

Non-Accredited Training in the Mining Industry

Research Webinar
15 July 2026



Agenda

**Acknowledgement of
Country**

**Overview of research
processes**

**Key findings and
identified challenges**

Discussion



Welcome

Dr Aneeq Sarwar

Senior Manager
Workforce Planning and Policy



Acknowledgement of Country



Image featured: Jagera Pine and Foam Bark Tree

Acknowledgement of Country

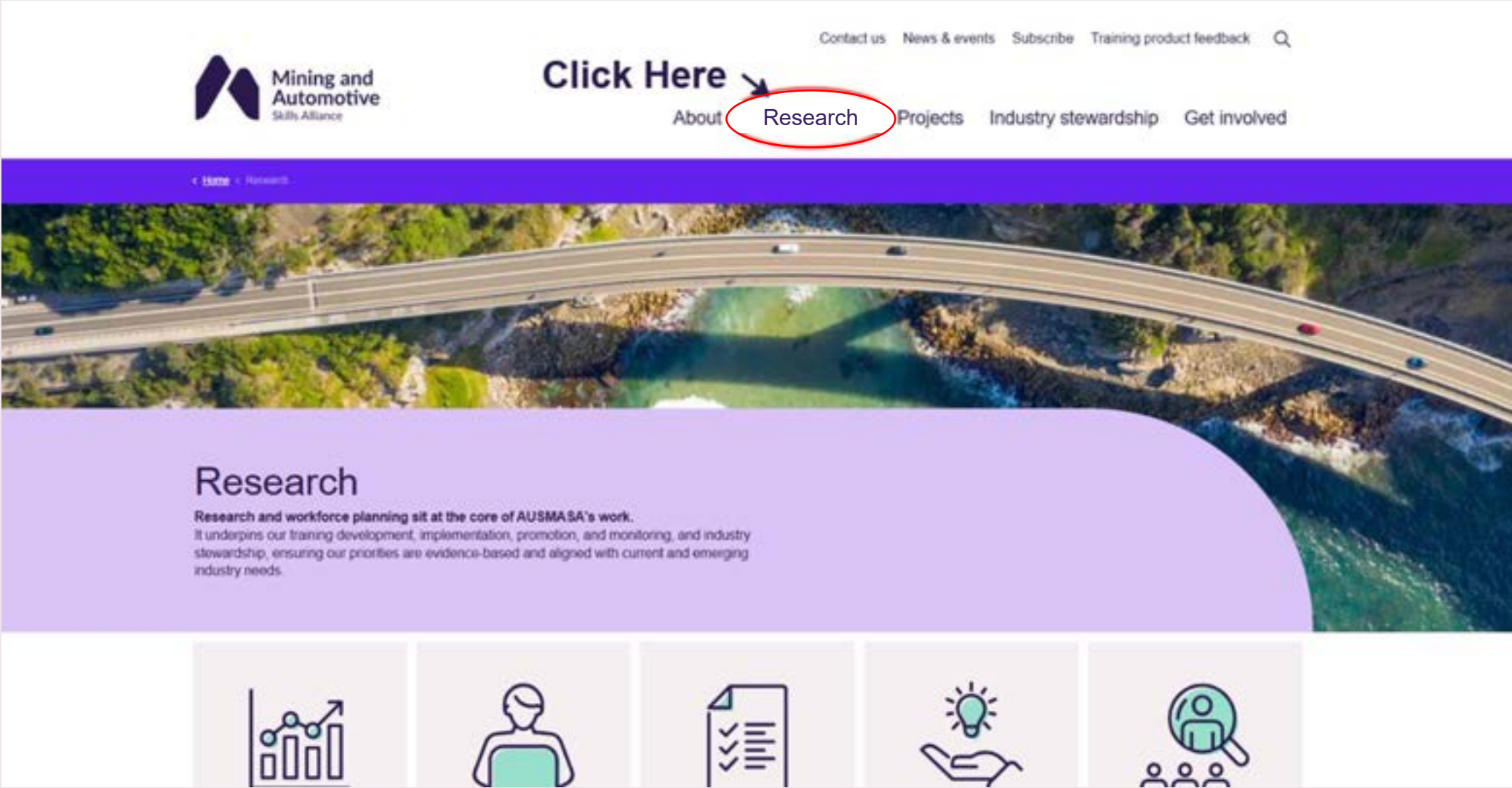
We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work.

We acknowledge Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We honour and respect their Elders, past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Research Hub



Ongoing Research projects

More details on each research project can be found in the research hub of our website.



