



8 October 2025

Professor Barney Glover AO
Commissioner
Jobs and Skills Australia

Via email: RegionalWorkforceAssessment@jobsandskills.gov.au

Dear Commissioner,

Re: Jobs and Skills Roadmap for Regional Australia- Phase 1

Clubs Australia welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Jobs and Skills Roadmap for Regional Australia- Phase 1 (the Roadmap).

Clubs Australia represents over 5,000 licensed clubs that employ more than 140,000 people. Clubs are not-for-profit, member-owned organisations. With a significant footprint across regional and remote communities, Clubs Australia is well positioned to provide insight into real workforce conditions on the ground.

Regional clubs often function as anchor employers, training hubs, and critical providers of social, recreational and wellbeing infrastructure for local communities. Clubs in regional and rural areas are integral to their communities, offering social, economic, and community benefits.

Clubs Australia supports the development and the vision principles of the JSA Regional Roadmap as an enduring, shared and overarching framework to elevate the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of the jobs and skills system across regional Australia. Clubs Australia also notes that the ten proposed policy design principles and contributing metrics are well-considered and appropriately incorporate the challenges of regional businesses, which will provide a useful platform for policy and decision makers.

Challenges for Regional Clubs as Employers

Clubs Australia has received feedback from regional clubs, as part of the survey¹, that some of the key challenges include:

- Wage subsidies (e.g. apprenticeship incentives) have not been as effective as hoped to bring in skilled workers.
- Meeting compliance training requirements remains a challenge, with regional clubs reporting difficulty in locating qualified trainers within their region. Training subsidies assume practical access to RTOs however many regional workers must travel significant distances, often at employer expense, to complete training.
 - This also means that the actual 'cost of compliance' is significantly increased. One club provided feedback that it would be advantageous to offer training and a career path to encourage individuals to stay the industry.

¹ Clubs Australia, Club Industry Workforce & Skills 2025 Survey (2025).



- Housing availability and affordability continue to be major barriers to workforce attraction and retention for clubs in regional areas.
- Administrative burden and uncertainty with using skilled migration to fill skilled vacancies in regional and rural areas.

Considerations for the Roadmap- Practical Levers

Drawing on the evidence provided by regional clubs in the Clubs Australia 2025 Workforce & Skills Survey and informed by comparable government and industry initiatives outlined in Annex A, Clubs Australia proposes the following proposed workforce solutions for consideration.

1. Vision Principle 1- Addressing Barriers- Housing Supply

Feedback from regional clubs indicates that recruitment often fails not due to wages, but because there is a lack of suitable housing available.

Evidence from comparable programs shows that housing availability is a critical determinant of workforce stability. The Victorian Government's Regional Worker Accommodation Fund has successfully delivered modular housing for essential workers in towns such as Omeo, while Round 2 funding is supporting over 750 additional bedrooms across regional Victoria.² Internationally, Whistler in Canada has introduced planning levers to fast-track the development of employee housing and mandates that 75 per cent of its workforce be housed locally. These precedents demonstrate that housing-linked workforce measures are both effective and cost-efficient, converting the high cost of staff turnover into a structured investment that secures retention.

JSA may wish to explore integrated workforce housing models, such as short-term staff accommodation partnerships or supported leasing arrangements, as part of regional workforce planning. A broader Regional Employer Housing Partnership model where clubs, councils and community housing providers co-invest in modular or repurposed worker accommodation, helping to lower vacancy durations and improve retention.

2. Vision Principle 2- Developing Skills- Training Accessibility

Clubs Australia suggests consideration of a Regional Compliance Training Access Fund, enabling industry bodies or RTOs to deliver on-site or digital RSA/RCG, First Aid, Food Safety and AML/CTF training.

Distance and rostering barriers mean that centralised delivery imposes disproportionate costs on regional employers, with each four-hour round trip valued at more than \$200 in lost productivity using standard Value of Travel Time Savings benchmarks. TAFE NSW has demonstrated through its Connected Learning Centres and Mobile Training Units that decentralised models work for small regional cohorts,³ and several jurisdictions already recognise online RSA/RCG as a valid pathway, proving that digital compliance delivery is both feasible and effective.

