

# **NSW Budget 2017/18: Pre-budget submission**

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## About NECA

The National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) is the peak industry body for Australia's electrical and communications contracting industry, which employs more than 145,000 workers and delivers an annual turnover in excess of \$23 billion. We represent approximately 4,000 electrical contracting businesses across Australia.

NECA represents the electrical and communications contracting industry across all states and territories. As a result of NECA's bi-annual industry survey, we are aware that NSW is the chosen headquartered state for many of the larger electrical contractors, making NSW issues critical for our members and the industry at large.

NECA aims to help our members and the wider industry to operate and manage their business more effectively and efficiently. To this end, NECA NSW owns and operates a Group Training Organisation, Registered Training Organisation, and its own Law Firm which all provide valued and industry focussed services to our members.

NECA represents members' interests to Federal and State Governments, regulators and principal industry bodies such as the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and Standards Australia.

## Foreword

This submission highlights the main issues that NECA considers that the NSW Government should address in formulating the 2017/18 Budget.

We believe that in the forthcoming Budget, the NSW Government can and should take concrete action to lift the burden on the electrical contracting sector, including in respect of:

- Addressing the significant dangers posed by non-conforming products;
- Establishment of a new centre for the training of electrical apprentices in Western Sydney;
- Vocational Education and Training – industry skills sets and the mentoring of apprentices;
- School and entry requirements – pre-apprenticeships and minimum mathematics skills;
- Taxation – incentives for employers to take on apprentices and payroll tax;
- Enhancing energy efficiency and safety – Home Safety Electrical Audits and Home Energy Audits; and
- Additional resourcing for the enforcement of Security of Payment laws.

These measures will greatly assist in relation to the NSW government's provision of infrastructure.

We thank the NSW Government for the opportunity to participate in this consultation as part of the 2017/18 Budget process. Should you wish to discuss further, I can be contacted on ph: 02 9439 8523 or email: [suresh.manickam@neca.asn.au](mailto:suresh.manickam@neca.asn.au)

**Yours faithfully**



**Suresh Manickam**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## **Non-conforming products**

NECA strongly calls for action to assist in the stamping out of non-compliant electrical parts and product sales that fail to meet Australian Standards. The professional reputation of our industry is compromised through the weakening of safety standards, property damage and the potential endangerment of human life when non-compliant products remain on sale.

NECA therefore calls upon the NSW Government to increase its commitment and resources to ensure a larger number of product random batch tests are carried out. This action would assist with the delivery of higher quality electrical products for consumers.

## **Dangers of non-conforming products**

The trade in counterfeit and non-conforming products poses a clear threat to the viability of Australia's electrical contracting sector. This threat manifests itself as follows:

- The risk of electrical fire and shocks;
- The potential of death or serious injury to installers and the public;
- Property damage and rectification;
- Legal liability issues;
- Expenses relating to the provision of replacement products;
- Insufficient insurance products and resultant premium increases;
- Industry brand and / or reputational damage;
- Cost to businesses operating with the supply chain of the electrical sector; and
- Consumer confidence.

## **Examples of recent product failures**

Recent product failures such as Infinity, Olsent Cables and E-Cables, coupled with the tragic death of a woman on the New South Wales Central Coast in 2014 following

electrocution from a non-compliant USB charger, have amplified our concerns. Further, the problem has deteriorated to such an extent that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is now actively involved with and monitoring product recalls.

These product failures have not just been limited to the Infinity and Olsent incidents. In recent times there have been a range of other examples where product failure and / or administration failure has led to regulatory intervention, these include:

- Federal Government Pink Batts Home Insulation;
- Mr Fluffy Asbestos (particularly in the ACT but also affecting NSW);
- Avanco DC Isolators; and
- Faulty USB charger causing electrocution.