Scan for more information

Roundtables

Upcoming Adelaide Event key details:

Date: Monday, July 20

Time: 8:45 AM - 4:40 PM

Location: Rydges South Park Adelaide, SA



Annelies MacDuff

Research Assistant and Project
Lead

Workforce Planning and Policy



In the midst of acute skills shortages..

1

What factors are driving the declining reliance on the **RII training package**?

2

Why is the industry increasingly using **internal training models**?



**RII Share
AUSMASA**

**Total Active RII
Quals
53**



Skill Sets

6

Qualifications

39

**Units of
Competencies**

828



31 Consultations

**Data collection and analysis
Consultations and
interviews
Thematic analysis and
validation**

Sectors Covered

- Coal
- Extraction
- Blasting
- Drilling
- METS
- Iron Ore
- Iron ore
- Oil and Gas
- Critical Minerals
- Heavy Machinery
- Quarrying

Understanding the Decline in Accredited Training

Context

Mining employment **+38%** over the past decade

RII enrolments, completions, and commencements have decreased incrementally **-44%**.

Mining industry has the second-most acute skills shortages of all industries in Australia from 2022 to 2024, following the construction industry.

1

Reduced reliance on the VET system?

Questions around whether the industry is moving away from traditional vocational education pathways.

2

Nationally accredited training not reflective of current mining practices?

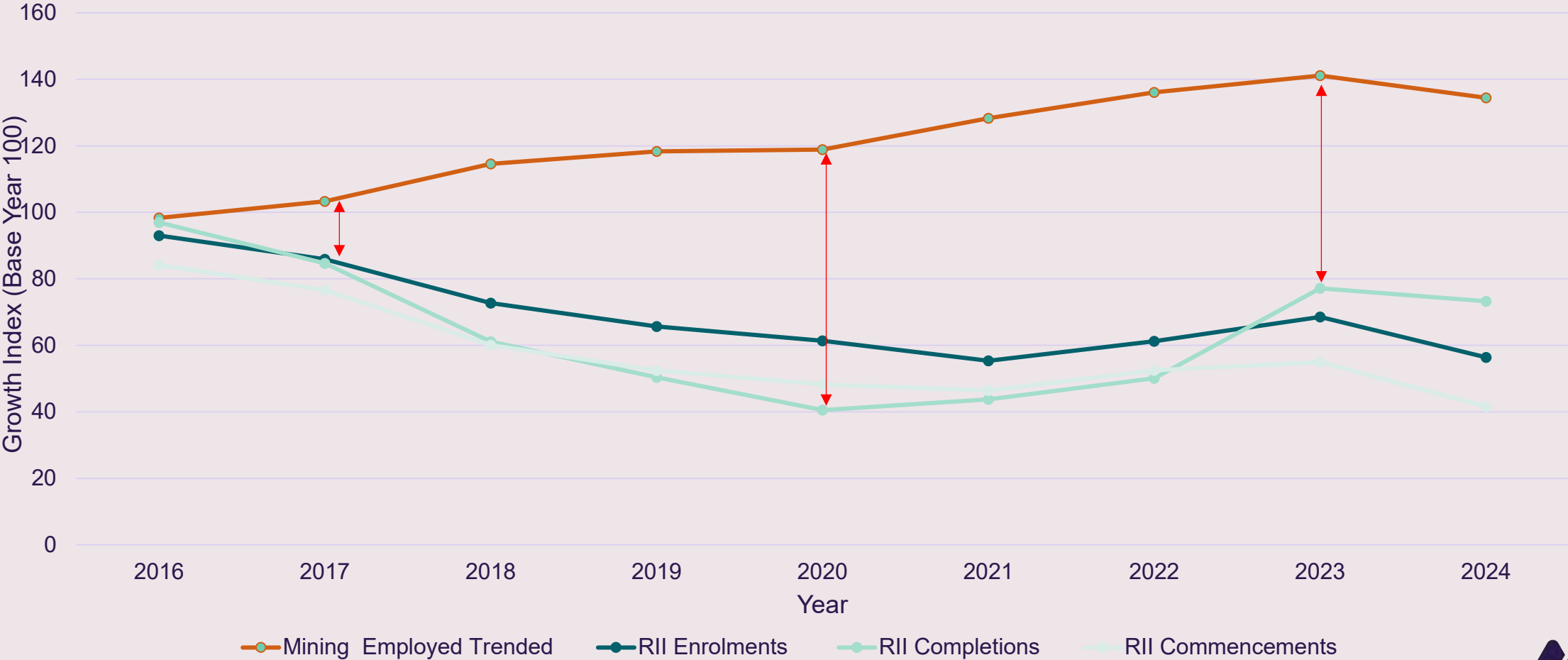
Concerns that formal qualifications may not align with the skills needed on modern mine sites.

