

Media release

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Essential Energy wins Australian Training Award for Apprenticeship Program

Essential Energy's Apprenticeship Program has been recognised as one of the electricity industry's best trade pathways, winning an Australian Training Award for excellence in education and training.

The program's success in creating jobs that evolve into long-term careers in regional NSW was crucial to Essential Energy being awarded the 2019 Australian Apprentices – Employer Award.

At a gala event in Brisbane last night, the Australian Training Awards attracted the nation's best apprentices, trainees, students, teachers, practitioners, employers and training providers, with the category winners recognised for demonstrating outstanding performance in vocational education and training.

Federal Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business Michaelia Cash announced Essential Energy won the Apprentices – Employer Award category for its industry-leading success in creating pathways towards fulfilling careers for people from regional, rural and remote communities across NSW.

More than 100 apprentices are currently employed by Essential Energy, building on the 1280 apprentices who have passed through the program since 2003, with 93 per cent completing their qualification, well above the national average of 63 per cent for electrotechnology trades. More than 90 per cent of apprentices remained with the business after finishing their apprenticeship, with one in four promoted into higher level technical and supervisory roles.

As well as creating new job opportunities in regional areas, Essential Energy's apprenticeships further benefit NSW by generating additional economic activity in the local communities and help build skilled capability right across the State.

Essential Energy Chief Executive Officer John Cleland said the Apprenticeship Program is central to maintaining a highly skilled workforce across regional NSW that reflects the communities served by the business.

"Our apprentices are part of the communities in which they live and work – training to be skilled and adaptable workers in the rapidly evolving energy industry, to help build and maintain the poles and wires that empower regional NSW.

"The Australian Training Award recognises the hard work we put into the program, right from day one of the recruitment process. Its success is underpinned by smart approaches to attracting and hiring the best people for electrical trades, providing opportunities for people from a diverse range of backgrounds, using technologies and mentors and buddies to make training a great experience, and providing opportunities for promotion into higher level positions.

This award is also a wonderful testament to the professionalism and dedication of our training team and the many people across our network footprint involved in the training, mentoring, support and development of our apprentices.

"We are very proud of our apprentice program and in particular our completion and retention. We recruit apprentices from across our network area, they train in their local regions, and go on to careers throughout regional, rural and remote NSW."

More about Essential Energy's Apprenticeship Program: www.essentialenergy.com.au/apprenticeships

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Photo:

Suggested caption: Essential Energy's Manager Learning and Development, Lara Rich and Lismore Powerline Worker Courtney Nelson accepting the award from Federal Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business Michaelia Cash.

