



**Government
of South Australia**

Treasurer

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Mr Malcolm Richards
Chief Executive Officer
Master Electricians Australia
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Dear Mr Richards

Thank you for providing Master Electricians Australia's *2022 South Australian State Election - Policy Priorities for Master Electricians Members* document.

Please find attached a consolidated response on behalf of the Government to your questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rob Lucas'.

Hon Rob Lucas MLC
Treasurer

13 March 2022

2022 South Australian Election

Response to Master Electricians Australia

1. Mandatory fitting of safety switches on all safety switch capable circuits in all South Australian homes.

If re-elected Marshall Liberal Government would be pleased to have further discussions about this issue.

2. Accelerating the progress of Automatic Mutual Recognition of Occupational Licences between State jurisdictions.

Legislation supporting the introduction of AMR in South Australia was passed in November 2021.

AMR for electricians and a number of other occupations commenced in SA on 1 February 2022.

The introduction of legislation to support the national AMR regime is at different stages of introduction across jurisdictions:

- Victoria – commenced.
- WA – legislation in Parliament.
- Qld – not progressing legislation at this stage.
- NSW – legislation passed but Electricians subject to detailed risk assessment expected to be complete later this year.

3. Support for the Electrotechnology Industry to have its own skills cluster, recognising the urgent need for training packages to be reformed in these vital areas of skills for the South Australian economy.

The Government has successfully rebuilt South Australia's training system to train jobseekers and upskill existing workers. Under our \$200 million Skilling South Australia program SA has achieved nation-leading success with national data showing that between June 2018 to June 2021 the number of apprentices and trainees commencing in South Australia increased by 72 per cent, compared to 34.1 per cent nationally. Critically, we have turned around the State's disastrous performance under Labor between 2012 and 2018 when there was a 66 per cent decline in training commencements.

We are ensuring more South Australians can access high quality training to support them into employment through paid career pathways, and re-skilling opportunities to work in the modern labour market.

A key part of our training reforms include establishing local Industry Skills Councils (established in January 2019) and the new South Australian Skills Commission, which commenced in July last year following our significant legislative changes. The Commission was established with the objective to deliver a more responsive training

system to support local industry training priorities, and ensuring our local workforce is equipped with the skills to respond to local industry needs.

To support South Australia's growing economy through a skilled workforce, the Government's Skills Commission and Industry Skills Councils will continue to develop new training in line with industry needs. An example of our work with industry is the declaration of the dual-trade Electrical Refrigeration Technician occupation in October 2020, enabling apprentices to concurrently achieve Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician (UEE30811) and Certificate III in Air-conditioning and Refrigeration (UEE32211).

Just this month, the Skills Commission also approved five new micro-credential courses, two of which directly support your industry; Global Wind Organisation Basic Safety Training and High Voltage Operations.

Our priorities remain to work with employers and apprentices and trainees to ensure quality training outcomes, promote higher education apprenticeships and traineeships and work with industry and the university and higher education sector to expand offerings (SA has delivered the first Higher Apprenticeship in the nation) and expand the micro-credential program to develop shorter, bespoke courses to enable people to easily upskill throughout their career, and have these new skills recognised.

A re-elected Government will further work to support and advocate on behalf of the Electrotechnology industry at a national level. The new Industry Clusters model will replace the 67 Industry Reference Committees and six Skills Service Organisations and are expected to be fully operational by 1 January 2023. Industry Clusters are being established through a two-stage grant opportunity, with stage one now open until 31 March 2022 through GrantConnect

<https://www.grants.gov.au/Go/Show?GoUuid=b4bbac70-2d21-4e90-b406-bf3dc6fb80e6&keyword=GO5308>

The opportunity exists for industry and businesses to take a seat at the table as part of this fundamental overhaul of Australia's VET system, and the Government encourages all industry leaders with an interest in the future of our VET sector to work with your aligned industry sectors to develop an application.

4. Accelerating South Australia's Nation leading commitment to Distributed Energy Resources (DER) and the increasing the resilience of the power grid.

The Government has taken the lead on distributed energy resources, and ensuring that basic smart capabilities are normalised. We have also incentivised the deployment of batteries and electric vehicles paired with programs which will ensure that they are smart and benefit all consumers.

Our smart mandate on batteries as part of the home battery scheme mean that South Australia now have more than 3.5% of homes with a battery, and that 10,000 homes are part of Virtual Power Plants. We look forward to completing 40,000 home batteries as part of our \$118 million home battery scheme. Our subsidies for smart home charging of electric vehicles will support 7,500 vehicles being charged in ways that best support the grid and make us of time of use charging.

We have strongly encouraged time of use tariffs, both by mandating that retailers provided such an offering, and by strengthening their uptake when new distributed energy resources are deployed. Our fleet pledge program is accelerating both the South Australian Government and broader uptake of electric vehicles.

As the cost-effectiveness of bi-directional charging enabled models improve, our policy framework based around best total cost of ownership will bias our fleet towards models that provide the greatest return, which may be through bidirectional charging or otherwise smart management of charging. We commit to continuing our leadership in distributed energy resources, and appreciate the support of the Master Electricians in that regard.

5. Reviewing the Power of Choice (POC) metering reforms and facilitating the ability of Electrical Contractors to become involved more fully in the installation and replacement of metering.

The Government is interested in improving the access to timely services from electricians for those changing house or installing distributed energy resources. We are aware that there are barriers to some electricians performing various classes of work, which are different in other jurisdictions such as NSW. A re-elected Marshall Government will review the barriers to suitably qualified and experienced electricians undertaking certain classes of work, aware that this is of greatest interest in the case of meter installations, in a way which is different from other jurisdictions. This is a matter that has been investigated to a degree in the last term of Government, and a re-elected Marshall Government would seek to finalise this work through review led by DEM in consultation with stakeholders.

6. Improving the Security of Payments framework for sub-contractors in line with the Murray Review and best practice on other jurisdictions.

The Government acknowledges the matter and will consider it in due course.

7. A return to "Business as Usual" in the wake of the Covid19 pandemic as soon as possible, and a removal of restrictions and emergency powers to lessen the red-tape burden on business imposed in the course of the pandemic.

The Government is committed to keeping the State borders open. The Government looks forward to business as usual in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic to assist businesses to thrive.

The Government has risen to the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 and kept our state safe and our economy strong, in part, by closing the borders during the height of the pandemic when a vaccine was not yet available or the vast majority of people were not vaccinated against COVID-19.

In November 2021, the local economy was stimulated, and families, friends and loved ones were reunited as our borders opened to those who were fully vaccinated.

The Government has, at each stage of the pandemic, protected local jobs from the devastating impacts of the pandemic which we have seen interstate and overseas – and continuing to keep the borders open now will support our local businesses.

In late February 2022, the Government removed the remaining density restrictions for non-essential public sector workers in office buildings which followed a relaxing of social distancing measures. This month, the Government removed the remaining density restrictions in hospitality venues and restrictions on singing and dancing.