3

Resourcing and equipment issues for TAFE institutes?

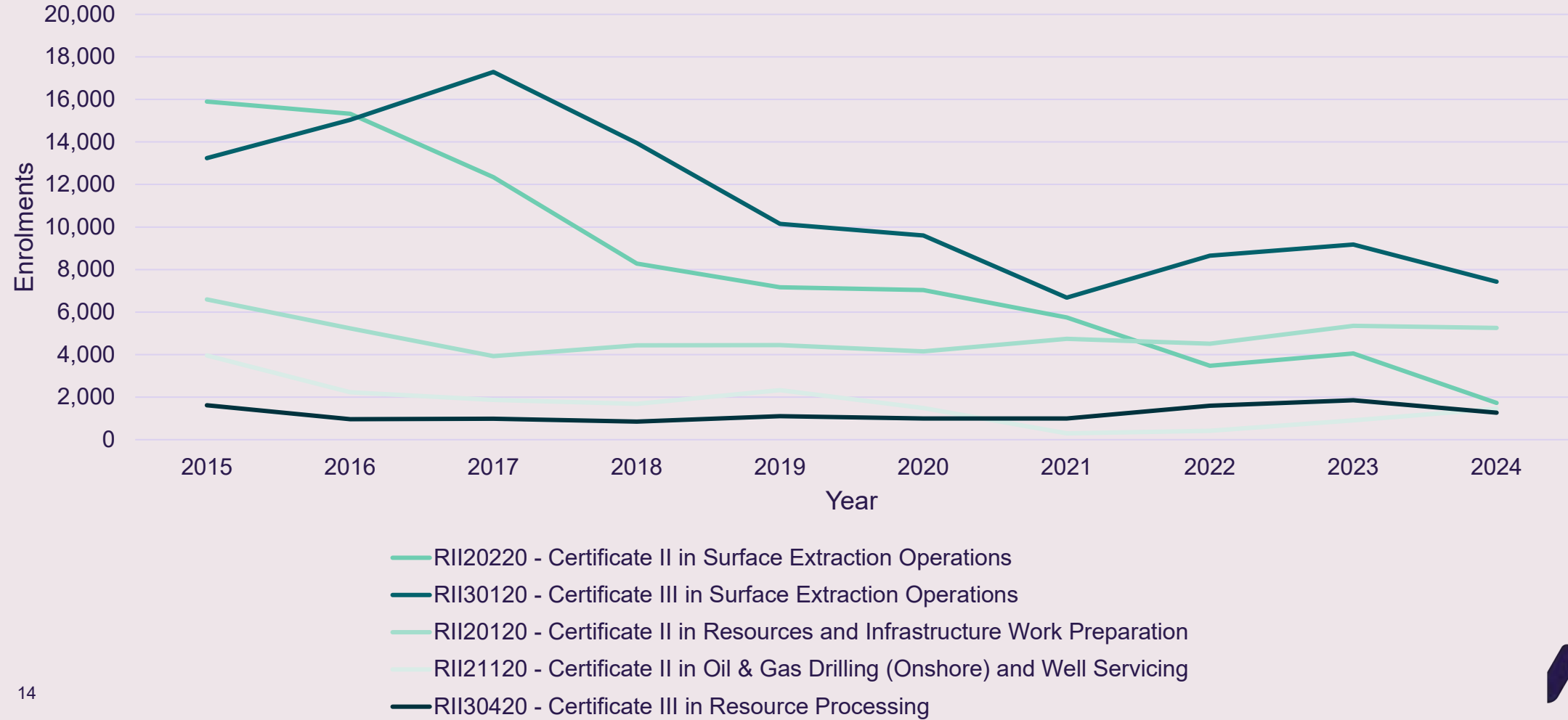
Challenges in providing up-to-date equipment and adequate resources for training delivery.

