

PPTEU

Journal



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THE ELECTION OF THE MINNS LABOR GOVERNMENT
IS GOOD NEWS FOR PPTEU MEMBERS



THE PPTEU IS PROUDLY SUPPORTING
THE YES VOTE



PFIA – RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE
AND DIVERSITY IN OUR INDUSTRY

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EARLE SETCHES



As the National Secretary I am very pleased to welcome members to the 2023 national edition of the PPTEU Journal.

Our membership is strong, growing and diverse and this national magazine provides a great opportunity for members to find out what is going on in our Industry and for our members right across the country.

As our members are all too aware, the Plumbing and Fire Protection Industry, along with the broader Construction sector, is vitally important to the economic prosperity of all Australians. It is also a complex and dynamic Industry, one in which new innovations, materials and systems are entering the sector all the time. Change is all around us, from the material the pipes we install are made from, to the energy sources which power increasingly complex heating, cooling and ventilation systems in homes and buildings. The transition to renewable energy and away from things now considered carbon pollutants like natural gas, means that the nature of the work many of our members do will continue to evolve and change over time.

As evidenced by the story inside this edition about the incredible Industry training facilities the union owns and runs for members, we are playing a vitally important role in ensuring our skills evolve with the changing economy. The PPTEU, in partnership with Industry, now owns and operates five training centres across the three most populous states in Australia delivering world class industry training to our members.

And there is more to come with the newly elected Minns Labor Government in NSW committing to investing \$25M in a new Hydrogen Centre of Excellence to be built at Glenwood, in Sydney.

As the whole country grapples with a shortage of skilled workers, the ability our industry has to train our own people at our own facilities has never been more important. We need to grow the number of workers with skills in plumbing and fire protection, and in new energy areas like hydrogen and solar. Through PICAC, because of our foresight and preparedness to invest in the future, we have the facilities and training know how to make that happen.

However, the energy transition will take time, and for now, and for likely many years to come yet, the traditional skills of our members, especially in relation to gasfitting and gas safety, will remain in high demand. Our members will need to straddle the old and new worlds when it comes to energy transition. We need traditional gasfitting skills, and we also need members skilled in the installation and maintenance of emerging systems like heat pumps for hot water systems.

We need to ensure we preserve gasfitting skills because, like the pipework which transports the stuff around, gasfitting skills will be key to our collective ability to embrace the emerging renewable energy source of green hydrogen.

Your union is working hard across Australia to ensure we are heard in these critical national policy deliberations around things like the future of gas and the identification and promotion of the skills the workforce will need

moving forward. With Labor now in Office across mainland Australia as well as at a national level, there is every reason to be positive about the prospect of finding common sense solutions to these big national questions, like the future of gas. We are also seeking to find national consistency in other key parts of Industry, like Fire Protection – which is regulated in NSW, Victoria and Queensland – but not in Western Australia. Similarly, there are opportunities to develop nationally consistent approaches to Mechanical Services and Medical Gas licensing, Roofing and others. We believe every member of the PPTEU skilled workforce, whether they are working on a new tower development in Sydney or Melbourne, or doing house maintenance in rural or regional Australia, should have their skills recognised and be reflected in their pay packets.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate all those who were successfully elected or re-elected through the union election process earlier this year. I am very pleased to say we have in place a strong and united national leadership team, capable of continuing to deliver great pay and safe conditions for our members.

I hope members enjoy this national edition of the Journal. It is packed full of information, pictures of members out on site, and articles which we hope are of interest to the great men and women of the PPTEU.

Earle Setches
National Secretary

PADDY MCCRUDDEN



When our last national edition was published, we were welcoming in the new Federal Labor Government and saying good riddance to the Morrison administration – arguably the worst government Australia has ever endured.

Since then we have seen the Andrews Government re-elected for a third term in Victoria, and more recently, the long overdue election of Labor to power in New South Wales. This means Labor is in office in all the mainland States and Territories as well as Federally, which is good news for our Industry. Unlike the conservative side of politics, Labor have showed over the decades that they understand our Industry. In particular they understand that our licensing and registration is vitally important to a safe and successful sector. As long as Labor is making the decisions about how our Industry is overseen and regulated, our licensing and registration will be safe.

As covered in more detail inside this edition, from an Industrial Relations viewpoint, removing the Liberals in NSW was particularly important. The new Minns Labor Government in NSW will review the Building and Construction Procurement Guidelines for

NSW. The Guidelines were written to reflect the approach to Industrial Relations of the former Federal Government and were essentially a state-based version of the ABCC and The PPTEU, in partnership with Industry, now owns and operate five training centres across the three most populous states in Australia delivering world class industry training to our members. Labor's support of PICAC, which included financial assistance, has been a key reason we have been able to build world class training infrastructure, capable of delivering world class training by Industry for Industry.

And there is more to come. As the story inside explains further, the election of the Minns Government in NSW means Labor will now make good on a pre-election commitment to invest \$25M in a new Hydrogen Centre of Excellence to be built at Glenwood, in Sydney.

As members can see from the stories inside this edition, there is a great deal happening right across the country. NSW is a very active space, with a new government and new training facilities, but there is also an enormous amount going on in Queensland, the ACT and in WA, where a new organiser has been appointed and really

hit the ground running. Troy Smart recently joined the WA Branch and has been busy recruiting new members and getting new companies on board with EBAs. Great to have you on board Troy and keep up the great work.

The other important issue covered in this national edition is that of the referendum to be held later this year about the Indigenous Voice to Parliament. The PPTEU, together with other unions and the ACTU, is 100 per cent behind the Yes campaign. We think recognition of First Australians in the nation's foundation document, the Constitution, is appropriate, fair, and just. We think First Australians should have a Voice and a say in the decisions that directly impact them, their families, and their culture. Of course, in a great democracy like Australia, everyone is free to vote how they choose. But we will be voting Yes, and the story inside explains why.

Thank you to all members for your ongoing support and contribution, and I hope members enjoy this 2023 edition of the PPTEU Journal.

Paddy McCrudden
Federal President



VOTE YES

to an indigenous voice to parliament

At some point in calendar year 2023, members and their families along with all other adult Australians will be asked to vote in a referendum on the question of whether a First Nations Voice should be enshrined in the Australian Constitution.

THE PPTEU, TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER CONSTRUCTION UNIONS AND THE ACTU AND VICTORIAN TRADES HALL, WILL BE PROUDLY SUPPORTING A YES VOTE.

The referendum on a First Nations Voice is a historic opportunity for this country to take a step towards reconciliation which we cannot afford to miss. The First Nations Voice will give a permanent line of communication for Indigenous peoples to the Australian Government and allow Indigenous Australians to have a say on issues that affect them, before laws are drafted.

The union movement has listened to the call of First Nations workers who want our movement's support for a Voice to Parliament. Unions had already committed to support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and this is the next step in that process.

In explaining why the Australian union movement will be supporting the Voice, ACTU Secretary Sally McManus said:

“For too long our Parliaments have made laws about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples without proper consultation with First Nations peoples. These policies have often entrenched discrimination and disadvantage, forcing First Nations peoples to work for free or below legal minimum wages over two centuries.”

“The minimum First Nations peoples deserve is that their voice be respected and listened to before laws are made. For these reasons the ACTU commits to supporting the ‘Yes’ campaign in any referendum.”

We strongly support this view. In a democracy, of course, members can vote how they choose. But we strongly encourage members to vote Yes – yes to justice, yes to fairness and yes to a brighter future for all First Nations people of Australia.



Six years ago, the Uluru Statement from the Heart asked Australians to walk together on the journey towards reconciliation. The referendum is a key first step in that journey. As the Uluru Statement noted:

“We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country. We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.”

Just 439 words in total, the Uluru Statement is as generous as it is powerful. That is why we will be supporting a yes vote in the upcoming referendum.



For a referendum to be successful in Australia, it requires what is often termed a “double majority” – A national majority (more than half) of voters from all states and territories vote Yes and a majority (more than half) of voters in at least four of the six states vote Yes. This is not easily achieved. In fact, since federation in 1901, there have been 19 referendums, proposing 44 changes to the Constitution; only eight have been agreed to.

Making it harder is the steady stream of inaccurate information being put out there by opponents of the Voice, which include many on the conservative side of politics. It is important to remember that a First Nations Voice to Parliament will not be a third chamber of Parliament. It will be an advisory body only and will not run programs. It will not have a veto right over the Parliament, or lead to “apartheid” or create “two Australias” or any of the other scaremongering nonsense being pushed by its opponents.



The Voice will simply allow the voices of First Nations people, whose connection to this country dates back over 60,000 years, to be heard on matters that affect them.

***THAT IS NOT A RADICAL IDEA
AND IS NOT A LOT TO ASK.***

VOTE YES.

PICAC

**Delivering nationally consistent,
high-quality, industry led training in more ways,
to more students, in more places, more often.**

The PPTU is a **national** union, focussed on delivering great safety and pay outcomes for members right across Australia. We are also committed to ensuring all our current and future **members have access to high quality, industry led training.**

Through the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre (PICAC), the men and women of the PPTU have access to world class training. Whether new to the industry and undertaking pre - apprenticeship training or an experienced licensed practitioner upskilling with some post trade training, your union membership is your ticket to high quality, industry led training. That is training developed and delivered by industry, for industry.

As our members out on site every day know, the industry is changing all the time. New energy sources, new building materials and new skills requirements are entering the Industry continuously. **Remaining current, compliant, safe, up to date, and able to take advantage** of the rapid advancements in energy and water technologies is both important and challenging.

At a domestic, commercial, and industrial level, the skills the employment market is requiring are changing and PICAC is **ensuring that training keeps pace** with those changes and prepares the next generation of skilled workers. PICAC and the stakeholder groups which comprise it, have a key role to play in training up the **skilled water, energy, renewable gas, and fire protection** professionals of tomorrow. That is why the union, through PICAC, is providing more training, in more places and in more innovative ways than ever before.