### **Costs associated with product failures**

The recall of Infinity and Olsent branded electrical cables installed in houses and buildings across Australia between 2010 and 2013 was initially expected to cost businesses around \$80 million. However, more recently released estimates from the ACCC have revised this figure to approximately \$100 million. Further, approximately 20,000 properties are said to have been installed with Infinity and Olsent branded cables, according to the ACCC.<sup>1</sup>

### **Australian Senate Economics References Committee inquiry into non-conforming building products**

Due to the dangers above, NECA has joined with a range of leading building and construction industry peak bodies to call for more government funding and enforcement in relation to non-compliant building products, as part of the current

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<sup>1</sup> John Rolfe, Infinity cable recall too slow, ACCC fears only fires will stir consumers into action, *Daily Telegraph*, 26 March 2015: <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/infinity-cable-recall-too-slow-acc-cfears-only-fires-will-stir-consumers-into-action/story-fnlrw4is-1227278718234>

Australian Senate Economics References Committee inquiry into non-conforming building products.

This inquiry is now due to report by 25 May 2017.

### **Does it Comply? Campaign**

In 2013, NECA in conjunction with Voltimum, one of the world's leading electrical industry information portal and Standards Australia, developed and instigated the [Does it Comply?](#) Campaign. This campaign focuses on the removal of unsafe and non-compliant products across the electrical sector. As part of the campaign, NECA and Voltimum conducted an industry survey to gain an understanding of the seriousness of the issue of non-compliant product and attitudes across the industry and towards this problem. The survey results indicated that fully over 75% of respondents had seen the installation or sale of non-conforming electrical product in the Australian market.

[Does it Comply?](#) enabled the creation of the Electrical Industry Charter, an alliance of major industry partners who are committed to selling and using only genuine and compliant products.

Given the size and significance of the building and construction sector in NSW and around Australia, it is critical that safeguards are in place to ensure that damages do not flow to industry or consumers as a result of non-complaint building products.

### **Need for greater government enforcement**

A key concern for the electrical contracting sector is the lack of government enforcement, at all levels, of those businesses importing non-compliant products. This is further compounded by the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the current product batch-testing regime that seeks to ensure that Standards are adhered to.

With respect to the above, NECA believes that the NSW Government should regularly and vigorously undertake random product auditing as well as non-compliant product enforcement.

**NECA therefore calls upon the NSW Government in the 2017/18 Budget to increase its commitment and resources to:**

- **Ensuring a larger number of product random batch tests are carried out;**
- **Ensuring that a greater number of audits are carried out in relation to sellers of electrical products to verify their authenticity; and**
- **Ensuring that there is great enforcement surrounding the sale and distribution of non-compliant building products.**



## **Establishment of a new centre for the training of electro-technology apprentices in Western Sydney**

NECA advocates that in the 2017/18 Budget the NSW Government should support and incentivise the establishment of a new centre for the training of electro-technology apprentices in Western Sydney.

NECA believes that we need to start planning now for the training of more electrical apprentices in NSW, in order to meet the future requirements of industry.

NSW is currently experiencing a welcome period of robust growth, bolstered by a healthy building and construction sector. However, the State's continued economic good fortune relies on having a workforce with the necessary skills.

There is a pressing need to commence preparations for the training of more electrical apprentices in NSW, in order to meet the future requirements of industry.

Over the last decade Ausgrid, Endeavour, Essential, Sydney Trains, Telstra and QANTAS have all ceased or dramatically reduced their provision of training and apprenticeships in NSW.

Ausgrid and Endeavour Energy have now ceased training new apprentices for the electricity supply industry, with no further enrolments since 2014. Ausgrid has already confirmed they will also not recruit apprentices in 2017. This will result in Ausgrid not having apprentices in any stage of learning whatsoever.

The Ausgrid Learning Centre, located at Silverwater, possibly the most outstanding vocational training facility in Australia, is now hardly used at all for training, the purpose it was originally designed for. Indeed, some of the Ausgrid Learning Centre's specialist training facilities have already been re-modelled to make way for storage and functions from other parts of the business are slated to move in to the purpose-built classrooms.

Prior to 2014, the Ausgrid Learning Centre was used to train all of Ausgrid and Endeavour Energy's electrical supply industry apprentices, covering the Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong areas.

Irrespective of the future ownership of the distribution network, there is an ongoing need to train and re-train new and current workers in the electricity supply industry.

NECA has the capability and desire to train these workers. We already currently employ and train over 400 electrical apprentices in NSW.

Unfortunately, NECA's ability to provide further quality training to additional apprentices is currently hamstrung, as a result of lack of access to appropriate training and network facilities.

The establishment of a new centre for the training of electrical apprentices in Western Sydney is also ideally aligned with the government's objectives in respect of improving apprentice completion rates, infrastructure provision and the economic development of Western Sydney.