Growth of competitions, enrolments and commencements has yet to return to Pre-COVID levels



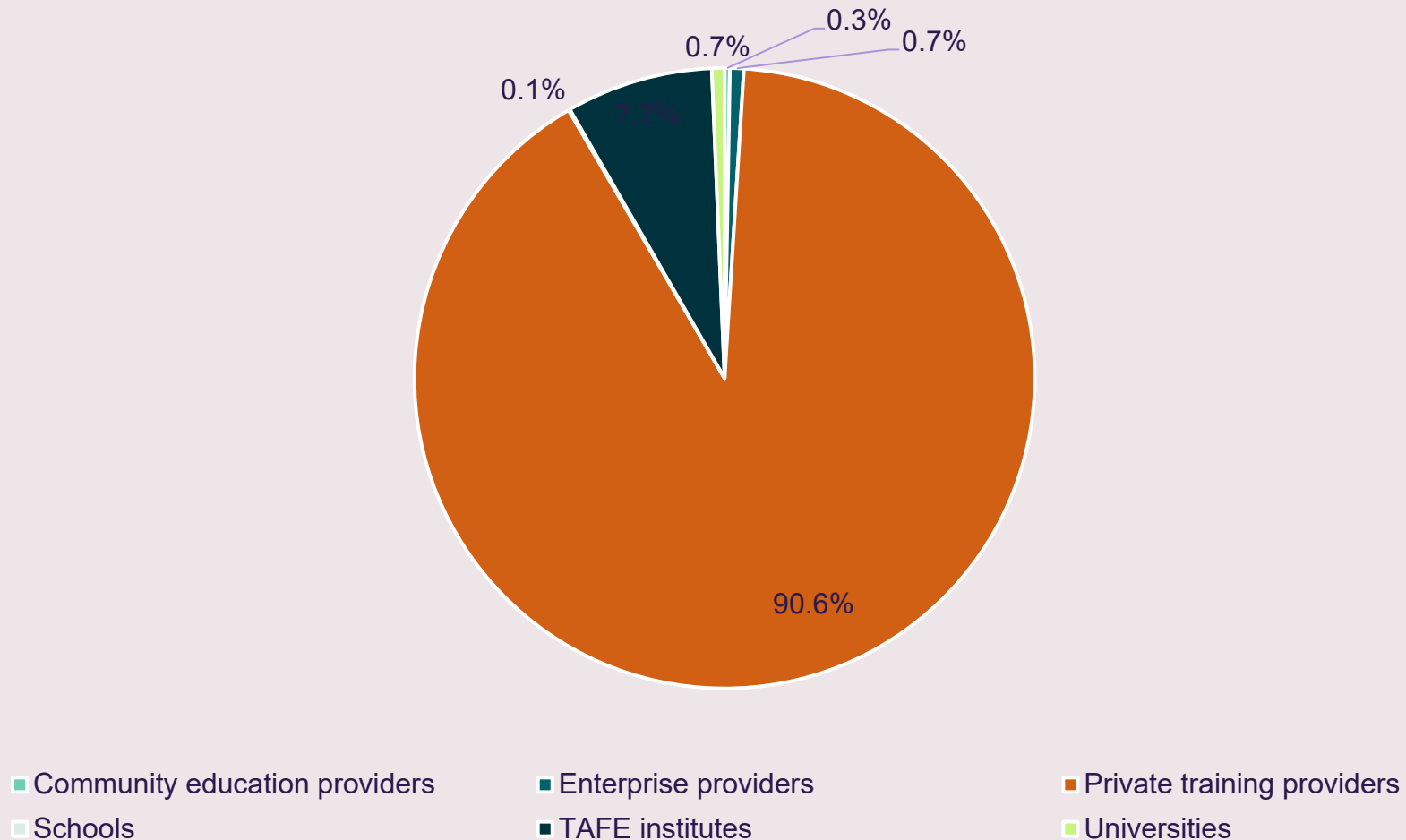
Following the declining trend - Top 5 most enrolled in RII qualifications 2015-2024