Over the last few years, despite all the challenges of the pandemic, PICAC has significantly expanded its

training footprint, bringing training opportunity to men and women of **all ages and at various career stages.**

PICAC now delivers its leading-edge curriculum in five state of the art facilities in three Australian states.

There are three campuses in Victoria, and in 2021 our **New South Wales facility**, at Glenwood, was opened and operationalized and is now delivering training to dozens of students in plumbing and fire protection.

Last year, PICAC completed and opened the brand new, state of the art, **the Hydrogen Centre of Excellence at PICAC Beenleigh**. The new Centre significantly expands training capability and scope of delivery in Queensland, being accessible to residents of Brisbane, the Sunshine and Gold Coasts and those who live in regional or remote areas. PICAC Beenleigh features the latest training equipment state of the art facilities for fire, plumbing, gas, mechanical plumbing, medical gas, and training,

Over 50 local apprentices worked on the project to expand PICAC Beenleigh which will deliver long term benefits to the Queensland Building and Construction Industry and to the City of Logan.

This **national training focus** reflects the fact that the industry operates within a national training framework. Under Australia's Vocational Education and Training (VET) model, there is a **national training and skills framework**, in which training packages are agreed on a national basis. Whilst recognising that there are nuances across the different state jurisdictions, which reflect the different weather patterns and types of associated plumbing work, PICAC stakeholders are focussed on **driving national**



consistency of regulation and training frameworks wherever possible.

For PICAC, aspiring to training excellence permeates every facet the organisation's activity. From **developing facilities which are unrivalled**, through course design and planning which accommodates a spectrum of students and delivery modes, to the recruitment and retention **of expert trainers**, themselves qualified and licenced in the trades they teach – PICAC is **focussed on excellence** across the training delivery continuum.

PICAC has now trained or re-trained over 10,000 plumbing and fire protection practitioners and has maintained an apprentice completion rate of over 90 per cent across the training delivered by the Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) under the PICAC umbrella.

PICAC is a part of Industry, so it can anticipate and address Industry training needs. Training to enable a green or renewable hydrogen workforce, which was developed at PICAC in 2022, is a great illustration of PICAC's role, and capability, in this regard. To work safely with hydrogen, practitioners will require **specialist and tailored training**. Hydrogen skills are effectively gasfitting skills with some modifications and PICAC has been involved in the development of an amended plumbing (gasfitting) training package to incorporate hydrogen skills.

Training that is excellent is training that is effective. Effective training is current, and delivered in a way which is understandable, and **relevant for the individual student**. PICAC strives to ensure training

it offers and facilitates has broad reach and appeal. For example, PICAC is focussed on developing training tailored for **First Nations Australians**, working with industry partners to bring training opportunity to more First Nations men and **women**.

PICAC has also developed **on-line, and other contemporary training delivery methods**, designed to make PICAC's high quality training available to more regionally based Australians. In recent years, PICAC invested in its delivery capability. These **innovations** in delivery methods, which were necessitated by the pandemic, have now been developed, refined, and **mainstreamed** for a wide range of courses and learning modules.

Since it was established in 2009, **PICAC has grown** from a single facility in Brunswick in Melbourne to a multi campus, multi state provider of very high-quality industry led training.

Through PICAC, the union is providing training with real, long term employment outcomes for members and creating a great legacy for future generation of skilled plumbing and fire protection professionals right across Australia.

PLUMBING AND FIRE INDUSTRY AWARDS MELBOURNE 2023

*A fantastic night of celebrating success, diversity,
and sustainability*



PPTEU President Glenn Menzies welcomes guests to the Awards

The **Plumbing and Fire Industry Awards (PFIAs)** is a joint initiative driven by key industry stakeholders comprising the Master Plumbers and Mechanical Services Association of Australia, the Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union, the National Fire Industry Association, the Association of Hydraulic Service Consultants Australia and the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre.

For the second year in a running, the 2023 Awards were held in March at the brilliant **Crown Palladium**. The PFIAs keep getting bigger and better every year. This year's event was a spectacular evening, and a great chance for the Industry to take a breath, have a laugh and relax after what has been a very turbulent couple of years for everybody concerned.

The aim of the Awards is to **recognise excellence** in the training and development achievements of individuals and companies and **acknowledge professionals** at every stage of their career and across the various disciplines. The Awards, which are national Awards, celebrate the achievements of committed professionals who excel in their trade or whose **work has made a great impact** on their company or the industry. Leading Australian comic and actor, Lehmo, played host for the second time, and did great job as MC, keeping the jokes coming and the proceedings moving along.

18 Awards were presented in total, and a full list of the winners is set out below. The **PPTEU extends its congratulations to all Award winners**, and a big thank you to all the sponsors of the Awards and the event itself. We want to thank major sponsor **Incolink**, whose support was critical to the night being such a success, and all the other companies and organisations which supported the event and sponsored Awards.

The Award winners and nominees represent the best in their field, and cover all aspects of the industry from training, though to major project delivery and OH&S. The Awards reflect the **vibrancy, sophistication and incredible capacity to succeed which exists within our thriving sector**.

This year, the **Welcome to Country**, which kicked off the awards presentations, was delivered by the Industry's own Kaelun Brown from Pathway Plumbing, who last year took

home the Indigenous Professional of the year award. Kaelun, a decedent of the Wurundjeri people, was joined by Uncle Ricky Morris a descendant of the Gunditjmara people.



Uncle Ricky Morris and Kaelun Brown explaining the significance of the Welcome to Country

THE WILLIAM P. HITE LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE AWARD



Andy Wallace accepting the William P. Hite Leadership Excellence Award for 2023

The most highly respected and prestigious award the Industry can bestow is the award named in honour of the great Bill Hite, the inspirational former leader, and General Secretary of the United Association (UA). The **William P. Hite Award for Leadership Excellence** recognises lifetime achievement and Industry contribution.

We are very proud that the 2023 recipient of the William P. Hite Leadership Excellence is **PPTEU Assistant Secretary Andy Wallace**. Andy is the third William P. Hite winner from the Fire Protection Industry, joining Carmel Coate and the late Lou Maglio. Andy will be well known to many if not most of our members, both the young and the not so young. Andy is a big personality with a big presence. He has been a proud, active, and passionate member of our great union for over 40 years and has held a range of roles over that period. From the

day he was first appointed an official back in 2007, right through to when he was elected Assistant Secretary in 2019, Andy has been a **big contributor** to our union and our industry.

Andy's no-nonsense approach; his member-first attitude; his hands on knowledge of the Industry, especially fire protection; his passion for safety onsite and his compassion for others are some of the **many qualities** which have enabled Andy to make such a **valuable and long-term** industry contribution – both on and off site.

Respect – for tradition, for the union, and for those who went before is at the core of Andy's identity. Born into a life of hard work and trade unionism, Andy's father Bill was a tradesman and mentor to Andy, as was his uncle Norm Wallace who was an active BLF official back in the day. Andy learnt plenty from his father and uncle, as well as from several key **long term union mentors** and leaders.

Andy was close to the late Billy Davis, former Assistant Secretary, and cites Barry Fitton and Earl Setches as others who have had a **big influence** on his career because of what they did for the trade of sprinkler fitting and for the union as a whole. As Andy sees it, those guys deserve much of the credit for what sprinkler fitting is today *"Billy and Barry and Earle, basically took sprinkler fitting from being just another job to being a registered and licensed trade, with rates of pay that reflect the skills of fitters"*.

Asked to reflect on his own time in the Industry, Andy says the biggest changes are around safety and registration and licensing.

"When I started out as a 17-year-old kid, I had no clue about the construction industry or sprinkler fitting. I'd never worked on building site before, much less cut a pipe or anything like that so I was pretty green. My first job was with AFS and I didn't even have a driver's licence but I worked hard and soon worked out I was pretty good at it, the money was good and I enjoyed it – so I stayed."



Four legends together – Andy is joined by previous William P. Hite winners Ox Menzies, Carmel Coate and Ken Gardner



Andy and sons Billy and Jack

I had a union ticket, and that was what got me a start, so I've been in the union as long as I've been in the Industry.

I worked with all sorts over the journey. Some good bosses, like Lou Maglio for example, who was always firm but fair, and a few bad ones. And I have had my share of ups and downs and run ins – within the union and with bosses. But I have always tried to be honest and direct with people, and to be respectful."

Andy has been a full time Organiser since 2007 and has done an **outstanding job**. A key part of Andy's role is to coordinate the team of Organisers and mentor the less experienced officials in their roles. His focus has been on building up the numbers and capabilities of on-site PPTEU member representatives – be they Shop Stewards, Delegates or OHS Reps. Andy's **leadership** on this goal has been outstanding, and the union is now at peak on site representation, with over 70 PPTEU officials on the ground on sites around Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Andy has always been respectful of the past but always with an **eye to the future**. He has always placed a high importance on growing the ranks of union members, officials, and representatives. In any respects Andy has been a conduit between the union leaders of the past – and the values they instilled in him – and the union **leaders of tomorrow**. One of Andy's passions in recent years is the Next Gen group of young PPTEU men and women. The Group, which now numbers over 40 and is growing all the time, is about providing an opportunity for the current group of organisers and OH&S reps to **share and pass on the knowledge** to the next generation of unionists – just as it was passed on to them by the likes of Billy Davis, Earle Setches or, now, Andy Wallace.

Ensuring the next generation of fire protection industry professionals have access to top quality, **industry led training** has always been important to our union and to Andy. Since 2016 Andy has served as Director on the **Fire Industry Training Board** and made a valuable contribution over that time which has seen fire protection training go from strength to strength.