² Regional Development Victoria, *No place like home: worker housing arrives in Omeo, 2025*

³ TAFE NSW, Connected Learning Centre, 2025



A targeted JSA fund would build on these precedents, allowing clubs and RTOs to cluster training delivery at venues, use after-hours micro-cohorts, and expand high-quality digital options. This would reduce improve compliance, accelerate time-to-onboard and save both employers and workers significant travel costs.

3. Vision Principle 3- Meeting Demand- Skilled Migration

Chefs, cooks and other positions that can be filled by skilled migration at clubs should be fast-tracked for regional visa processing, with simplified sponsorship available to “trusted employers” such as not-for-profit clubs with strong compliance records.

Clubs Australia recommends that changes are made to the existing mechanisms to support regional clubs using skilled migration, further to our submission to the Review of Regional Migration Settings Discussion Paper in July 2024. Comparable trusted-employer fast lanes are in place overseas, such as Canada’s Recognized Employer Pilot and New Zealand’s Accredited Employer Work Visa. To make the Skills-in-Demand visa effective for regional clubs, JSA should recommend three reforms: ensure key hospitality roles remain on the Core Skills Occupation List, formalise a Regional Accredited Sponsor pathway with template packs and helpdesk support for not-for-profits, and introduce instalment payments of the Skilling Australians Fund levy for SMEs. These measures would be low-cost, administratively simple, and deliver faster workforce access for clubs as employers.

Partnership Opportunities

Clubs Australia would welcome the opportunity to continue to collaborate and engage on the next phases of the regional roadmaps to build a resilient and skilled regional workforce.

This include exploring potential pilot approaches with JSA where appropriate. For example, the following concepts could be considered for further discussion, subject to feasibility and interest from participating regions:

Potential concept	Possible delivery approach	Intended outcome
Regional Training Circuit	Accredited trainers rotating through clusters of venues	Lower compliance burden, faster onboarding
Workforce Housing Collaboration	Clubs making transitional accommodation available where suitable, alongside government support arrangements	Supports candidate relocation
Youth ‘Earn and Learn’ Pathways	Structured traineeship placements co-designed with local schools and TAFEs	Builds early-stage local talent pipelines



Closing

Clubs Australia appreciates JSA's focus on practical, place-based solutions. We would welcome the opportunity to co-design and test the approaches outlined above in live regional settings and to share additional data and case examples as needed.

For further information regarding Clubs Australia's submission, please contact Daniel Mitchell, d.mitchell@clubsaustralia.org.au

Kind regards,

Daniel Mitchell
Clubs Australia



Annex A — Evidence & Precedents

This annex provides illustrative evidence to demonstrate why the proposed levers are effective, cost-viable, and transferrable to the regional club sector.

A. Housing Enablement

- Victorian Regional Worker Accommodation Fund (RWAFF): Delivered modular housing for essential workers in towns such as Omeo, confirming that modular and shared facilities can quickly increase supply in small markets.
[No place like home: worker housing arrives in Omeo](#)
- RWAFF Round 2 outcomes: Over 750 additional bedrooms supported across regional Victoria, strengthening recruitment and retention capacity.
[More worker accommodation for regional Victoria](#)
- RWAFF guidelines: Program details confirm objectives, eligible uses, and co-funding approach.
[RWAFF Program Guidelines \(Round 2 PDF\)](#)

B. Training Access

- TAFE NSW Connected Learning Centres (CLCs): Provide regional students with access to training using digital technologies, supported by mobile delivery.
[TAFE NSW — Connected Learning Centres](#)
- Mobile Training Units (MTUs): Specialised trailers/trucks fitted for practical training, used across NSW to reach regional learners.
[Mobile Training Units overview \(NSW Government\)](#)
- CLC/MTU example in Jindabyne: Confirms mobile units support local delivery for small regional cohorts.
[TAFE NSW Connected Learning Centre in Jindabyne — media release](#)

C. Skilled Migration

- Skills in Demand (SID) visa (Subclass 482): Introduced to replace the Temporary Skill Shortage visa, offering a four-year term with permanent residency pathways.
[Home Affairs — Skills in Demand visa \(subclass 482\)](#)
- Accredited Sponsor priority processing: Accredited sponsors receive priority processing of nominations and visa applications, which can materially reduce vacancy durations.
[Home Affairs — Accredited Sponsor](#)
- Visa processing priorities: Confirms employer-sponsored visas are prioritised where the employer is an Accredited Sponsor.
[Home Affairs — Skilled Visa Processing Priorities](#)