**Certificate III in Surface Extraction Operations
declined by 44%**

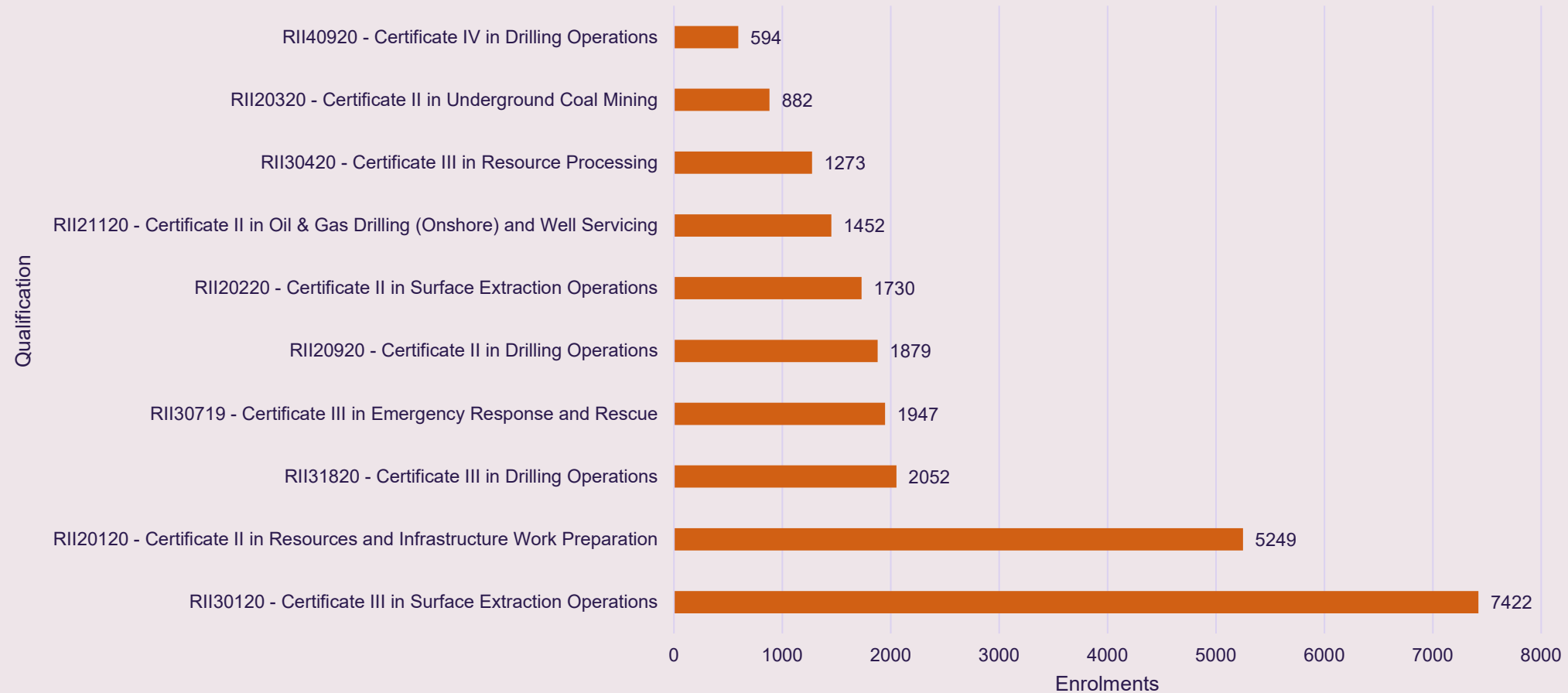


Where are RII enrolments coming from? – Provider types 2024

Private training providers accounted for 90% of all accredited RII enrolments in 2024