It is fitting that Andy receive an honour named in honour of the great UA leader because Andy attended the UA/PPTEU Affiliation signing in Ann Arbor Michigan in 2012 (August 15). Andy was a strong supporter of the ground-breaking Agreement which has enabled the exchange of knowledge and skills between the US Canada and Australia. This ensures that all three countries remain at the forefront of change and are well equipped for the challenges of a constantly evolving industry keeping all our union workforce relevant and world class in a global market.

Keeping the **intergenerational tradition** going, Andy's two sons have both chosen careers in the Industry – Jack is a Sprinkler Fitter and Billy is a plumber and was recently elected as the PPTEU's OH&S rep on the big Werribee Law Courts project. No doubt they will follow in the footsteps of the Wallaces who went before them and be fine tradesman and make a valuable contribution to the Industry.

The PPTEU wishes to take this opportunity to thank Andy for his enormous contribution to our union and our Industry, and we could not think of a more worthy winner of the William P. Hite Award for 2023.



Winner for Women in Plumbing Rose Cutis Award Jessah Iliopoulos

2023 PLUMBING & FIRE INDUSTRY AWARDS – WINNERS

APPRENTICE AWARDS

- ★ **MECHANICAL SERVICES AWARD –**
Sponsored by Hutchinson Builders
Winner: Ryan Bridle from Entire Mechanical Services
- ★ **FRANK MASKELL GENERAL PLUMBING AWARD –** Sponsored by Reece
Winner: Nathan Brien from Plumbing Apprenticeships Victoria
- ★ **NA SMITH GAS AWARD –** Sponsored by Energy Safe Victoria
Winner: Sean Anderson from Commercial Hot Water and Maintenance
- ★ **LOU MAGLIO GOLD MEDAL FOR APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR –** Sponsored by NFIA
Winner: Michael Loprete from Shield Fire Systems

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

- ★ **EXCELLENCE IN FIRE PROTECTION AWARD –**
Sponsored by Fire Industry Training
Winner: Mark Buckley from Contractfire
- ★ **EXCELLENCE IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY AWARD –** Sponsored by Incolink
Winner: Chris Bell, PPTEU
- ★ **EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARD**
Winner: John Arnel, Fire Industry Training
- ★ **WOMEN IN PLUMBING ROSE CURTIS AWARD –** Sponsored by Plumbing Apprenticeships Victoria
Winner: Jessah Iliopoulos from Plumbing Apprenticeships Victoria
- ★ **INDIGENOUS PROFESSIONAL AWARD –**
Sponsored by RAW Group
Winner: Jackson Viney from RAW GTO

★ EXCELLENCE IN ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AWARD

Winner: Kathy Goodwin from McCarthy Plumbing

★ AHSCA COMMERCIAL PLUMBING AFFILIATE OF THE YEAR AWARD –

Sponsored by Caroma

Winner: Geschke Plumbing

★ AHSCA TOM CELEMENTS CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR –

Sponsored by Halgan

Winner: Mark Pearson

★ AHSCA SALES REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR –

Sponsored by AHSCA

Winner: Greg Brittain from ZIP Water

COMPANY AND PROJECT AWARDS

★ PROJECT OF THE YEAR –

Sponsored by Cbus

Winner: NSG Plumbing/Energy Smart Water

★ EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY AWARD –

Sponsored by IAPMO

Winner: Thermal Energy Solutions

★ SMALL PLUMBING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR –

Sponsored by Victorian Building Authority

Winner: T.J Coles Plumbing

MAJOR AWARDS

★ Andrew Letten Gold Medal Award –

Sponsored by Master Plumbers

Winner: Nathan Brien

★ William P. Hite Award –

Sponsored by PICAC

Winner: Andy Walalce

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

VICTORIA



EARLE SETCHES



After a few turbulent years, it is great to be able to report that the Victorian Construction Industry, of which Plumbing and Fire Protection is a vitally important part, is stable and growing.

There are a range of major infrastructure works being undertaken as part of Victoria's Big Build, which, along with dozens of other projects – apartments, schools, hospitals, etc – will keep our members going for a long time to come.

And, as covered elsewhere in this edition of the Journal, through our Industry partnership with PICAC, we are ensuring our Industry keeps pace, producing the next generation of skilled men and women, capable of meeting the demands of Industry and equipped to meet the challenges of a changing industry.

In a big picture policy sense, there are some key issues on the horizon which will directly impact our members. The biggest of all is the full-scale transition of the economy from an entrenched reliance on fossil fuels for energy (coal and gas) to renewable energy production and use. The push for full electrification of virtually everything is well underway, but we think there is a need for great caution here.

Victoria, as is the case in other jurisdictions, has legislated net zero targets (net zero by 2050). To achieve this, a big focus of governments is on the future of natural or sometimes now called "fossil" gas. Clearly, there is a role for renewables, but we argue that there is also a role for gas, especially in Victoria which has over

3 million domestic gas connections – significantly more than other States and Territories.

We are focussed on encouraging all governments to keep our energy options open. The pathway to net zero is inherently uncertain and making room for a variety of energy options open is going to be key to our success when it comes to reaching net zero targets being pursued by governments.

Green hydrogen (hydrogen made from renewable energy) can potentially be blended with gas and distributed through existing pipes and be utilised with existing appliances. But the hydrogen industry needs the gas industry (both skills and infrastructure) in order to be successful. If gas is removed from the energy mix prematurely (before hydrogen has a chance to fully develop), and the gas network asset ceases to be maintained, the prospects for hydrogen distribution and therefore the development of the burgeoning hydrogen sector, will be set back significantly.

In places like Victoria, where there is an extensive reticulated gas network, that network can effectively become a giant battery, storing renewable energy in the form of green hydrogen. The economic value and utility of such a significant storage capacity, should not be underestimated. In its absence, a range of additional and expensive investments will be required in batteries, pumped hydro, other generation, and storage options.

Green hydrogen gives economies (particularly those with existing gas infrastructure networks) an important opportunity to have two operational,

complementary, mutually supporting energy grids, with green electricity and green hydrogen interchangeable or directly usable by consumers and industry.

In the current political context, in which fossil gas (and, by extension and unfairly – hydrogen) is seen as the enemy of net zero, there is a significant risk that the opportunity of green hydrogen will be missed.

As more households, businesses, communities, and regions electrify and disconnect from gas, the pipe infrastructure supporting those connections will cease to be maintained. Under this scenario, over the short to medium term the infrastructure needed to realise the hydrogen opportunity will gradually degrade and will cease to be economic or safe for the storage and transport of hydrogen. This is why it is so important to maintain the gas connections to homes and businesses even when appliances are electrified.

We will keep members updated on developments about the future of the Victorian gas industry, and other important policy development, as they progress.

Thank you to all members for your ongoing support, and to all those who contributed pictures and stories for this third ever national edition of the PPTEU Journal.

Proud History. Strong Future.

Earle Setches
Victorian Secretary



VIC AROUND



TO THE TRAPS



VIC AROUND THE TRAPS



2024 CALENDAR

www.ppteu.asn.au

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
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SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
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Public Holiday Annual Leave RDO Lock Down Weekends School Holidays Picnic Day World Plumbing Day Return to work on 14 Jan 2025

VICTORIAN SCHOOL TERM DATES

TERM 1: 30 January 2024 - 28 March 2024
TERM 2: 15 April 2024 - 28 June 2024
TERM 3: 15 July 2024 - 20 September 2024
TERM 4: 7 October 2024 - 20 December 2024

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Monday 1 January
Australia Day: Friday 26 January
Labour Day: Monday 11 March
Good Friday: Friday 29 March

Easter Saturday: Saturday 30 March
Easter Sunday: Sunday 31 March
Easter Monday: Monday 1 April
Anzac Day: Thursday 25 April

King's Birthday: Monday 10 June
Melbourne Cup Day: Tuesday 5 November
Christmas Day: Wednesday 25 December
Boxing Day: Thursday 26 December

PPTEU
52 Victoria Street, CARLTON SOUTH VIC 3053
TEL: 03 9662 3388
EMAIL: info@ppteu.asn.au

PRESIDENT
Glenn Menzies

STATE SECRETARY
Earle Setches

ASSISTANT SECRETARIES
Paddy McCrudden
Jake Cranny

ORGANISERS
Norm Kelly, Ryan Russell, Paris Andriske, Simon Jewell,
Bill Ramsay, Billy Jovanovski, Nick McCubbin, John Haitas

OH&S
Steve Rocco, Chris Giblin

GENERAL MEETING DATES - Melbourne
5.00pm at 52 Victoria Street, Carlton South
19th Mar, 18th Jun, 24th Sep, 26th Nov
GENERAL MEETING DATES - Geelong
5.00pm at PICAC Building - 66 Tanner Street, Breakwater
26th Mar, 25th Jun, 25th Sep, 27th Nov

Tune-in to the Plumbers' Radio
Program, every second Thursday
morning at 6.30am on 3CR
- 855 on the AM dial

CBUS (SUPERANNUATION)
Caselden Place, Lonsdale Street,
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
TEL: 1300 361 784

