

## New mentoring program to assist Licensed Electrical Inspectors navigate complexities of solar inspections

NECA Victoria is delighted to collaborate with Solar Victoria in delivering a new onsite training and mentoring program for Licensed Electrical Inspectors (LEIs) working in the solar space.

NECA has seen first-hand the challenges that many LEIs experience on electrical solar installation jobs and has been advocating on behalf of the solar industry and LEIs to receive more support in overcoming these challenges.

NECA is passionate about supporting the industry and is pleased that after 12 months of consultation with the Government, this pilot program has been given the green light to commence. The pilot program is part of the Victorian Government's \$11 million investment in training and will include specific training resources to develop, upskill and support the LEI sector, and increase the number of inspectors.

The purpose of this program is to educate and support LEIs in developing new skillsets. It will be suited to both new and existing inspectors that may wish to upskill and advance their knowledgebase within the renewable sector.

NECA Victoria is fortunate in having Technical Managers who are Licensed Electrical Inspectors themselves and have vast experience, reputation, skills, and knowledge in the solar and renewable space. The pilot will see them work with 35 Licensed Electrical Inspectors to share this experience and knowledge.

*"It is great to see such constructive collaboration between Government and NECA. Continual professional training is important to not only evolve skillsets around new technologies, put LEIs taking part in this program ahead of the pack, but will also give them the confidence that they are doing their job well. This is a great outcome, not just for the solar sector, but the entire electrical industry",* **Pawel Podolski, Executive Director of NECA Victoria** said.

Focusing on safety and compliance through this program will lift standards across the industry, benefitting all Victorian workers and householders. The Solar Homes Program was designed with safety in mind – only accredited, approved retailers and products can be used in any Solar Homes installation, installers undertake mandatory training, and an independent inspector signs off on the safety of all systems. Victoria is the only state to require this.

Ensuring inspectors have the knowledge and skills they need to work in the renewable space will increase the number of inspectors available to sign-off on solar installations, shorten inspection wait times and ensure the highest levels of safety is maintained.

**Solar Victoria CEO, Stan Krpan** summed up what the program is set to achieve, saying: *"Supporting professional development in the Licensed Electrical Inspector industry will help improve the timeliness of independent electrical inspections, and allow households who have installed solar to gain their Certificate of Electrical Safety sooner."*

*"It will not only create new jobs in the industry but continue to lift standards and quality by investing in skills and qualifications for the increasingly technical nature of solar and new energy technologies."*

The pilot program will commence in October running until available slots are used up on a 'first-come, first-served basis', with the view to expand the program's reach to more LEIs based on the benefits measured.

There are 35 spots available during the pilot, and with that in mind, we encourage all LEIs to seriously consider taking up this program and act quickly, so as not to miss out.