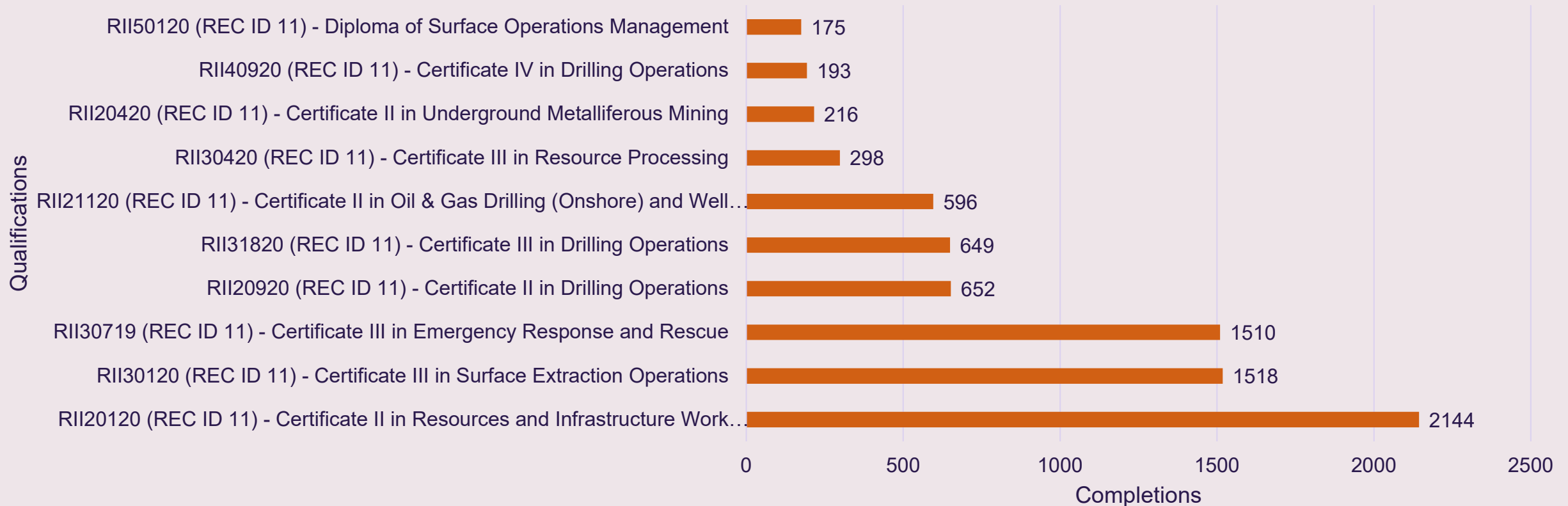


Certificate III in Surface Extraction Operations most enrolled in qualification



Top completions 2024

Certificate II in Resources and Infrastructure Work Preparation most completed qualification