INCOLINK (REDUNDANCY)
1 Pelham Street, CARLTON VIC 3053
TEL: 9639 3000



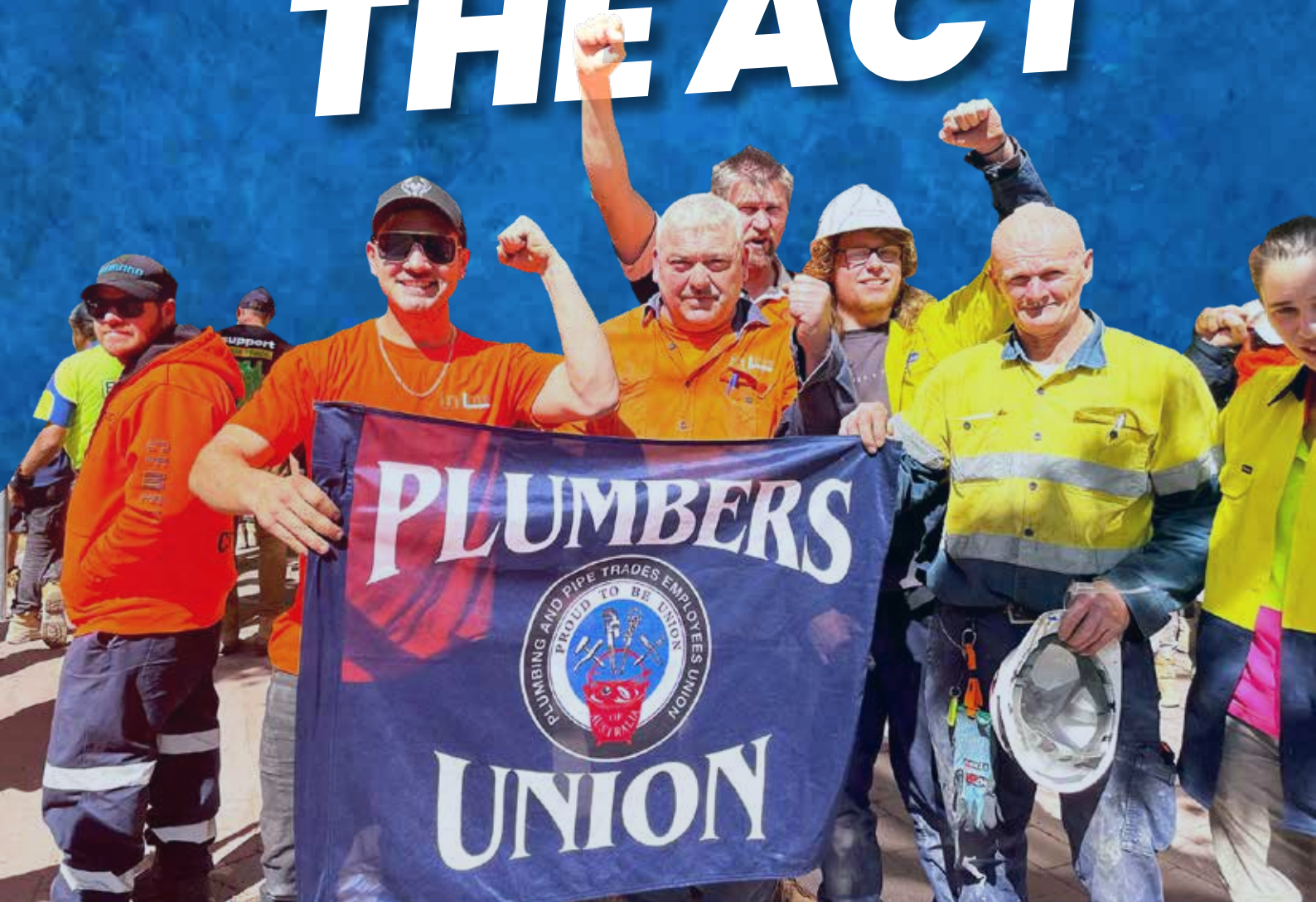
PICAC and CEPTEC
offer the following courses to union members:

- CI Induction (Red card)
- Initial 5 Day Occupational Health & Safety Training Course
- First Aid Level One - Two - Three
- Traffic Management
- Poly Butt Welding
- Fire Training (Sprinkler Fitters Only)
- Computers - Basic - Intermediate - Advanced
- Confined Space Entry
- Backflow Prevention
- Earthmoving
- Asbestos Removal
- Asbestos Awareness
- Elevated Work Platform
- Boom Lift
- Forklift
- Install primary Ground (Trench Shoring)
- Safe Work Roofs
- Welding (MIG & TIG)
- Installation of Split Air Con (Mechanical Plumbers Only)
- Gas Type A
- Gas Type B
- Disconnect/Reconnect
- Thermostatic Mixing Valves
- Cert IV WHS
- Diploma WHS
- HSR Refresher OHS Training Course

For further information contact your training office on 1300 222 727

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

NEW SOUTH WALES & THE ACT



THEO SAMARTZOPOULOS



Hello members.

Well done to the people of New South Wales for electing the Minns Labor Government.

The election result is great news for our Industry, for our members and their families and for the people of NSW.

We are very much looking forward to working with the new Labor administration as they set about implementing **their** plans for the economy of NSW and our Industry. In the lead up to the election, Labor committed to a **comprehensive overhaul of building and construction in NSW**. This will include appointing a separate Minister for Building who will be responsible for the NSW building industry and establishing a **NSW Building Commission**, a single body to oversee the regulation, licensing, and oversight of the industry. Labor has also committed to a range of other measures designed to improve the regulatory framework for construction,

including Plumbing and Fire Protection, and introducing new, stricter requirements on private building certifiers, reviewing the progress of Project Remediate and the removal of dangerous, flammable cladding, and reviewing the Home Building Compensation Fund.

We think the establishment of a Building Commission is a vitally important first step. Importantly, the Minns Government recognises that it is vital to include **representation** of the range of licensed tradespeople, including plumbing and pipe trades and is committed to working with the PPTEU and other unions to establish a formal engagement framework to ensure workers and their representatives are heard on the matters that impact their trade.

The new Labor Government intends to tackle a range of issues in our sector which, under the former government, just kept accumulating. In plumbing and fire protection, as well as the broader construction sector, the **issues requiring attention** are many – around quality and compliance, enforcement and insurance, integrity, and

financial viability and more. The former government was unwilling or unable to do anything about any of them, and so we are looking forward to some very positive changes under Labor.

For example, in **Fire Protection**, an anomaly currently exists whereby a license is required to install a fire protection system, and a thorough and comprehensive qualification is required to obtain that license, yet no license is required by those currently allowed to inspect, test, and maintain those systems. It makes no sense from a risk management perspective, especially in the heightened risk environment created by using flammable cladding on a range of buildings in NSW. The new government is aware of the high risks attached to this situation, and is committed to making positive changes.

The new government in Macquarie Street also presents an overdue opportunity to review the **Building and Construction Procurement Guidelines** for NSW. The Guidelines were written to reflect the approach to Industrial Relations of the former Federal Government

THEO SAMARTZOPOULOS

and were essentially a state-based version of the ABCC and Building Code. We are looking forward to having a say in how the new Guidelines are drafted.

As well as reforming the way the sector we work in is oversighted and regulated, the newly elected government is committed to pursuing the potential of **green hydrogen** to be a key player in the NSW energy mix in the future.

Hydrogen is the future, especially for our gasfitting members, and as part of its commitment to green hydrogen, has committed to invest **\$25M** in supporting the Industry and the union to develop a NSW first – a specialist hydrogen training facility right here in Sydney. The significance of this development cannot be overstated. It will see the development of a state-of-the-art facility, built by the Industry for the Industry. The new **Hydrogen Centre of Excellence** will mean the union has a direct role in delivering the hydrogen powered jobs of the future. The Centre will be built at Glenwood in partnership with the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre. (see story on page 47 for more about the exciting

new Hydrogen Centre) It is a very good thing that we are investing in the future skills of our trade because there is **plenty of work about and demand for our skills has never been higher**. In Sydney and the regions our organisers are flat out with PPTU members working on everything from airport infrastructure, to new hospitals, museum redevelopment, entire precinct upgrades like Darling Harbour, shopping centres, universities, apartments and more. Some of the major projects currently underway or coming up include:

- Westconnex M6 extension
- Western Harbour Tunnel
- Metro West Train Line – Westmead to the City
- Metro Train Line – St Marys to Western Sydney International Airport
- Westmead Childrens Hospital
- Prince of Whales Childrens Hospital
- RPA Hospital
- St George Hospital Stage 3
- Nepean Hospital Stage 2

Thanks again for your ongoing support and please stay safe.

NSW Secretary
Theo Samartzopoulos

The ACT construction sector **remains strong**, but the slowdown we started to see towards the end of last year has continued in the first few months of 2023.

There are several key projects just “coming out of the ground” which will keep our Canberra based members going for some time. The \$500M Australian War Memorial redevelopment (Kane, Lendlease, Hindmarsh) is one of the most notable, but there are many more.

Safety on site continues to be a big focus of our union and all the construction sector unions in the ACT. Here in the nation’s capital there were two significant structural failures on sites. In August last year the piling on the WOVA project collapsed in, and not long after there was another collapse on the CALYPSO Project on Northbourne Ave, prompting a WorkSafe ACT investigation.

The **skills crisis**, which is being felt right across the economy, is biting hard in the ACT. There are vacancies for skilled tradespeople on most of the projects currently underway in the ACT, and there are just not enough plumbers for the current works.

BRIAN WINDSOR



As members right around the country would be aware, the issue of how best we transition to low carbon energy sources is a hot topic. The ACT are moving faster than other jurisdictions on this front, and planning some **big moves away from gas**. The ACT is moving to ban new natural gas connections on new buildings and wants to see and end to gas in the ACT by 2045.

This is obviously a very significant development for our gasfitting members in the ACT. The PPTEU and other stakeholders in the Industry have been and will continue to make representations to the ACT Government on the energy transition issue. In particular, we have said and will continue to argue that **green hydrogen**, which is a rapidly advancing clean energy source, can be blended with natural gas and transported in the current existing pipe infrastructure.

Our key point is that hydrogen needs domestic connections and pipework to be retained and maintained. It would be short sighted in the extreme to allow the existing gas pipe infrastructure, which is a \$300M ACT asset, to degrade because when green hydrogen production does ratchet up and becomes more available, the ACT will not be able to take advantage of the hydrogen

opportunity because the connections and pipework will be lost. The last pay rise due from the current **construction EBA** is coming up in July for the ACT. Everyone knows the cost of living isn't getting any cheaper, everything is going up, so the pay rise installment comes at a good time.