### **Potential for skills shortages to worsen**

Failure to plan now for the State's future requirements for electro-technology workers may have significant negative ramifications in future years, including worsening of skills shortages leading to increased construction costs, thus reducing NSW's competitiveness and attractiveness for major projects.

After the current adjustment driven by the regulatory determination, NECA estimates that there will be, on average, 200 new workers needing to be trained each year to maintain the workforce required in the electricity supply industry alone.

Electricity supply industry workers are not being trained by any of NSW's three distributors. Vital skills are therefore being eroded over time in this sub-sector of the

industry. NECA is willing and able to train these workers and currently employs and train a number of apprentices within this field.

Our apprentices hold the key to NSW's ability to build and maintain crucial infrastructure. With further skills shortages in trade areas anticipated, including in the electrical contracting sector, we need to act now to recruit the future trade workforce and train them in the skills we know will be needed.

According to the Commonwealth Department of Employment's *Skills Shortage List 2015, NSW* in relation to Electro-technology and Telecommunications Trades Workers:

*"Shortages are evident in Sydney in a number of sectors including commercial fit-outs and industrial maintenance."*<sup>2</sup>

According to the *Greater Western Sydney Skills Audit*, a survey of businesses in Western Sydney conducted in mid-2015, technical skills are in short supply in the Greater Western Sydney area, with almost half of businesses (48 per cent) experiencing a technical shortage of skills.

This shortage is anticipated to rise to 68 per cent of businesses in the future.

Electro-technology is among those sectors listed by the skills audit as currently experiencing the most severe shortages.<sup>3</sup>

Ultimately the beneficiaries of additional training of electrical apprentices would be the consumers of New South Wales.

The fact that the NSW Budget has a surplus of \$3.7 billion forecast for 2016/17 is a positive.

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<sup>2</sup> Skill Shortage List, New South Wales, Department of Employment. List reflects research undertaken to 31 December 2015

([https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/skillshortagelistnsw\\_4.pdf](https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/skillshortagelistnsw_4.pdf))

<sup>3</sup> TAFE Western Sydney and the Western Sydney Business Connection, *Greater Western Sydney Skills Audit*, p.17 (<http://wsi.tafensw.edu.au/resource/file/17432/1509002-tafe-barometer-booklet-20151005-web.pdf>)

Similarly, the record \$73.3 billion for critical infrastructure provided over the next four years will significantly benefit both NSW and the electrical contracting sector, given the boost to construction involved.

The long-term lease of TransGrid, resulting in net proceeds of \$6.6 billion, has contributed to these outcomes.

The partial long-term lease of Ausgrid and Endeavour will further enhance NSW's budgetary position and provide scope for future investment opportunities. The sale of these three assets in total is expected to contribute more than \$20 billion to the NSW Budget.

In this context, NECA believes that the NSW government should, going forward, re-invest some of these proceeds back into the electricity supply industry in the form of providing support to industry for apprenticeship training.

### **Reduced capability of TAFE to train electrical apprentices**

Significant changes are also underway for TAFE NSW, including property consolidation, a growing need for new investment in facilities and a reduction in funding translating to fewer teaching hours and a reduction in quality.

NSW's future workers need to be recruited and trained and in the absence of other options, the burden will continue to fall on the NSW Government.

### **Greater industry responsibility for training**

NECA believes that a commitment from the NSW government to support the private training provider expansion of the training of apprentices would adjust the balance towards greater industry responsibility for current and future training, reduce recurrent spending and improve the responsiveness and capability of the vocational training sector.

This further demonstrates the need for skills formation in the Western Sydney region given the demands of the construction sector.

Over the next 20 years, the population of Western Sydney is expected to reach three million people, comprising half of Sydney's total population of an anticipated six million by 2036. Western Sydney is already Australia's third-largest economy. Planning for the skills of the future must commence now.

We consider that this represents an excellent opportunity to secure the future of electrical trades in NSW.

**NECA advocates that in the 2017/18 Budget the NSW Government should support and incentivise the establishment of a new centre for the training of electro-technology apprentices in Western Sydney.**

## Vocational Education and Training

### Industry skills sets

The NSW Government in the 2017/18 Budget should allocate funds for the training of industry supported 'skill sets', particularly at post-trade levels. This responds to the overall drop-off in formal training undertaken by workers in the industry and their preference for shorter training times.

