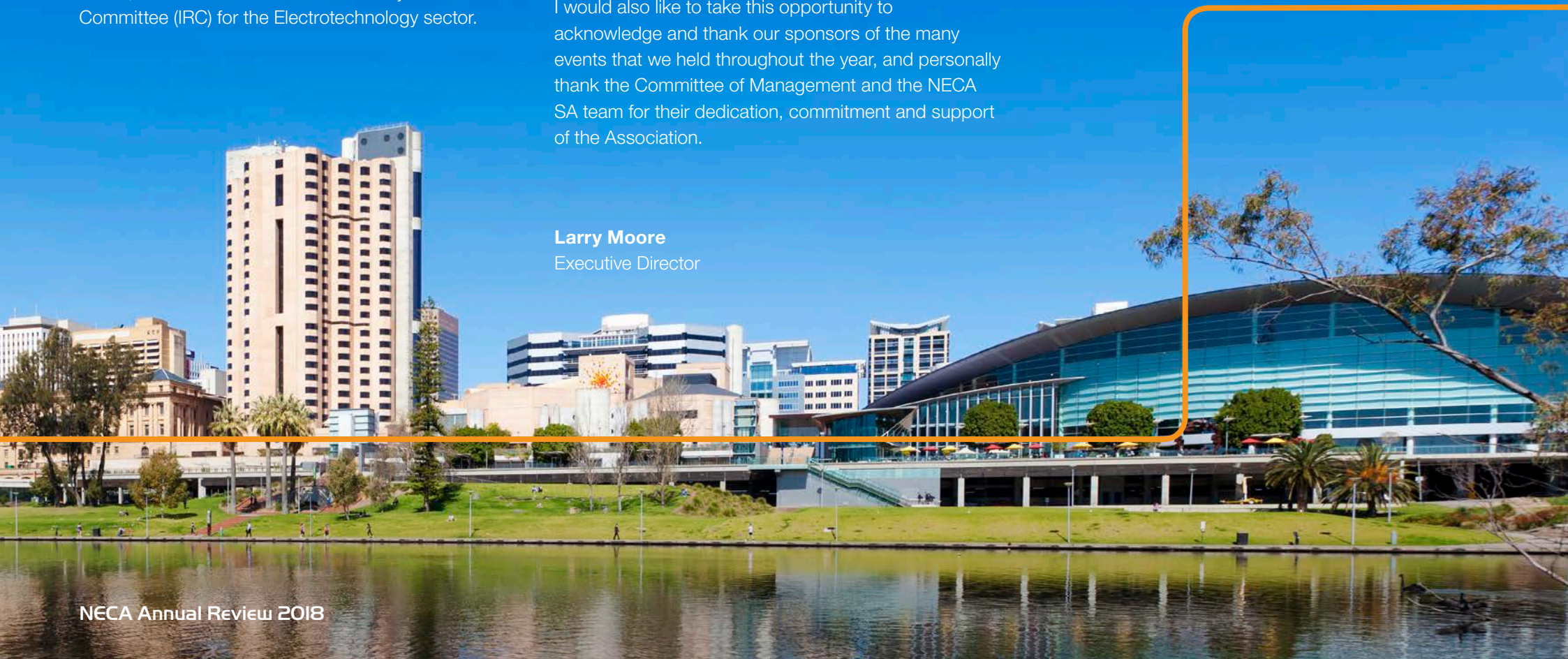
We have also continued to provide representation and advocacy for the electrical and communications sectors with industry stakeholders such as the Office of the Technical Regulator, SA Power Networks, Office of Consumer & Business Affairs, Safework SA, Workcover Corporation, SA Government Small Business Commission, manufacturers and wholesalers.

2018 also saw the delivery of another very successful Industry Roadshow where the NECA SA/NT staff and associated industry partners travelled to all regions of the state providing invaluable information to the industry which continues to be the only source of continuous professional development for our industry in SA.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our sponsors of the many events that we held throughout the year, and personally thank the Committee of Management and the NECA SA team for their dedication, commitment and support of the Association.

**Larry Moore**
Executive Director

"We again remain committed to making membership a major focus..."



## Winner of the Commercial Small Project Category, 2018 NECA South Australia Excellence Awards

Electric Solutions (SA):
The d'Arenberg Cube,
McLaren Vale SA

# ACRS Annual Report 2018

The Australian Cabler Registration Service (ACRS) is Australia's second largest Registrar of Cablers, providing a fast, reliable and affordable service.

Peter Lamont, Director

Installation of any equipment that will be connected to the telecommunications network can only be performed by a technician with a current cabling registration. This includes cabling for monitored security alarms, closed circuit TV, telephone lines, internet connected computers, building automation, and smart home systems.

ACRS is a wholly owned and operated subsidiary of NECA and is licensed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).

ACRS advocates to the Communications Minister, ACMA and the NBN to address any concerns raised by cablers and to ensure that ACMA regulations are effective in ensuring quality without being too restrictive on businesses.

ACRS ensures competency levels are appropriate for registered cablers to guarantee high quality cabling work across Australia and keep its registered cablers up to date through quarterly e-news bulletins on the latest issues in this rapidly changing field of technology.