Negotiations on the next EBA are soon to commence, and **unity and solidarity** have never been more important. The value of unity was brought home to me recently when I learned of what happened in negotiation between another union and a company (non-construction). In that case, only 20 per cent of the workforce was unionized. When management came to workers with a 3 per cent pay rise offer, it was ultimately accepted by the workforce even though many thought it was unfair as it did not even come close to the inflation rate. The problem was that because only one in five workers in the company were union members, the protected industrial action they took (non-members cannot participate in protected actions – strikes or work bans) had no real impact.

The moral of the story is **we need to build membership, build unity and build solidarity** so that we can speak with one united voice in negotiations. Talk to the union about

becoming a delegate for the company you work for, and, if your co-worker is not in the union, ask them why not and encourage them to get involved.

Last time I reported to members about some of the big challenges being faced by members on the **trouble plagued Snowy Hydro project**. Unfortunately, there are still plenty of issues on the project, with one of the biggest being the poor quality of food in the camp.

Unbelievably, despite repeated complaints, we are still receiving reports of disgusting and rotten food being served to workers. We have heard of chicken, beef and other food being contaminated with maggots. The situation reached a point where workers sat in the sheds at Lobs Hole until management addressed the issue of inedible food being served up.

The project has plenty of challenges, including a major tunnel boring machine becoming stuck due to a ground collapse above it. And, if they can't get the basics right, like providing workers with decent food, it is no wonder there are other problems. We are looking forward to an improvement in the situation at the Snowy Hydro. Look forward to seeing you on the job.

SNOWY 2.0

A BIG PROJECT WITH SOME BIG PROBLEMS!

Snowy 2.0 is Australia's biggest green energy project and will become the world's biggest pumped storage plant. Thousands of workers, including PPTEU members from NSW and the ACT, are working on this multi-billion-dollar mega project which involves, amongst other things, the construction of a series of 27km of concrete-lined tunnels that will connect the existing Tantangara and Talbingo reservoirs located within the Snowy Scheme in New South Wales.

WORKING CONDITIONS ON THE SNOWY 2.0 PROJECT HAVE BEEN SUB-STANDARD FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE PROJECT, AND THE SITUATION HAS BEEN SLOW TO IMPROVE.

Shifts are long (10-12 hours) and conditions are hazardous. Recently there have been some improvements in terms of more on-site accommodation being available, so workers no longer have to drive an hour and a half to and from site. But the problems continue. A lack of covered walkways makes conditions very difficult, particularly when winter comes, and the snow falls are heavy. Laundry services are slow and not very reliable, which is also creating problems.

One of the big problems on the project has been the poor quality of food being provided to workers on site. There are a range of photos circulating on line, taken by various workers on the site and show maggot infested food and other assorted slop being dished up (see images).

IT IS JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH. MANAGEMENT CANNOT SERIOUSLY EXPECT TO HAVE A PRODUCTIVE AND POSITIVE WORKFORCE WHEN IT IS TREATING THEM LIKE THIS.

The project is a significant and very important one for Australia, and we have been strong supporters of it. Renewable energy production is badly needed if Australia is going to meet its net zero ambitions, and the Snowy 2.0 is a key piece of the energy picture going forward.

The project is extremely complex from an engineering perspective and has been plagued with problems from the get-go, not just in terms of how it has treated workers. One of the three tunnel-boring machines working on Australia's biggest renewable energy project is stuck. Tunnel-Boring Machine (TBM) "Florence" hit soft ground in Kosciuszko National Park in December and ground to a halt. The incident caused a hole to appear above the machine, measuring approximately 10 metres across and 4 metres deep.




Maggot infested steak provided for morning tea – February 2023



Grub served in vegetables at Tantangra Worksite



"Potato Cake" served for breakfast at Lob's Hole, February 2023.



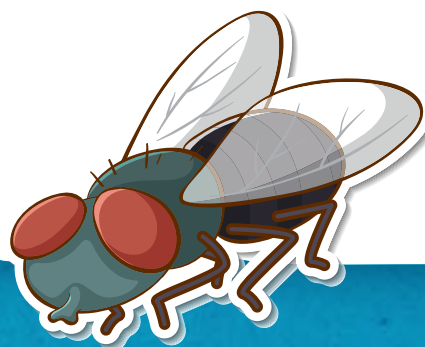
"Poached Eggs" served for breakfast on Sunday – February 2023.

After a bit of a search the location of the TBM has been pinpointed – but getting it out is not straightforward. As it bores the tunnel, concrete reinforcements are inserted behind it, meaning the TBM cannot be pulled out the way it went into the tunnel. It will be essentially a massive jacking task. Florence weighs 2,400 tonnes and measures 143 metres in length and nobody is sure when she will be free and boring again.

The stuck TBM will further slow down progress on the tunnelling phase of the project which is already about 18 months behind schedule and billions over budget. The tunnelling has only progressed 200 metres in 10 months, that's an average rate of only 60 centimetres a day. This is a problem when these machines were designed to travel 30 metres a day, and in good conditions, 50 metres a day.

We will keep members posted on how the Snowy 2.0 progresses. Hopefully they get the TBM unstuck and moving again soon.

IN THE MEANTIME, MAYBE MANAGEMENT COULD USE THE DOWNTIME TO SORT OUT THE FOOD AND ACCOMMODATION FOR THE WORKERS.





LABOR'S ELECTION WIN IN NSW IS GREAT NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS

NSW Labor's victory in the March election is great for the people and economy of NSW. It is good news for apprentices, for women in our industry, and for everyone working or training in the NSW building and construction sector.

Labor understands that construction is the engine room of our economy and that high quality skills, like those delivered by the Industry training model, are the basis of a well-paid future for the women and men of NSW.

Labor understands the value of our licensing system and will preserve its integrity. Labor appreciates the link between community safety and the effective regulation of key high risk trades, like plumbing and fire protection.

More directly, Labor has committed to invest \$25M in supporting the Industry and the union to develop a NSW first – a specialist hydrogen training facility right here in Sydney. The significance of this development cannot be

overstated. It will see the development of a state-of-the-art facility, built by the Industry for the Industry.

The new Hydrogen Centre of Excellence will mean the union has a direct role in delivering the hydrogen powered jobs of the future. The Centre will be built at Glenwood in partnership with the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre.

Hydrogen could play a major role in the transition to renewable energy. A trial project at the Western Sydney Green Hydrogen Hub is already generating 'renewable gas' for local homes and businesses. The federal government has set a target to make Australia a major player in green hydrogen by 2030.

The Industry's new Centre will prepare the plumbing industry to meet the future demand for jobs in the growing hydrogen sector, and help make New South Wales a leader in the sector. By partnering with government, the union and the Industry will together deliver highly paid, secure jobs in NSW's growing renewables sector.

This investment will see PICAC Glenwood become Australia's leading training centre for Hydrogen, Fire Protection, Mechanical Services, Medical Gas and Plumbing.

The Centre, which is expected to open in 2026, will be built to accommodate large volumes of students, providing opportunities to workers and students of all ages, genders, and career stages. It will be able to deliver hundreds of apprentices and upskilled workers every year.





NSW & ACT ARO



UND THE TRAPS



NSW & ACT ARO



UND THE TRAPS

2023 RDO

NEW SOUTH WALES CALENDAR

36 HOUR WEEK

JANUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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- Annual Leave (optional)
- Flexible RDO
- □ Designated Long Weekend
- Public Holiday
- World Plumbing Day
- Picnic Day
- Scheduled RDO

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Autumn Holidays: 10th April 2023 to 21st April 2023
 Winter Holidays: 3rd July 2023 to 14th July 2023
 Spring Holidays: 25th September to 6th October 2023
 Summer Holidays: 20th December to 29th January 2024

PUBLIC/PICNIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Monday 2nd January
 Australia Day: Thursday 26th January
 Good Friday: Friday 15th April
 Holy Saturday: Saturday 8th April
 Easter Sunday: Sunday 9th April
 Easter Monday: Monday 10th April
 Anzac Day: Tuesday 25th April
 Queen's Birthday: Monday 12th June
 Labour Day: Monday 2nd October
 Picnic Day: Monday 4th December
 Christmas Day: Monday 25th December
 Boxing Day: Tuesday 26th December

2023 RDO

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY CALENDAR

38 HOUR WEEK

JANUARY

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MARCH

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AUGUST

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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- Public Holiday
- RDO
- Canberra Day
- Reconciliation Day
- World plumbing Day

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Autumn Holidays: 7th April 2023 to 23rd April 2023
Winter Holidays: 1st July 2023 to 16th July 2023
Spring Holidays: 23rd September to 8th October 2023
Summer Holidays: 16th December to 29th January 2024

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Monday 2nd January
Australia Day: Thursday 26th January
Canberra Day: Monday 13th March
Good Friday: Friday 7th April

Easter Saturday: Saturday 8th April
Easter Sunday: Sunday 9th April
Easter Monday: Monday 10th April
Anzac Day: Tuesday 25th April
Reconciliation Day: Monday 29th May

Queen's Birthday: Monday 12th June
Labour Day: Monday 2nd October
Christmas Day: Monday 25th December
Boxing Day: Tuesday 26th December

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



BRIAN BINTLEY



THINGS ARE GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH FOR THE PPTEU IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

After a couple of tough years with COVID and related industry disruption, things are looking very positive for our members and the construction sector in WA more broadly.

There is major health, transport, and community infrastructure work either underway or in the pipeline which will keep our members busy for some time. Major developments are going on all over Perth and in regional WA. Jobs like the 50 plus level Elizabeth Quay mixed use development, the Murdoch Health and Knowledge precinct development and the \$700M Edith Cowan University project will employ dozens of skilled PPTEU men and women for years to come.

The skills of our members, whether it be in fire protection, mechanical services work or plumbing and drainage, are key to our State's ability to build the infrastructure and provide the water, energy and sanitation services Western Australians need.

