



FACT SHEET – OVERVIEW

What is the *Priority Start* policy?

The *Priority Start* policy aims to assist Western Australia to develop a sustainable construction trades workforce by setting benchmarks for the number of apprentices and trainees to be employed by companies working on State Government building construction, civil construction and maintenance contracts.

Head contractors and the subcontractors used for these contracts are required to meet a **target training rate**, based on their combined WA construction trades workforce.

How is the *Priority Start* policy different to the *Government building training (GBT)* policy?

Priority Start is different to the *GBT* policy in that it:

- applies to contracts with a **total value** over \$5 million (including GST);
- includes a **civil construction target training rate** of 5%;
- **expands** the range of in-scope occupations and apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications;
- has **less reporting** requirements with more flexibility;
- contains **stronger compliance** and auditing requirements; and
- delegates requests to vary the target training rate to an inter-agency **compliance panel**.

Which State Government contracts will the *Priority Start* policy cover?

The *Priority Start* policy applies to construction and maintenance tenders issued **from 1 April 2019**.

State Government building construction, civil construction and maintenance contracts with a total value over \$5 million (inclusive of GST) are in scope of the policy.

Government trading enterprises should consider the policy when procuring construction and maintenance contracts.

What is the target training rate?

The target training rate is the required percentage of construction trades workers who are apprentices and trainees in the occupations in scope of the policy and working in WA for the head contractor and the subcontractors used for the contract. The target training rate is the benchmark head contractors have to meet each reporting period.

The following target training rates apply:

- 11.5% for general building construction and maintenance contracts; and
- 5% for civil construction contracts.

What is the construction trades workforce?

The construction trades workforce includes all in-scope construction trade workers, apprentices and trainees working in WA for the head contractor and subcontractors used for the contract.

Apprentices and trainees may be employed:

- directly (new and existing employees);
- through a group training organisation (GTO) or a skill hire company; or
- as students undertaking school-based arrangements.

The lists of in-scope construction trades occupations and apprentice and trainee qualifications are available [on the Department's Priority Start website page at dtwd.wa.gov.au/prioritystart](http://dtwd.wa.gov.au/prioritystart).

Please note: The construction trades workers – including the apprentices and trainees – **do not have to work on the contract or construction site** to be counted in the total construction trades workforce, but **must be working in WA**.

Which contractors are in scope of the *Priority Start* policy?

The head contractor and all subcontractors used for the contract are in scope of the policy. To be included in the training rate calculation in a reporting period, contractors must:

- be working on the contract; and
- employ in-scope construction trades workers, apprentices and/or trainees working in Western Australia.

Please note: Manufacturers and suppliers of materials **are not** in scope of the policy.

Can contractors change from the *GBT* policy to the *Priority Start* policy?

Contractors under the *GBT* policy can choose to transition to Priority Start from 1 July 2019, on the condition that:

- they have fulfilled their 2018–19 GBT reporting requirements by submitting their 30 June verification report; and
- all parties to the contract agree.

When transitioning to Priority Start, head contractors may be able to negotiate an alternative annual reporting date with the government contracting agency.

What are the compliance requirements?

Compliance requirements will be outlined in the head contractor's contract and monitored by the government contracting agency.

Head contractors may be audited to verify the subcontractors used on the contract and the construction trades workforce figures provided in their report.

Further information

Jobs and Skills Centres

WA's TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres provide an online jobs board, to connect jobseekers with employment opportunities and to help employers attract and recruit employees. [Visit the Jobs and Skills WA website jobsandskills.wa.gov.au for further information](http://jobsandskills.wa.gov.au).

How to employ an apprentice or trainee

The Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) can help companies who want to attract and recruit apprentices and/or trainees. For more information, or to find an AASN provider in your area, call 13 38 73 or visit australianapprenticeships.gov.au.

Financial assistance to employ apprentices and trainees

The Construction Training Fund provides incentives up to \$25,000 to companies to employ an apprentice or trainee. [Visit the Construction Training Fund website ctf.wa.gov.au for further information](http://ctf.wa.gov.au).