NECA's employee survey shows that many post-apprentices spend less than one hour a month on training and professional development at their own initiative. Consideration should be given to a core set of competencies that reflect environmental requirements for the industry and consumers.

Electro-technology is undergoing significant change, making it essential that we ensure that apprentices are endowed with the requisite skills, and that existing workers have the opportunity to re-skill.

Already, electric car manufacturer Tesla has rolled out charging stations in Australia, including charging stations in Goulbourn and Wodonga, the first stations outside of Sydney and Melbourne.

Electric vehicles (EVs) reduce dependence on petroleum and tap into a source of electricity that is often domestic and relatively inexpensive. Equally significant, EVs have the potential to unlock innovation and create new advanced industries that spur job growth and enhance economic prosperity.

In the long-term, EVs will be important in de-carbonising the transport sector.

The uptake of EVs and the resulting need for charging stations is anticipated to rise exponentially, driven by factors such as:

- Falling battery costs;

- More efficient vehicles with greater range, for example the Tesla Model S has a range in excess of 500 km; and
- Government purchasing in respect of fleet acquisitions.

According to Navigant Research, the global light duty EV market is expected to grow significantly, from 2.7 million vehicle sales in 2014 to 6.4 million in 2023, or 2.4 per cent of total worldwide light-duty vehicle sales by 2023, under a base scenario.<sup>4</sup>

Plug-in versions of Audi (A4), Mercedes (C-class) and BMW (3 series) models are being developed by these manufacturers for release over the next few years.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, electrical workers must develop skills and keep abreast of developments in respect of:

- Smart meters – the roll-out of smart meters has now occurred in NSW;
- Solar rooftop and battery systems for household use; and
- Anticipated future advances in relation to smart grids, enabling consumers' devices to trade electricity based on their preferences with other devices connected to a network.

**The NSW Government in the 2017/18 Budget should allocate funds for the training of industry supported 'skill sets', particularly at post-trade levels.**

### **Mentoring of apprentices**

NECA Training's high completion rates at over 80 per cent (against an industry level of 50 to 60 per cent) demonstrate the merits of the mentoring of apprentices.

Mentoring allows the proactive management of the individual apprentice's development, including in respect of:

- OH&S awareness and compliance;

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<sup>4</sup> Navigant Research, *Electric Vehicle Market Forecasts, Global Forecasts for Light Duty Hybrid, Plug-In Hybrid, and Battery Electric Vehicle Sales and Vehicles in Use: 2014-2023*, 2014

<sup>5</sup> Michael Taylor, Car & Driver, *2016 BMW 328e Plug-In Hybrid*, January 2015

- Profiling monitoring;
- Managing personal issues and discipline where necessary;
- Work exposure;
- Review PPE (personal protective equipment);
- Review toolkits; and
- Monitor and discuss trade school work.

According to a Deloitte study commissioned by the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training, the cost of non-completions in NSW for 2010 alone was \$348 million. The Deloitte study also estimated that the cost to the NSW government of non-completion amounted to \$4,100 per apprentice per annum. This did not include costs to the Commonwealth government, to employers and to the broader economy in terms of lost productivity and other multiplier effects<sup>6</sup>.

This implies that there is significant scope to save the ACT government valuable training funds by raising overall completion rates through measures including the mentoring of apprentices.

**The NSW Government in the 2017/18 Budget should allocate funds for the mentoring of electro-technology apprentices in order to help ensure high quality completion rates of apprentices.**

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<sup>6</sup> Deloitte Access Economics, commissioned by the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training, *The cost of apprenticeship non-completion in NSW*, 25 August 2011



## School and entry requirements

School-based apprenticeships are important pathways for students and are a good source of apprenticeship applications for the industry and provide a way to screen potential applicants.

Some of these courses, however, are too institutionally-based and do not always lead to good vocational outcomes. This issue will become increasingly important as employment opportunities within the industry slow.

NECA therefore considers that there is a need to reform the approach to pre-apprenticeships.