We need high skilled tradespeople in WA and need more of them. We have more than enough work for the existing skilled workforce and the government in WA can and

should be doing more to attract more workers over to the west. One way of doing that would be to update the occupational licensing arrangements in WA to bring them in line with the other Australian States and Territories. For example, there is no reason I can understand as to why fire protection work is not regulated work here in WA like it is everywhere else in the country.

We need a registration system for fire protection work here in WA, which will enable the skills of workers both here in WA and from other States, to have their skills properly recognised and rewarded. Also, in mechanical services and medical gas work – licenced work in Victoria and NSW but not in WA.

It makes no sense, and this anomaly is leaving WA residents exposed to unlicensed work and is depriving local skilled workers of an opportunity to be on a level playing field with their counterparts in other States.

These issues are not new and are an ongoing work in progress for the union. We will continue to work positively with the Western Australian Government with a view to ensuring the occupational

licensing arrangements here in WA provide adequate safety and protection to members of the public and reflect the skills and experience of our members. We will keep members posted on progress.

I am extremely pleased to have Troy Smart on board. As you can see from Troy's short editorial, he brings a wealth of construction sector and industrial relations experience to his role at the PPTEU. In the few short months Troy has been with us, our membership is up, by about 15 per cent, and we are talking to new companies all the time about EBAs.

Troy is doing an outstanding job, and with the ongoing support of the national executive (which is committed to continuing to support us to bolster our capability), we can expect further increases in both membership and representation.

Thank you to all members for your ongoing support, and for making Troy so welcome in his new role. I look forward to seeing many of you on site across the great State of WA throughout what promises to be a very positive 2023.

Brian Bintley
Western Australia Secretary

TROY SMART

I want to thank the national and WA leadership of our great union for the opportunity to help organise the members in the wonderful State of Western Australia and help grow the membership of the WA Branch.

It is an opportunity I have thoroughly embraced. It gives me a chance to continue to work with Secretary Brian Bintley who I have known and worked with for over a decade, and the national leadership team which is working hard and taking the steps necessary to set up our union for the decades ahead.

I come to my role in the PPTEU from a construction background, having commenced in the sector as an apprentice back in 1988. For the past 15 years I

have been with the CFMEU, working as an organiser with the Construction and General Division. I am pleased to say that in this role I have met many of the great men and women who make up the rapidly growing WA Branch of the PPTEU.

Thank you to all the members who have been so welcoming to me since I came across to the PPTEU late last year. In the short time I have been organising for the PPTEU, I have been extremely impressed with how proud and committed members are, and the sense of identity and camaraderie which comes from being a member of the WA PPTEU. With that sort of spirit and dedication, it is no surprise that our membership is growing.

Also growing is our capacity to represent our members industrially. The national executive of the union has

determined that additional organising resources will be directed west, reflecting our growing membership, and bolstering our capacity to represent our men and women on site.

WA Branch Secretary Brian Bintley has done a great job, setting a solid foundation for me to commence my new role, and I look forward to growing the Branch further in the years ahead. I am absolutely committed to working hard for the men and women of the PPTEU. I will meet members and potential members, on or off site, and ensure I provide the representation they deserve. Thank you again to all members for making me welcome in our great union.

The PPTEU – Proud history,
Strong future!

Troy Smart
PPTEU WA Organiser

Rupert Hillbrick

is 84 not out and stumps not in sight!!

One of the great things about the PPTEU is the diversity of our membership. We represent plumbers and sprinkler fitters across the length and breadth of Australia. From Brisbane to Broome, and from Adelaide to the Adelaide River, we have men and women, from a broad range of cultural backgrounds, working on all manner of projects, from domestic maintenance plumbing to installing complex heating, cooling and ventilation systems in 80 storey apartment towers. Our members can do it all.

And amongst that broad and diverse membership there are some very unique individuals. One such unique individual is **Rupert Hillbrick**. Rupert is **84 years old** and still on the tools every day. That's right, Rupert, who has **been a PPTEU member for a staggering 65 years**, is still going strong and has no plans of stopping just yet:

"I love it. Yes, I am 84 but I can still do the work and it helps keep me young, so why stop?"

For the past 30 years, Rupert, who is one of the most likeable blokes you could ever meet, has lived and worked in Geraldton, a beautiful coastal town about 420 kilometres north of Perth. Rupert runs his own one person plumbing business, doing mainly domestic maintenance and repair work:

"I worked in new construction before I came up here and I enjoyed the new builds, but I really enjoy problem solving and helping people, and domestic plumbing work gives me that opportunity. In a small place like Geraldton (population of about 37,000) you really get to know the local people and it's an intergenerational thing. I regularly do maintenance on houses I helped build 40 plus years ago, it is that sort of place".

Rupert's journey into the plumbing trade and the union, was perhaps typical for the day but would be foreign to most young members

today. Born to working class parents in the port town of South Fremantle at the start of the Second World War was a tough time to enter the world. Young Rupert's time at school was brief, leaving at the tender age of 13. And, at 13, he was still too young to be legally employed, so the teenage Rupert had to do some off jobs before cracking it for a plumbing apprenticeship at the age of 15.

Rupert did his apprenticeship with SW Hart and Company, which Rupert describes as one of those classic old school family plumbing businesses (since gone) where you really learned the full breadth of trade skills.

Rupert was still an apprentice when he, along with all other young men of his generation, was called up to do National Service (period of compulsory military training):

"National Service was tough, but it sure taught me how to be organised and disciplined, and I finished that about the same time I completed my apprenticeship".

As a qualified plumber, Rupert looked to get a job and ply his trade. He also joined the union. That was in 1958, and Rupert has been a paid-up member for every year since. He landed a job in with a company called J. Fitzpatrick and Company, where he worked for 30 years. He also lived on the company property in Geraldton. Rupert mainly did what he calls "cottage work" on new house builds, including for the public housing agency in WA.

After thirty years of working for someone else, Rupert set up his own shop and has been a successful one-man operation for over 30 years. In many ways Rupert has had two full careers, and he is not showing any signs of slowing down just yet.

Rupert's union experience has been a little different too. As far as he knows, he is the only member in Geraldton,



and although he says he doesn't have a lot to do with the union, he has always believed in trade unionism and in looking after workers' pay and conditions, and so he has always been happy to be a member.

Having been on work sites in WA for more than six decades, it is fair to say Rupert has seen a lot. And, like others of his generation, he cites safety on site as an area where things have improved enormously over that time: "Back in the 1950's and 60's for example, we knew we were responsible for our own safety. No such thing as an OH&S Act then. We were smart enough and I was lucky enough to avoid serious injury or accidents over the years, but it was pretty dangerous at times. And it was all labour. There was no earth moving machines – we dug by hand. And cutting too, we did that all by hand, cutting through galvanised pipes or pipes made of ceramic mixed with concrete. It was hard work, but I thrived on it!"

Rupert can see a very bright future for the union and its members:

"I am really pleased to see the union growing and expanding its membership all the time. It is great to see so many young men and women getting involved because they are the future."

Thank you, Rupert, for your loyalty and dedication over an astonishing 65 years of membership. The PPTEU wishes you all the best for what is next in your amazing journey.



WA AROUND THE TRAPS

2023 RDO

WESTERN AUSTRALIA CALENDAR

38 HOUR WEEK

MAY

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AUGUST

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NOVEMBER

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JANUARY

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MARCH

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DECEMBER

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FEBRUARY

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JULY

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OCTOBER

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Public Holiday
School Holidays
RDO

- *The RDOs are required to be set each year for the State Building Trades (Construction) Industry Award.
- The RDO calendar may also be adopted by business's covered by the Building Construction (General) On site Award 2020 – (modern award).
- When New Year's Day falls on a Saturday or Sunday the next following Monday is also a public holiday.
- Easter Sunday was established as a public holiday in Western Australia in February 2022.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

QUEENSLAND



GARY O'HALLORAN



Last year has seen some massive wins for workers and electing a Federal Labor Government has made this happen.

The Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022 abolishes the ABCC and ROC and will start to get wages moving again. This is a great first step, and we look forward to the ongoing support of a government who cares about workers.

EB10 negotiations have well and truly kicked off for the new Fire, Mechanical, and Plumbing agreements and we will begin negotiating for Roofing soon. Many Contractors will already have received notices, which will start the official process for an agreement.

With the support of our members, we hope to finalise the new agreements as soon as possible. We held the second PPTEU Awards night on the 16th of September, recognising some truly outstanding contributions to our trade and industry.

It was a great night, and we are glad we could have so many members

attend. Keep an eye out for registrations for 2023, it's sure to be a fantastic night. Congratulations to all who were nominated in 2022 and congratulations to our winners!

We have also upped the engagement in both our PPTEU Youth Crew and PPTEU Women spaces. The Youth Crew Golf Day was a massive success and we raised over \$30,000 for the Youth Crew's chosen charities; Orange Sky Australia, Mates in Construction and Share the Dignity.

This is the future of the PPTEU, and we are excited to see what else they can do. Chanelle C, Apprentice Sprinkler Fitter and PPTEU Women member, attended the Women in Male Dominated Occupations and Industries (WIMDOI) Conference 2022 in Canberra, joining Union women from across the country.

Our PPTEU Women are engaging with industry, and we look forward to seeing what they can do with all our support.

We were thrilled to have The Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier and Minister for the Olympics, officially open our own Hydrogen Centre of Excellence on the 16th of November. This facility will train Queensland's next generation of renewable hydrogen experts, and it's owned by industry! 40+ renewable hydrogen projects are currently underway across Queensland – so this facility is crucial for a growing industry that's helping create a clean energy future for Queensland.

This would not have been possible without the support of the State Government. We have achieved a lot in the last few years, and we will continue to fight for workers' rights on site and strive for a safe and secure future for our members and industry.

This would not have been possible without the support of the State Government. We have achieved a lot in the last few years, and we will continue to fight for workers' rights on site and strive for a safe and secure future for our members and industry.

