



9 May 2022

Chris Lehmann
National Advocacy Advisor
Master Electricians Australia

By email: clehmann@mea.asn.au

Dear Mr Lehmann

Thank you for providing the election priorities of your organisation on behalf of your members. An Albanese Labor Government will put trades, skills and modern, eco-technologies at the heart of our economic recovery from COVID-10. The Liberals have held Australia back from the economic opportunities of clean and renewable energy production, and they have presided over a skills crisis that has seen industry and business unable to make the most of these opportunities.

Labor will invest in the renewables that will power our future, and the skills, contractors, industries and businesses we will need to get the greatest return on that investment. We will also build an electricity network designed for this century, linking up cheap renewables to the grid.

Our *Rewiring the Nation* program will invest \$20 billion to rebuild and modernise the grid, in line with a blueprint already completed by the Australian Energy Market Operator and signed off by all governments. This will provide thousands of new construction jobs for Australians, many of those in our regions.

And Labor will ensure Australia's modern energy grid will be built by Australian workers using Australian suppliers by mandating local supply and local labour.

Below are a series of short responses to the issues you raised on behalf of your members. I would urge your members to also visit these sections of our website, where they will get a more expansive view of how we intend to create Secure Australian Jobs, provide a Better Deal for Small Business and deliver a Future Made in Australia, and how these plans all fit together to take us towards a better future.

[Secure Australian Jobs | Policies | Australian Labor Party \(alp.org.au\)](#)

[Labor's Better Deal for Small Business | Policies | Australian Labor Party \(alp.org.au\)](#)

[A Future Made in Australia | Policies | Australian Labor Party \(alp.org.au\)](#)

Yours sincerely

Paul Erickson
ALP National Secretary

- Labor supported the introduction of the Mutual Recognition Amendment Bill 2021, which introduced a uniform scheme of automatic mutual recognition for licenced occupations across the States and Territories. We also recognise the need to balance mutual recognition arrangements for specific industries.

- A Labor Government will address post-pandemic strains on small and medium enterprises by introducing quicker payment terms and a plan to reduce transaction costs through what is known as least-cost routing. These changes will benefit 2 million Australian businesses, with the potential to save businesses \$804 million a year in merchant fees.

We support the principle of harmonising State and Territory Security of Payments systems, and will ensure any reform we consider in this space will not result in weaker standards than currently apply.

- An electrotechnology Industry Skills Cluster makes sense for an economy in which new sustainable and clean energy technologies will become more and more important as we shift to a power mix that brings down power bills and reduces harmful emissions.

- More apprentices and trainees will be central to an Albanese Labor Government's plan for economic recovery. We need to bring more apprentices and trainees into key industries that are facing worker shortages. Labor will support industry and small business by ending the skills crisis the Liberal Government has created. As a part of our Powering Australia plan, we will invest in 10,000 New Energy Apprentices and a New Energy Skills Program.

- National leadership is urgently required to fix Australia's skills crisis. In contrast to the last nine years of cuts, an Albanese Labor Government will deliver secure well-paid jobs, by investing in the skills Australia needs to drive future economic growth. That's why we will offer a fee-free TAFE place for any Australian who wants to learn a trade or train for a skilled job in a recognised skills shortage area.

Priorities will be determined by the National Skills Commission's National Priority list, but also through Jobs and Skills Australia - a new and independent agency we will create to research workforce trends and provide impartial advice about what skills are needed and how best to address skills shortfalls, in consultation with States and Territories, industry and providers.

- We support reforms that reduce costs and waiting times for consumers, and reduce unnecessary paperwork for qualified contractors, while ensuring that streamlining should not reduce existing protections for consumers and contractors.

- We are supporting the expanded use of batteries and investing in the supply chain and industry infrastructure that will manufacture them. For example, we've committed \$22 million to establish Northern Australia's first ever eco-industrial precinct,

supporting battery cell manufacturing, producing battery grade minerals and leading on renewable manufacturing and hydrogen production.

We'll roll out 85 solar banks around Australia to ensure more households can benefit from rooftop solar, and we're installing 400 community batteries across the country. And our Driving the Nation Fund will support cheaper, cleaner transport by building a National Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Network, and investing in Hydrogen Highways for heavy transport.

We're also allocating up to \$3 billion from Labor's National Reconstruction Fund to invest in green metals (steel, alumina and aluminium); clean energy component manufacturing; hydrogen electrolysers and fuel switching; agricultural methane reduction and waste reduction.