They should be encouraged where they meet employer and student needs, particularly where there is flexible timetabling. In some cases, it may be sufficient to use this option for Year 11 students to bridge the gap in academic learning required in off-the-job training. Employers have only limited understanding of this option and its ability to supplement labour when off-the-job training is being undertaken by full-time apprentices. Attainment of acceptable minimum mathematics skills (at least to sound Year 10 level) is an on-going problem with young applicants.

**In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should therefore allocate funding for:**

- **Flexible timetabling for pre-apprenticeships; and**
- **The development of practical maths lessons in schools for trade-training aspirants, with involvement of relevant partners in the education systems (including the Australian Association of Maths Teachers).**

## Taxation

### Incentives for apprentices

The NSW Government should consider introducing tax incentives for employers to take on apprentices, particularly for small contractors who form the basis of the electrical industry.

Mature age apprentices are very productive within the workforce and bring enhanced knowledge, maturity, wisdom and experience to businesses within the electrical sector. However from an employer perspective, mature age apprentices are often priced out of the marketplace given the cost of hire.

NECA therefore advocates that the NSW Government provides an employer wage subsidy to employers who choose to employ mature age/adult apprentices. This subsidy should match the differential between the hourly rate of a junior apprentice and adult apprentice across each stage year of the apprenticeship, helping to promote reskilling and cross skilling to take greater advantage of the benefits that mature workers could offer industry.

### Reduce payroll tax

Payroll tax is essentially a tax on the employing of Australians and a disincentive to grow small and medium enterprises. Each state and territory maintains separate tax and threshold limits creating further confusion and complexity for national businesses.

Reducing the rate of payroll tax would make NSW more attractive as a destination for investment.

**In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:**

- **Consider introducing tax incentives for employers to take on apprentices;**
- **Provide an employer wage subsidy to employers who choose to employ mature age/adult apprentices; and**

- **Reduce payroll tax.**

## Enhancing energy efficiency and safety

### Home Safety Electrical Audits (HSEA)

Electrical safety and product compliance awareness is a key component of NECA's policy framework, particularly as there are potential risks associated with property damage caused by faulty or aging electrical wiring and componentry. In the context of the 2017/18 NSW Budget, we wish to highlight NECA's key policy area of mandatory HSEAs as a focus for your Government over the next few years.

NECA notes that the majority of Australia's residential housing stock is ageing and NSW is no exception. NECA believes that the ageing stock serious challenges to incoming home owners or renters, whereby existing electrical wiring including associated equipment may be:

- Compliant with previous versions of the Australian Building Code (ABC);
- Not compliant with the current standards as set out in the ABC; and
- Degrading and/or deteriorating such that remedial action is either immediately or imminently required.

Whilst home electrical safety checks are encouraged, but not enforced in NSW, NECA believes that it is critical that all new home occupants are made fully aware of any wiring or electrical safety issues upon the sale and purchase of a property with the same approach applying prior to the commencement of any new rental arrangement.

We argue that such a proposition, whilst adding an additional cost for new home occupants, is a quick and inexpensive way and provide the consumer with a list of safety issues, remedies and costs, thereby enabling occupants to budget for remedies of their residence in an appropriate manner. Further, NECA argues that the consumer benefits greatly outweigh any costs, through:

- Identifying safety deficiencies and recommending safety remedies; and
- Identifying energy efficiency deficiencies and recommending energy efficient options.

Additionally, both the people of NSW and the NSW Government will benefit through:

- A gradual identification and uplift of the wiring and safety standards of the existing housing stock to the Australian Building Code standards;
- A gradual identification and uplift of the energy efficiency of NSW's housing stock; and
- Added stimulus to the NSW economy.

By definition, the identification and remediation of the above, gradually reduces any electrical risk to property or person.

### **Home Safety Electrical Audits – Pilot**

In the context of piloting a HSEA, NECA proposes that the pilot might work in the following way:

- That such a pilot scheme might be voluntary at first and could be trialled in a high density residential area. If successful, the scheme could then be mandated and adopted throughout NSW;
- Consumers would be encouraged by Land and Property Information (LPI) to undertake an HSEA prior to the transfer of title;
- The NSW Government would fund up to 300 HESAs (capped at \$450 inclusive of GST), thereby no consumer would be out of pocket;
- NECA NSW would be able to provide the NSW Government with a list of electrical contractors who are willing and able to undertake HESAs; and
- At the conclusion of the 300 HSEAs, the NSW Government would then collate and analyse the data, thereby assessing the success and possible mandating of such a scheme for state-wide adoption.