TROY FERNANDEZ

The Plumbers Union congratulates the MPs who joined with the Albanese Government to support the Secure Jobs, Better Pay Bill – the first step towards real pay rises that Australian workers have seen out of the Federal Government in a decade.

The Bill will make workplaces fairer and safer for women while also enabling more parents to access and return to work. It will also expand access to bargaining for millions of workers who have been locked out of the process which should be the engine of wage growth in this country.

The ALP was joined by the Greens and independents Zoe Daniel, Monique Ryan, Bob Katter and Andrew Wilkie, who have voted to end a decade of flatlining wages and real wage cuts.

The 'Secure Jobs Better Pay' Bill is an absolute game changer for our wages and conditions.

We're living through an unprecedented cost-of-living crisis. Everything is going up, except our wages. Meanwhile, CEO pay and the profits of multi-nationals keep going up. Guess what?

These same multi-national companies have long benefited from our workplace laws – making it easier to send profits overseas rather than keeping them in the hands of Australian workers.

The Secure Jobs, Better Pay bill will start to get wages moving again. Here's how:

A. Strengthening laws on equal pay, tackling sexual harassment and discrimination at work and the right to request flexible working arrangements.

B. Beginning to tackle insecure work by limiting the use of fixed term contracts.

C. Making bargaining more accessible, including by introducing or improving multi-employer bargaining streams and simplifying approval processes.

D. Dealing with termination of agreements and "sunsetting" zombie agreements.

E. Beginning to strengthen compliance by lifting the cap on small claims.

F. Abolishing the

ABCC and ROC. The Government has also indicated that a second tranche of IR legislation called the "Protecting Worker Entitlements Bill" will be introduced in the second half of 2023.

Amongst other things these include:

- **Inserting a right to superannuation in the National Employment Standards.**
- **Providing stronger access to unpaid parental leave so families can share work and care responsibilities.**
- **Increased job security for casual workers.**
- **Same Job, Same Pay measures.**
- **Criminalising wage theft.**
- **Give workers the right to challenge unfair contractual terms.**
- **Provide stronger protections against discrimination, adverse action and harassment.**

The action taken by the Albanese Government is creating the fairer and more equitable workplace relations system that workers need, want and deserve.

Kind Regards,

Troy Fernandez
Industrial Officer report

2023 RDO

QLD/NT CALENDAR

36 HOUR WEEK

JANUARY

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MARCH

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SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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- EBA RDOs
- Industry RDO
- Public Holidays
- School Holidays
- Brisbane Holidays

The Problem: YOU CAN'T BE WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE

The Solution:

As of September 2021, 98.5 per cent of Victorian apprentice plumbers (10,010) were men, compared with 1.5 per cent (148) women. Of 30,146 qualified and registered plumbers, only 103, or 0.35 per cent, are women.

Celebrate role models that girls can look up to.



LIL – 39
FIRE SPRINKLER BY TRADE

"I decided to become a tradie, I was working as a screen printer and I loved working with my hands and I wanted to do something that involved that and paid well. I break the bias around women in construction by being visible, I am now working in underground mining, there are very few women in Underground Mining, I had done a trade and now I want to take up the challenge in a new way."

Lil has been a Union member for 15 years and has been a role model for so many women coming into our industry. Lil was one of the first Plumbers Union QLD Women in Plumbing Program participants in 2009 and has been said to be one of the BEST SPRINKLER FITTERS of her class and out on the tools. Thank you for inspiring us to take up the challenge to become a tradie, for supporting the Union and the PPTEU women members, we are very grateful to have you in our Union and in our Industry.

STACEY – 26 – MECHANICAL PLUMBER WINNER OF THE BEST 3RD YEAR APPRENTICE 2022

Stacey has completed her Certificate III in Mechanical Plumbing working with Thermal Group through to her completion. Stacey has demonstrated great commitment and passion for her trade over the last 4 years, she produces excellent work and doesn't shy away from a challenge. Stacey is currently studying at university and completing her drainage block at STC, allowing for dual trade. Stacey is an advocate for the Union movement and women in construction.

CHANELLE – 33
FIRE SPRINKLER FITTER
APPRENTICE



"I wanted to do a trade to continue learning, I was in the fire industry and I wanted to extend my knowledge by doing the trade and have all the knowledge moving forward. I love that every day is different, I am currently going to Trade School at PICAC in Beenleigh."

Chanelle has been a Union Member for 1 year, currently completed her Certificate III in Fire Sprinkler Fitter apprenticeship with Fire Industry Training. Chanelle not only works on the tools and studies hard but helps run the business Diligent Fire. Chanelle has demonstrated such dedication to her industry and the union from day 1. Last year we sent Chanelle to the WIMDOI Conference 2022 in Canberra, where she was able to experience the Union movement in a whole new way. Chanelle has been involved in Speed Career with the National Association of Women in Construction QLD, where she was able to speak to young women in grade 10-12 about our industry. Thank you for being such an inspiration to women, for putting your hand up to represent and for just being you.



The Problem: YOU CAN'T BE WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE

The Solution:

Celebrate role models that girls can look up to.



RIAN – 35

PPTEU PROJECT AND PROGRAMS MANAGER – WOMEN'S OFFICER

"My whole career has been focused on improving and progressing our Industry. It is an absolute honor to represent the women in our trades and I am dedicated to seeing more and more progression within our Union and the construction industry. My goal is to empower, support and to inspire courage in women to stand up, speak out and be seen in our industry. I hope to address the issues around retention of female trades women in the construction industry through all avenues I can."

Rian has worked in the Plumbing Industry for over 13 years, 8 of those with the PPTEU QLD, through out her time in industry she has implemented programs, strategies and supported the Union and members through training, programs, initiatives, funding and more. The PPTEU Women's was started in January 2022 by Rian and we hope that through this avenue we will be able to continue to improve, empower, and connect with our members in a new way. If you haven't connected with Rian yet, please reach out and get connected.

Rian currently works with a number of industry bodies and unions focusing on women in construction and holds positions that give women a voice and access to opportunity and equality.

- Services Trades College Director
- PPTEU Women – Lead Union Officer
- PPTEU Youth Crew – Lead Union Officer
- Queensland Women in Construction Industry Advisory Committee – Chair
- QCU Women's Committee – Committee Member

The PPTEU QLD has identified the need to focus on women in construction and will continue to engage with the membership and industry on how we can support women in their fight for respect, equality and equity.



SHARI – 28

APPRENTICE CO-ORDINATOR

"Our female members deserve a Union that makes space for them, supports them, and advocates for them. I'm glad to be able to assist our team in building the PPTEU Women's

Program and I look forward to seeing the ways we can better empower women in our industry into the future."

Shari has worked for the Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union Qld for 9 years, starting in membership and communications, and assists in many of the Unions core functions.



Jennifer Siebel Newsom's 2011 Sundance documentary Miss Representation features insights from many great minds about why women are under-represented in positions of power and influence. One of the most striking quotes in the film comes from Marian Wright Edelman, Founder and President of the Children's Defense Fund: "You can't be what you can't see."

Though hyperbolic, Edelman's quote touches on a key barrier to women in the construction industry: a dearth of strong role models. Without other women to look up to, many young women are self-selecting out of a trade before they even really give it a chance.



CELEBRATING OUR MALE ALLIES

Male Ally 2022 Damian O'Sullivan, Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement Mick De Brenni

This year the Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union (PPTU) in QLD came up with the initiative to recognize a Male Ally within the Plumbing Industry.

Plumbing being a Male dominated trade the Union has seen a small change in the uptake of females in our industry. We've identified that it is time to tackle the attraction and retention of women in our trades, targeting the cultural shift required to see improvements in this area.

Introducing the Male Ally Award at the 2022 PPTU Awards was one of the initiatives Rian Kelso from PPTU QLD felt would bring attention to the need for supportive and inclusive male allies to the forefront. Recognizing males that support women in trades, is step one for the PPTU QLD, in the education piece for our domain.

Damian O'Sullivan the recipient of the Male Ally Award 2022, has been a supporter of women in trades and continues to demonstrate his passion for change in this space. Damian currently works for Multiplex on Queens Wharf; he is also the president for the PPTU QLD. Damian was nominated to be awarded the Male Ally 2022 due to his passion for standing up for women in the workplace, his ongoing encouragement to women in leadership roles and the uptake of female apprentices within the Plumbing industry.

In a recent interview with Damian, he stated that he believes that training and education is the key to addressing the issues women face with working in the construction industry. Understanding what women face in the construction industry and then how to work with women in their very male dominated environment is key to the culture shift that is required to retain, attract and support women in construction industry.

Damian shared insight about his own bias around women being able to be plumbers when he was younger. At the beginning of his trade as an apprentice, he was faced with his bias. A young woman did her apprenticeship with Damian at TAFE, he was in the same class as her and happened to work in the same location up in Redcliffe. During their time at trade school there were many

manual tasks that were required, one of which was to bend copper pipe.

During this class, Damian could see his fellow female apprentice struggling with the task. She asked him if he would assist her to bend the copper pipe as she felt she wasn't strong enough. He was quite upfront with her and said, "If you can't bend the pipe in here at trade school how do you think you can qualify for a plumber out in the real world?" to that she said, "If I can't bend it myself, I will buy the bend, problem solved." It was at this stage Damian realised that there is always more than one way to do a task or a job. In Damian's words, "I was very quickly put back in my box."

The PPTU QLD is a huge supporter and advocate for women in trades, seeing the Male Allies Program as an opportunity to educate the industry. In Damian's interview he stated, "There are so many barriers that have been faced for women in male dominated industries, I believe that one of the first steps for our industry to break the barriers is Education, communication, and collaboration. Educating the workforce is the first step in understanding the barriers, then working together to support each other to break through some of the mindsets around women working in the constructions industry. We have come along way from where we were, but there is still a fair way to go."