Recent articles have covered topics such as Updates on Cabling Regulations and Standards, What you should do if you see non-compliant cabling, the Perils of Cheap Power over Ethernet (PoE) cables; a Guide for electricians wanting to do get their Cabling Registration, and Good practice guides to fire resistance.

## 2018 Highlights

Our registrations are now almost 26,000 across Australia giving ACRS a strong footprint in the industry.

- ACRS provided a submission to the ACMA review of telecommunications customer cabling, which encouraged ACMA to strengthen its regulatory controls and to ensure the communication industry remains strong and viable;
- ACRS has adapted well to the new ACMA competence requirements associated with these registrations in the lead up to the roll out of the NBN, which is one of the biggest publicly funded infrastructure projects Australia has ever seen;
- ACRS Cablers can register to be on this site, so consumers can find them when connecting their premises to the internet. This site has been picked up by the NBN Co. website as a referral for their customers too;
- ACRS also participated in Integrate 2018 in Sydney which brought together world-renowned industry speakers, networking events, education programs and global product launches; and
- ACRS is one of the leading Registrars of cablers in Australia, and being part of NECA we have a strong understanding of industry issues, along with the influence to ensure our members' voices are heard.

**Peter Lamont**
Director

ACRS
MASTER CABLER

## Cabling Registration run by the industry, for the industry

**The Australian Cabler Registration Service (ACRS) provides a fast, reliable and low-cost registration service for the electrical and communications industry.**

Peace of mind costs less than 60c a week! Register with ACRS and reap the benefits of being with the only Australian electrical specialist registry while avoiding a hefty fine.

It is illegal for anyone other than a registered cabler to install or maintain cabling that connects to the telecommunications network. So if you are installing any equipment that will connect to the network – from smart home systems to extra phone lines – you need a current cabling registration.

Carrying a current cabling registration card confirms you have completed the relevant training and gained the professional experience to complete the work to the customer's expectations.

## Why choose ACRS?

- Fast, reliable personalised advice and service from our expert staff
- Quarterly updates providing the latest cabling news, industry issues and training information
- Comprehensive website www.acrs.com.au with directory of training organisations and Cabler Quick Search
- Range of registration and renewal options – online, in person, email, mail or fax
- Wholly owned subsidiary of NECA – the peak industry body for electrical contractors
- Licenced by Australian Communications & Media Authority.

## Cabler registration fees – why pay more?

| | 1 year | 3 years |
|---|---|---|
| **ACRS Cabler Registration Service** | **$35.00** | **$88.00** |
| ASIAL | N/A | $91.00 |
| BICSI Registered Cablers Australia | $38.50 | $88.00 |
| FPA Australia | N/A | $87.50 |
| TITAB | $42.00 | $94.00 |

## Register with ACRS now

Call ACRS registration service on 1300 667 771 or visit www.acrs.com.au

# Member Benefits

NECA members have access to a great range of national and state benefits including advice, education, discounts and networking opportunities.

## Education and training

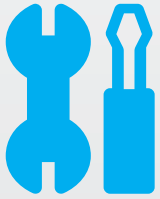
A range of technical and business courses ranging from legislation and policy changes through to human resources and marketing help you manage your business, keep your skills-up-to-date and increase your competitiveness.

NECA also trains and employs around 4,800 apprentices across Australia with the majority having the opportunity to gain on-the-job experience with NECA members.

## Advocacy and representation

NECA is the voice of the Electrotechnology industry in Australia, lobbying governments, regulators and industry bodies on our members' behalf.

Through our bi-annual *Market Monitor* survey we find out the issues and concerns that are top of mind for you, and can then develop policy recommendations and lobby the relevant parties to improve conditions across the sector.



## Tools and resources

NECA's Technical Knowledge Base (TKB) is an online searchable database of Australian Standards, Guidelines, Service and Installation Rules, codes of practice, legislation, changes, alerts and updates. A forum lets you ask questions and share your knowledge. Each state has a TKB with accurate, up-to-date information to help improve members' productivity, safety and accuracy.

Your NECA state office can also provide templates, standard contracts etc. to help you manage your business administration.

## Customised advice

As well as our Electrotechnology experts who can help with your technical questions, NECA has a number of experts who can provide you with specific advice on legal matters, industrial relations, human resources and Workplace Health and Safety queries.

## Events and Networking

NECA's annual National Excellence Awards and National Conference bring together members from across Australia, providing an opportunity to hear about the latest industry trends, develop your business skills and celebrate the achievements of your peers in a relaxed, friendly environment.

Local state events such as business lunches, race-days and golf days are a great way to meet other members in your state.

## Member discounts and services

Being an industry association representing thousands of members, we can negotiate discounts and offers on products and services that support your business. National benefits, available to all members, include discounts on fleet vehicles, vehicle servicing, reduced rates on health insurance and telecommunication, and a quarterly *Electrical Connections* magazine.

Each NECA State Office provides a different package of discounts and benefits including Fuel Cards, Trade Services and PPE. Visit the NECA website (www.neca.asn.au) or contact your state chapter to find out what's available in your state.

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