### **Home Energy Audits**

Additionally, NECA proposes that the NSW Government encourage property owners to undertake voluntary Home Energy Audits. Home Energy Audits should occur at the point of sale or any new rental arrangement. Such a proposition would be both quick

and inexpensive and would provide the consumer with options as to how best a consumer may plan to reduce their energy bill and carbon footprint.

**In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:**

- **Commit to a pilot of Home Safety Electrical Audits; and**
- **Encourage property owners to undertake voluntary Home Energy Audits.**

## Security of payment

Security of payment for electrical contractors is a key issue for NECA members.

Electrical contractors are often the last in the line of credit to receive payment for work completed, in the event of a construction firm facing financial difficulties. Moreover, in cases where the company falls into receivership, electrical contractors often do not receive payment at all.

Electrical contractors arguably provide the highest value inputs of all subcontractors by way of fixtures, fittings and labour. They are therefore the most vulnerable with respect to payments in the event of receivership. In other words, electrical contractors are at a greater potential disadvantage than any other sub-contractor.

Of critical concern to NECA is that the majority of electrical contractors are small-to medium-enterprises (SMEs) – small family owned and run businesses – who are particularly susceptible to cash flow issues.

In the 2017/18 budget, it is therefore essential that NSW Fair Trading receives additional resources for the proactive monitoring, investigation and, where necessary, prosecution of unlawful behaviour in respect of security of payment laws.

Additionally, NECA's key priorities in relation to the current review of the *Building and Construction Industry Security of Payment Act 1999* include:

- The default payment date of 10 business days should be re-instated, with a maximum date of 30 days;
- The time limit for making claims in respect of claims for the return of retention monies, bank guarantees and performance bonds should be extended to beyond the 12 month limitation period;
- NECA strongly advocates that payment claims should not be able to be made both up and down the contracting chain;
- The requirement for a payment claims to state that it is made under the Act should be reinstated;
- Mediation should not be introduced for disputes under the Act;

- The deadline for providing payment schedules for more complex claims should not be extended;
- The retention trust account requirements should be extended to cover the entire contract chain, including those contracts valued below the current \$20 million threshold, alternatively and preferably legislation for the use of deemed trusts for retention monies should be introduced; and
- NECA does not support the introduction of different processes for different sized claims.

Further information on NECA's positions in relation to Security of Payment may be found in our detailed [submission](#) to the NSW Fair Trading consultation on the *Building and Construction Industry Security of Payment Act 1999*.



## Summary

### Non-conforming products

In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:

- Ensure a larger number of product random batch tests are carried out;
- Ensure that a greater number of audits are carried out in relation to sellers of electrical products to verify their authenticity; and
- Ensure that there is great enforcement surrounding the sale and distribution of non-compliant building products.

### Establishment of a new centre for the training of electro-technology apprentices in Western Sydney

In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:

- Support and incentivise the establishment of a new centre for the training of electro-technology apprentices in Western Sydney.

### Vocational Education and Training

In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:

- Allocate funds for the training of industry supported 'skill sets', particularly at post-trade levels; and
- Allocate funds for the mentoring of electro-technology apprentices in order to ensure high quality completion rates of apprentices.

### School and entry requirements

In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:

- Allocate funding for flexible timetabling for pre-apprenticeships; and
- Allocate funding for the development of practical maths lessons in schools for trade-training aspirants, with involvement of relevant partners in the education systems (including the Australian Association of Maths Teachers).

### Taxation

In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:

- Consider introducing tax incentives for employers to take on apprentices;

- **Provide an employer wage subsidy to employers who choose to employ mature age/adult apprentices; and**
- **Reduce payroll tax.**

### **Enhancing energy efficiency and safety**

**In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:**

- **Commit to a pilot of Home Safety Electrical Audits; and**
- **Encourage property owners to undertake voluntary Home Energy Audits.**

### **Security of payment**

**In the 2017/18 Budget, the NSW Government should:**

- **Provide NSW Fair Trading with additional resources for the proactive monitoring, investigation and, where necessary, prosecution of unlawful behaviour in respect of security of payment laws.**