Unions play a big role in the mission to advocate for women in male dominated industries and their rights generally. Thank you to Damian O'Sullivan for making it his business to speak up and speak out for women's rights, to encourage women in the construction Industry and to see that more women and girls have opportunities to embrace careers in the Construction industry by breaking the bias, breaking down barriers and being proud to advocate for change.



AUSTRALIA'S FIRST HYDROGEN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

The PPTU was thrilled to have Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP officially open the Hydrogen Centre of Excellence on November 16 at the PICAC Beenleigh campus.

The PICAC Hydrogen Centre of Excellence is an Industry-first training facility that will upskill gas plumbing professionals, enabling the Australian workforce to begin the transition to a clean, renewable hydrogen future. Supported by the State Labor Government since its inception, The Premier was joined by Queensland Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment Cameron Dick MP, Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement Mick de Brenni, Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development Di Farmer MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence Shannon Fentiman MP and over 150 industry participants, apprentices and post-trade learners to celebrate the opening of the brand new, state of the art training centre.

This facility will train Queensland's next generation of renewable hydrogen experts, 1,000+ trainees and apprentices each year could have access to this world-class facility, which includes specialised gas training equipment, lower carbon technology upgrades, roof access work platforms, and state-of-the-art training rooms.

"Queensland is on track to becoming a global hydrogen heavyweight," the Premier said.

"We recently announced our \$62 billion Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan which will drive our renewable energy transformation.

"This includes developing our hydrogen industry which is expected to grow by \$19 billion and create 4,350 jobs by 2040.

"We're already on our way with 40 hydrogen projects happening across the state.

This world-leading centre is a great example of industry working together to equip apprentices with the skills needed for jobs now and into the future.





CHARITY GOLF DAY

Raising Funds For

OrangeSky
— Australia —



Mates in Construction, Orange Sky and Share the Dignity were chosen by the Youth Crew Committee based on the work they do in our wider community.

By hosting a day like Golf Day the PPTEU Youth Crew hope to connect, relax and have some fun, but most of all, raise funds for hard working organisations that keep people alive, clean and healthy, both mentally and physically.

What a great turn out to a great cause, thank you to all the attendees for your time, dedication and comradery.

A big thank you to the following companies for their sponsorship:

A.G. Coombs	FireVac
Axis Plumbing	FIT
BERT	Globe
BKB Plumbing Solutions	Havendeen Roofing
BUSSQ	Lindores
CC P&D	Premier Fire
CEPUTEC	South QLD Roofing
Cooke & Dowsett	STC
CSQ	STQ
Ellis Air	Underground Plumbing
Firerite	



CLICK TO CHECK OUT THE PHOTOS FROM THE DAY!

As part of the Fundraising for this event, members entered into competitions, such as Best Mo, Best Mullet, Best Dressed, using this to gather support from friends and family.

Great job to everyone who participated and raised money, a special shout out to Sam Evans who raised a massive \$1120!

All up we raised over \$33,000, and this was spilt amongst Mates in Construction, Orange Sky and Share the Dignity.



OVER \$33,000 RAISED!

Each charity was presented with over \$11,000.





QLD AROUND



D THE TRAPS



QLD AROUND



D THE TRAPS

World Plumbing Day **March 11**



Plumbing improves the world

World Plumbing Day is a globally celebrated annual event held on March 11th to raise awareness about the crucial role of plumbing and sanitation systems in safeguarding our health, communities and environment.

In honour of World Plumbing Day 2023, PICAC organised a **range of events at our campuses in Victoria, NSW and QLD** to commemorate the significance of plumbing and the work of licensed plumbers.

World Plumbing Day **Women in Plumbing Morning Tea at PICAC BRUNSWICK**



PICAC Brunswick held a morning tea to celebrate Women in Plumbing in honour of World Plumbing Day. The event featured inspiring guest speakers who shared their stories and knowledge of all things plumbing.

One of the highlights of the event was a panel discussion featuring **Jackie Sims-Coutts, a licensed plumber, and Amy Kosterman, a licensed sprinkler-fitter**, who discussed their personal experiences in the plumbing and fire protection industries. They emphasised the importance of breaking down barriers for women entering the industry and highlighted the long-lasting and fulfilling career opportunities available in plumbing and fire protection.



To wrap up the World Plumbing Day morning tea, Reece presented five female apprentices who are embarking on their plumbing journey with comprehensive toolkits. This will help ensure that they have the necessary tools and equipment to start their apprenticeships successfully.

PICAC would like to thank event partners Women Onsite, PPTEU VIC, RAW GTO and PICAC World Plumbing Day supporters Incolink and Reece.

2023 World Plumbing Day Apprentice Skills Contest



2023 APPRENTICE SKILLS CONTEST FINALISTS!

Plumbing competition:

3rd place: Jack Keogh – Axis Plumbing (QLD)
2nd place: Jordan Tait – NSG Plumbing (VIC)
WINNER: Justin Jongsma – Shinnars Plumbing (VIC)

Sprinkler Fitting competition:

3rd place: Jack Dillaway – ARA Fire (QLD)
Tyson Heathcote – Fireline Fire Protection (VIC)

WINNER: Daniel Roberts – SRD Fire Protection (VIC)

At our **Brunswick Campus**, PICAC hosted the annual World Plumbing Day Apprentice Skills Contest which brought together **6 plumbing and 5 sprinkler fitting apprentices from Victoria, Queensland, and New South Wales.**

The competition kicked off bright and early on World Plumbing Day, and it was a fiercely fought contest to the very end. We would like to extend a big thank you to all who competed and congratulations to the finalists in both competitions.



Sprinkler fitting competition
Winner: Daniel Roberts
SRD Fire Protection



Plumbing competition
Winner: Justin Jongsma
Shinnars Plumbing

World Plumbing Day New South Wales



PICAC's Glenwood campus in New South Wales commemorated World Plumbing Day by hosting a luncheon that celebrated the crucial role played by licensed plumbers and sprinkler fitters. More than 90 industry participants, apprentices, and notable guests, including then NSW Leader of the Opposition, Chris Minns MP, were in attendance.

During his visit to PICAC, **Chris Minns pledged \$25 million towards the establishment of a Hydrogen Centre of Excellence at PICAC Glenwood.** This announcement marks a significant milestone for the plumbing industry in the state, highlighting the importance of investing in this field to create sustainable job opportunities in the renewable energy sector.

PICAC Glenwood also hosted a plumbing and sprinkler fitting skills competition for apprentices. PICAC congratulates Cayden Herps, a plumbing apprentice from Doolan Plumbing, and Matthew Cincotta, a sprinkler fitting apprentice from Precision Fire Protection, for taking home the top prize in each event.





World Plumbing Day QUEENSLAND

PICAC's state-of-the-art campus in Beenleigh, Queensland hosted a special luncheon to celebrate World Plumbing Day. The event saw an impressive turnout of over **110 attendees**, including apprentices, staff and industry members. The participants were treated to a variety of activities and engaging speeches that highlighted the vital role plumbing plays in our society.

The keynote speeches were delivered by the Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union Queensland and the Master Plumbers Association of Queensland.

The speakers highlighted the rewarding and diverse career pathways that exist within the plumbing and fire protection industries and highlighted the vital role plumbing plays in the health, safety and sustainability of our communities.

The World Plumbing Day lunch was sponsored by Caroma, and PICAC would like to express its gratitude for their generous support. The event provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the latest innovations and technologies in the plumbing industry and promote the importance of ongoing education and training for plumbers.





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3 steps to get your insurance sorted



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2. Work out how much insurance cover you need

Visit cbussuper.com.au/calculators and use our *Insurance needs calculator* to work out how much you need to be financially secure, to protect yourself and your family in the event of death or disablement.



3. Update your options

It's easy to apply, change or cancel your cover anytime. Just log into your online account cbussuper.com.au/login or call us on **1300 361 784** if you're unsure.



You can find more information on our insurance options at cbussuper.com.au/insurance.

Your local coordinators

Local Cbus Coordinators provide face-to-face support when you or your worksite need it. All onsite visits will be subject to appropriate social distancing and COVID safety requirements. Get in contact if you need help or would like to organise a workplace information session.

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THESE *EVERYDAY* WORKPLACE TOXINS COULD BE MAKING YOU SICK

Most plumbers are now aware of the dangers they face at the workplace through exposure to asbestos dust. However, you may be unaware that many lesser-known toxins can also lead to an increased risk of cancer and lung disease.

Some of these common toxins include silica dust from cutting through concrete or artificial stone benches, welding fumes, epoxy and other resin vapours, chemical solvents and diesel exhaust fumes.

In most cases illnesses caused by these substances are irreversible and, in some cases, fatal. Common work-related conditions include lung cancer, pulmonary fibrosis, asthma, pulmonary oedema,

pneumonia, silicosis and scleroderma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which includes conditions such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

Safe Work Australia's Australian Work Exposures Study found that plumbers along with welders, painters, concreters, carpenters, engineers and demolition workers are among those most at risk of workplace disease.

What to do if you've been exposed in the workplace

If you have been exposed to toxic workplace materials, you should make your GP aware. Your GP can arrange periodic health reviews, if appropriate, or make a note on your file. You should let your GP know what you do for work, and the materials you have been exposed to.

It is important to remember that it can take months or years after exposure to some workplace toxins to cause disease.

You should also note that even if you are or were a smoker, exposure to workplace toxins can in some cases increase your risk of developing a condition, or make it worse.

If your condition is said to have been caused by smoking, it is still important to let your doctors know about your occupational history.

What to do if you have been diagnosed with a workplace disease

If you have been diagnosed with an illness linked to exposure at work, you may be entitled to significant compensation entitlements.

Maurice Blackburn Lawyers have a team of expert lawyers who specialise in work-place disease. Contact Maurice Blackburn Lawyers on 1800 763 192 for a free consultation.

For more information about how Maurice Blackburn Lawyers can help you on a no win, no charge basis, visit **www.mauriceblackburn.com.au** or free call **1800 810 812**





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