

Sources of Training Funds

SKILLING AUSTRALIA'S DEFENCE INDUSTRY

The Skilling Australia's Defence Industry (SADI) Program initiative addresses the significant shortfall in the quantity and quality of defence workforce skills available to defence industry to ensure that the Australian Defence Force has the capabilities it needs to defend Australia and its national interests.

The Government is investing approximately \$215 million over ten years. This commitment provides industry with assistance to meet the three program outcomes:

- The generation of additional skilled positions
- Up-skilling existing employees
- Improving the quality and quantity of skills training in defence industry.

Who Can Apply?

Defence Primes and Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) working on Defence acquisition and sustainment contracts are strongly encouraged to apply for the funding. The funding can be used to increase both the quality of their existing workforce and the quantity of skilled people in their workforce.

Micro-companies with small workforces (up to approximately 10 staff) that provide critical strategic capabilities to Defence, and selected other companies participating on the Defence Materiel Organisation Support Service panel and Defence Support Group (or similar) panels, with shortages in the targeted skill sets, can also seek assistance from the SADI Program.

Additionally companies that aspire to participate in the defence sector but do not as yet have a Defence contract may be eligible for SADI funding assistance where they can demonstrate a firm commitment to bid for a Defence contract within a twelve month period. And third parties, such as education institutions and industry representative bodies can also access SADI funding, where they can demonstrate they are responding to industry led demand for training or support that will deliver the SADI Program outcomes.

Proposals submitted for consideration under the SADI Program are required to:

- Target growth in those professional and technical trades categories where current and future shortages are identified;
- Attract new employees, both experienced and at entry level, into defence industries;
- Encourage skilled employees to remain in industry for longer;
- Ensure access to the right training for both experienced and new employees;
- Address the short, medium and long term growth requirements of industry; and
- Demonstrate the commitment of the company to increase the workforce skills base.

Positive consideration is given to proposals that increase both the quality of the existing workforce skills and the quantity of skilled personnel available to industry, through but not limited to, a combination of any of the following primary means:

- Emphasising workplace and on the job skilling programs that ensure employees are "fit for purpose"
- Providing skilling opportunities for both entry level employees and experienced employees from defence and other industry sectors
- Increasing the numbers of experienced employees moving laterally into defence industries from other sectors
- Influencing the education sector to ensure appropriate courses for the defence industry; training initiatives that encourage skilled employees to remain in the industry for longer periods and to ensure corporate knowledge is handed on when experienced personnel finally leave employment
- Building additional training capacity in areas of identified skill shortages.

Other initiatives include:

- Raising the awareness of career opportunities within the Defence Industry
- Increasing the pool of entry-level employees available to the defence sector through industry promoting the sector as a desirable vocation or career choice for young people
- Raising the awareness of experienced employees in other industry sectors of the existence of defence industry as an attractive career opportunity
- Including a proactive strategy to improve the reputation of the sector so competent people are attracted to defence industry careers.

The SADI Program

Funding is provided for the additional activities or initiatives that companies propose, "over and above" those they already carry out in the normal course of business. It is structured as a reimbursement program where companies commit to a program of skilling activities with outcomes and costs agreed in advance. SADI Funding Agreements can take the form of:

- individual company agreements that are tailored to suit the nature and size of both the company and the nature and duration of the initiatives being funded under the agreement; or
- one combined agreement whereby a group of companies is represented by one organisation, or a third party such as an education provider.
- Irrespective of the type of agreement established under the SADI Program, companies are actively encouraged to consider entering collaborative arrangements to offer other organisations opportunities to deliver additional skilled positions and up-skill existing employees.
- All SADI proposals are considered in a non-competitive environment and on their own merits within the published guidelines.

The SADI team is available to work with organisations to assist them in developing agreements that can be funded. The SADI Program requires commitment and up front investment from both Defence and industry. The long-term benefits of this commitment are:

- Increases in both the quality of the existing workforce skills and the quantity of skilled personnel available to industry
- Delivery of the capability required by the Australian Defence Forces on time, on budget and to the required standards;
- Growth in Australia's specialised skills base by enlarging the pool of qualified engineers, technicians, tradespeople and project managers through the creation of additional "smart" jobs;
- The provision of opportunities for rural and regional Australia, where many major Australian Defence Force platforms (and their components) are constructed and/or supported through life; and
- Enhanced opportunities to participate in the development of a range of innovative defence technologies.

The SADI initiative shares the responsibility for skills growth and development between industry and government and represents a win - win solution to both the defence of Australia and Australian defence industry.

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