

A word from the CEO NECA - Your voice in the industry

We all know how dangerous electricity can be, so it's reassuring to see there has been a general decline in all work-related fatalities over the past few years with the 2016 fatality rate in Australia the lowest in 14 years (2003-2016). Contact with electricity was responsible for 11% of fatalities between 2007 and 2016, behind vehicle collisions (57%) and being hit with falling objects (13%).

Of course, every fatality or injury is one too many. In the first few months of 2018, the electrotechnology sector has seen one licensed electrical worker die while working near live parts in Victoria, and an 11-year-old girl electrocuted through a garden tap in WA. The cost to families of these tragedies is far too high.

Businesses also have a high price to pay with a small business owner in Queensland being fined \$35,000 when

two of his workers suffered major injuries when their metal picking pole made contact with a Single Wire Earth Return (SWER) power line, and a construction company in NSW being fined a record \$1m for a worker electrocuted and set on fire when he touched high voltage power lines with a window angle.

Please, make sure you follow all the relevant safety procedures, wear the correct PPE and look out for your workmates so everyone gets home safely to their family and friends at the end of each work day.

Unfortunately, the nature of electrical work means dangers are often intrinsic to a property – damaged wiring, non-compliant parts, no safety switches and renovations or additions compromising the quality of the building. These are all too common, particularly in ageing properties.



Suresh Manickam
CEO, National Electrical and Communications Association



NECA Excellence Awards 2018

Nominations are opening for the Chapter Excellence and Apprentice Awards 2018, recognising excellence and achievement across the sector. If you've got a project or an individual who you believe demonstrates outstanding commitment, innovation and professionalism, make sure you visit www.neca.asn.au and complete the online entry form.

NECA National Conference

Our National Conference is a fantastic occasion for you to get away from the day-to-day demands of running your business, to hear about the latest industry trends and network with your peers. The conference will build on our 2016 conference in South Africa and our 2017 conference in Port Douglas and if they're anything to go by, it will be a fantastic experience.

I look forward to catching up with you at one of our NECA events.

Electrical Safety and Energy Audits

To raise the overall levels of safety in buildings across Australia and to address these hidden dangers, NECA has recommended a mandatory electrical safety audit be introduced. We believe a safety audit, conducted at the point of sale or at the time of taking out or renewing a lease, would significantly improve safety for both contractors and consumers.

The audit is a quick and inexpensive process and could be combined with a Home Energy Audit, providing the new owners or tenants with a list of safety issues, remedies and costs along with options on how to reduce their energy bill and carbon footprint.

NECA will continue to advocate our policy to government safety and energy audits become mandatory.

NECA's prestigious
Excellence and Apprentice Awards
are now open for nominations



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2018**

Contact your state office or visit
www.neca.asn.au for more details

A helping hand for electrical apprentices

Life as an apprentice isn't always easy, working and studying, trying to make ends meet and keep up financially with friends who have gone straight into the workforce.



Electrotechnology apprentices also face the challenge of early morning starts and working across many different worksites.

Although NECA apprentices have one of the highest completion rates - the national average completion rate is around 60% for the electrotechnology sector and 57% for all trades combined so there is scope for improvement.

To try and raise apprentice completion rates, the Australian Government has launched the Industry Specialist Mentoring for Australian Apprentices

(ISMAA) program with NECA selected to deliver the ISMAA program nationally for electrotechnology apprentices.

"NECA is delighted to have been selected to deliver the ISMAA program and encourage more people into our trade," said NECA chief executive Suresh Manickam.

"Mentoring has been a highly valued component of our apprentice training program at NECA for some time and definitely contributes to our above average completion rates. We're looking forward to trialling new approaches under the ISMAA program," he added.

Individual apprentice mentoring plans

NECA is well aware of how important it is to provide mentoring and pastoral care to young people in apprenticeships to support them through the various challenges they face in their workplace training and everyday lives. It's an essential component in the successful delivery of our apprenticeships.

Delivering the ISMAA program to NECA apprentices across Australia allows us to provide more support to apprentices who are struggling with any aspect of their training, or

their broader experience during the first two years of their apprenticeship.

The NECA Mentoring Program will include:

- Developing a relationship with each apprentice.
- Personalised meetings with a highly skilled industry mentor.
- Providing information about opportunities related to the apprenticeship.
- Liaising with RTOs regarding relevant training.

- Providing support and advice
- Being available to talk to apprentices and trainees about any issues they have.

The 'at-risk' years

Most of the apprentices who drop out of their training do so in their first or second year.

"We know that about one third of all apprentices and trainees leave within the first year of starting their apprenticeship and traineeship, usually because of a change in their job situation," said Dr Mette Creaser,

National Manager Statistics and Analysis National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).

The ISMAA program will be targeted at apprentices in these first two, at risk years, providing them with more support and pastoral care through highly skilled industry mentors.

Supporting employers

Happy, productive apprentices make a real difference in the workplace and can be a valuable asset in getting a job completed. NECA's Mentoring Program will also support employers who don't have the time, or expertise, to manage all the issues that arise for apprentices.

Best of all, the ISMAA program is provided at no cost to apprentices or employers.

For more information on mentoring support for Australian electrical apprentices call 1300 347266.



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