

Driving Industry Conversations – Electrification throughout the Automotive Industry

This document summarises discussions from Driving Industry Conversations – Electrification throughout the Automotive Industry on 27 July 2026. This summary captures the consistent themes raised across these sessions to inform training package reform and broader industry engagement.

National Licensing and Regulatory Consistency

The strongest and most consistent theme throughout the consultation was the lack of nationally consistent licensing and regulatory requirements.

Participants highlighted significant differences between states regarding:

- Licensing requirements for EV work
- Recognition of qualifications
- Scope of permitted work
- Funding eligibility
- Regulatory interpretation

This inconsistency creates uncertainty for:

- Employers
- Technicians
- Apprentices
- Training providers
- National organisations operating across multiple jurisdictions

Many participants supported a nationally recognised licensing framework similar to Australia's refrigerant handling licence.

Funding Drives Participation

Cost remains the greatest barrier to participation.

Participants consistently reported that when training is free or heavily subsidised:

- enrolments increase significantly
- employers are willing to release staff
- apprentices participate earlier
- workforce capability grows rapidly.

Where funding has been removed or is unavailable, training participation drops considerably.

Lost productivity while staff attend training was also identified as a significant financial burden for employers.

Strong Demand for Flexible Training Delivery

Participants agreed that high-voltage training must remain practical and face-to-face.

However, there was strong support for more flexible delivery including:

- evening classes
- shorter staged programs

- regional delivery
- additional training providers
- greater trainer capacity.

Regional participants noted travel requirements continue to limit participation.

Foundational Electrical Skills Need Strengthening

Many participants felt learners enter EV training without sufficient electrical knowledge.

Common concerns included:

- electrical theory
- Ohm's Law
- applied physics
- fault-finding fundamentals
- confidence working around high-voltage systems.

Many supported stronger bridging pathways before learners undertake advanced EV units.

Expand Training Beyond Technicians

One of the strongest recurring messages was that electrification affects far more than automotive technicians.

Participants identified significant training gaps for:

- service advisors
- dealership administration
- front-of-house staff
- panel repairers
- tow operators
- recovery services
- battery transport workers
- recyclers
- truck and bus drivers
- first responders
- workplace safety personnel
- landlords and property managers.

Many supported nationally recognised awareness training designed specifically for non-technical workers.

Improve Industry Awareness

Participants believed awareness is now a greater barrier than training availability.

Many businesses remain hesitant because of:

- fear of high-voltage systems
- misconceptions regarding EV safety
- uncertainty about available training
- confusion around licensing requirements.

Participants supported coordinated national awareness campaigns to improve understanding of career opportunities and available training pathways.

OEM Information and Training Resources

Training providers reported ongoing challenges accessing manufacturer information, including:

- depower procedures
- wiring diagrams
- battery information
- diagnostic systems
- technical documentation.

Intellectual property restrictions mean many RTOs develop their own learning resources, increasing cost and reducing consistency.

Participants suggested greater collaboration between OEMs, industry and training providers to develop shared resources.

Technology is Changing Faster Than Training Packages

Participants acknowledged that training packages struggle to keep pace with rapidly evolving technologies including:

- battery systems
- hybrids
- hydrogen vehicles
- heavy vehicle electrification
- mining equipment
- charging technologies.

There was strong support for more agile qualification review processes that allow updates more frequently than the traditional review cycle.

Heavy Vehicle, Mining and Mobile Plant Require Greater Focus

Heavy vehicle and mining sectors consistently reported that current training frameworks primarily reflect light vehicle requirements.

Key concerns included:

- significantly higher operating voltages
- limited regulatory guidance
- different safety requirements
- unclear licensing responsibilities
- limited training pathways.

Participants supported dedicated learning pathways for heavy vehicle, mining and mobile plant applications.

Overseas Qualifications and Recognition of Prior Learning

Several participants raised concerns regarding the practical capability of some workers entering Australia with recognised qualifications.

Industry supported:

- stronger practical competency assessments
- robust capstone assessments
- improved Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes
- industry ownership of competency standards.

Trainer Capability and Professional Development

Participants recognised the need to continue investing in trainer capability through:

- train-the-trainer programs
- regular industry placements
- OEM engagement
- refresher training
- nationally shared learning resources.

Keeping trainers current was viewed as essential as technology continues to evolve.

Apprenticeships and Workforce Attraction

Participants discussed several challenges affecting future workforce supply, including:

- attracting apprentices into electrification
- differing learner interests between mechanical and electrical work
- uncertainty around future licensing
- apprentice supervision requirements
- employer willingness to invest.

There was also recognition that electrification may attract a different learner profile than traditional automotive trades.

Priority Opportunities Identified

Participants broadly agreed that future work should prioritise:

- Developing nationally consistent licensing arrangements.
- Increasing funding for EV and hybrid training.
- Expanding awareness training beyond technicians.
- Improving access to OEM information and learning resources.
- Strengthening foundational electrical knowledge before high-voltage training.
- Increasing trainer capability and train-the-trainer programs.
- Providing greater flexibility in course delivery.
- Supporting heavy vehicle, mining and mobile plant pathways.
- Improving national recognition of overseas qualifications through practical competency assessment.
- Continuing to modernise training packages to keep pace with rapidly evolving vehicle technologies.

Overall Consultation Outcome

There was strong consensus that the automotive industry supports electrification and recognises the need to rapidly build workforce capability. However, industry believes the greatest barriers are no longer technical they are systemic. Inconsistent licensing, uneven funding, limited awareness, restricted access to OEM information and varying training pathways continue to slow workforce readiness.

Participants consistently called for a coordinated national approach involving governments, industry, training providers and OEMs to ensure Australia's automotive workforce is prepared to safely support the transition to electrified vehicles.

The views, claims, and recommendations in this summary are drawn from what was discussed during the Driving Industry Conversations consultations and do not necessarily reflect the official position of AUSMASA. They are presented to capture industry feedback and inform further discussion, not as AUSMASA policy.