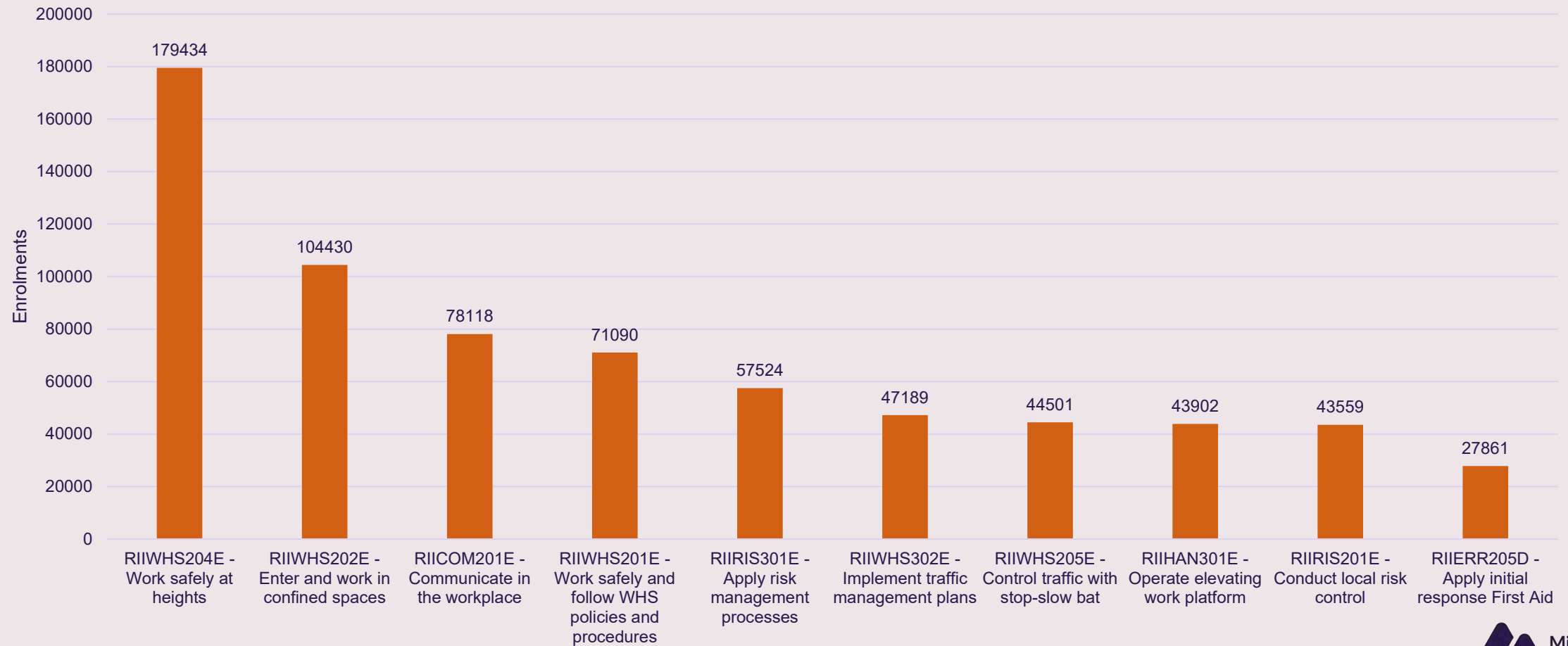


Limited use of full qualifications

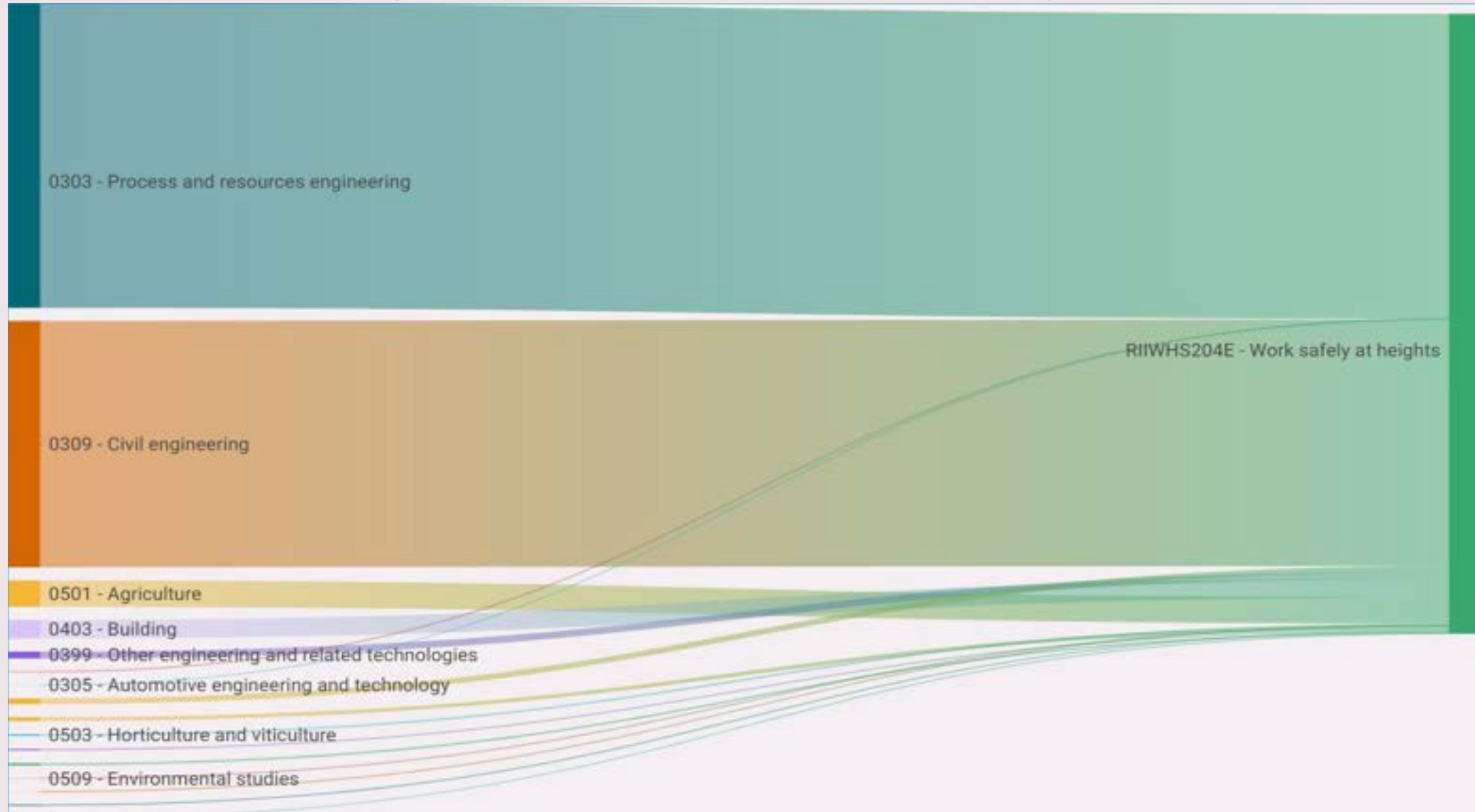


Top 10 Enrolled in Units of Competency

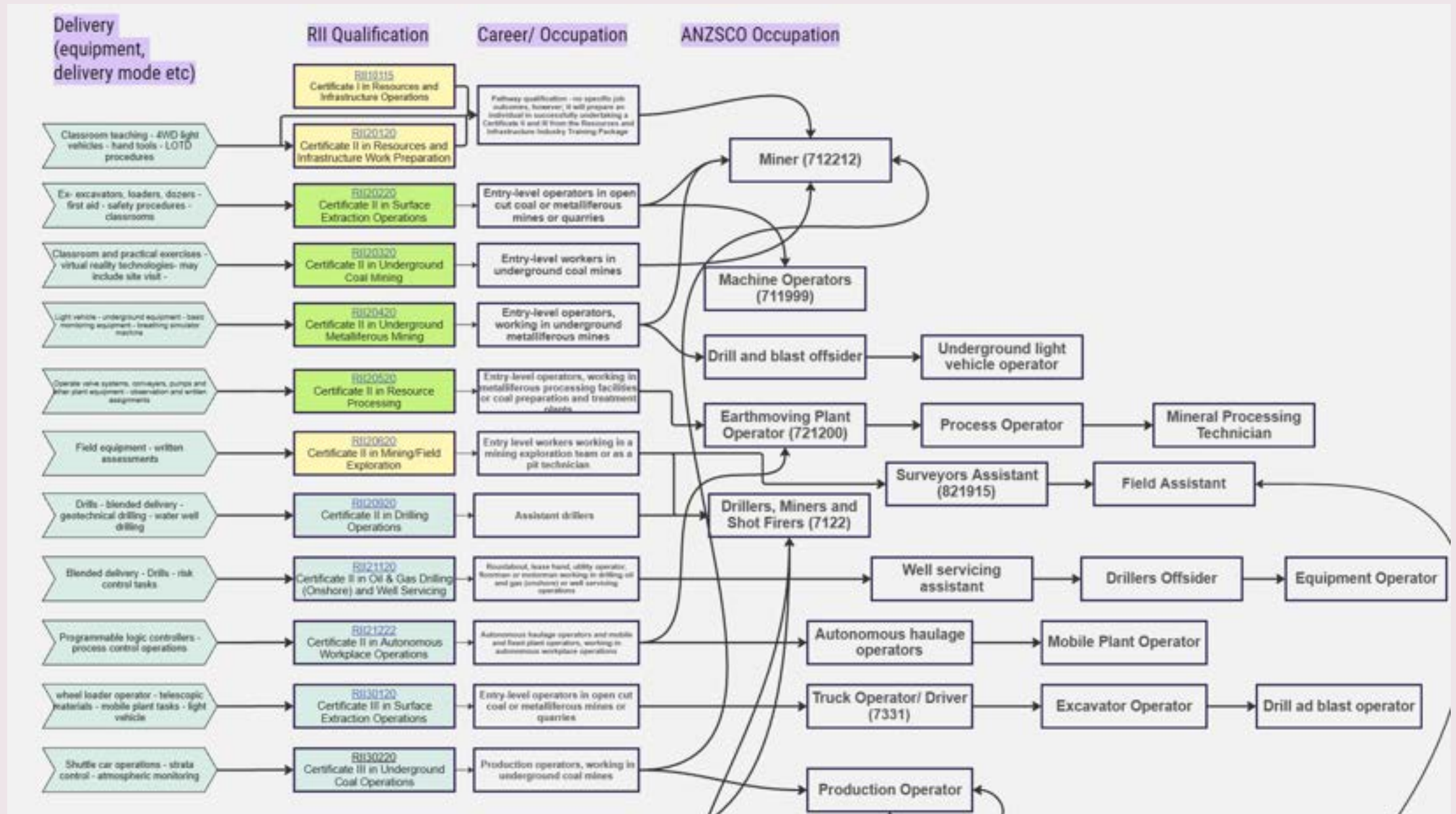
RIIWHS204E* - Work safely at heights consistently top UoC over the past decade



Resourcing and civil industries using RIIWSH204E



Occupation Mapping



Key findings

Compliance

RII qualifications are not mandated by any state's mining safety legislation as an entry-level requirement

State / Territory	Regulation
• New South Wales	WHS Act 2013
• Queensland	Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Regulation 2017, Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, Coal Mining Safety and Health Regulation 2017
• Western Australia	WHS Act 2020, WHS Act 2022
• South Australia	WHS Act 2012, WHS 2022
• Victoria	Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
• Tasmania	WHS Act 2012
• Northern Territory	Environment Protection Legislation Amendment Act 2023, WHS Act 2011

ASQA compliance disconnected from workplace reality?

Industry Perspective

- 1 Not reflective of specific units and competencies' risk assessments (RIIRIS301)
- 2 ASQA is making training compliance-driven, which can distract from learning
- 3 Training becomes compliance-based rather than skill-based

RTO Perspective

- 1 Compliance structures are producing a focus on meeting the standard rather than developing job-ready capability
- 2 Previous emphasis on demonstrating capability in real work environments, currently it is on compliance, documentation and audit readiness
- 3 Industry internal programs (or enterprise RTO) not held to the same regulatory standards as RTOs

Entry-level listing requirements Australia-wide typically require:



Driver's Licence

A current and valid driver's licence is a standard requirement across entry-level mining roles.



National Police Clearance

Candidates must provide a national police clearance as part of the pre-employment screening process.



Medical & Fitness

Pre-employment medical, drug and alcohol screening, and demonstrated physical fitness are required.

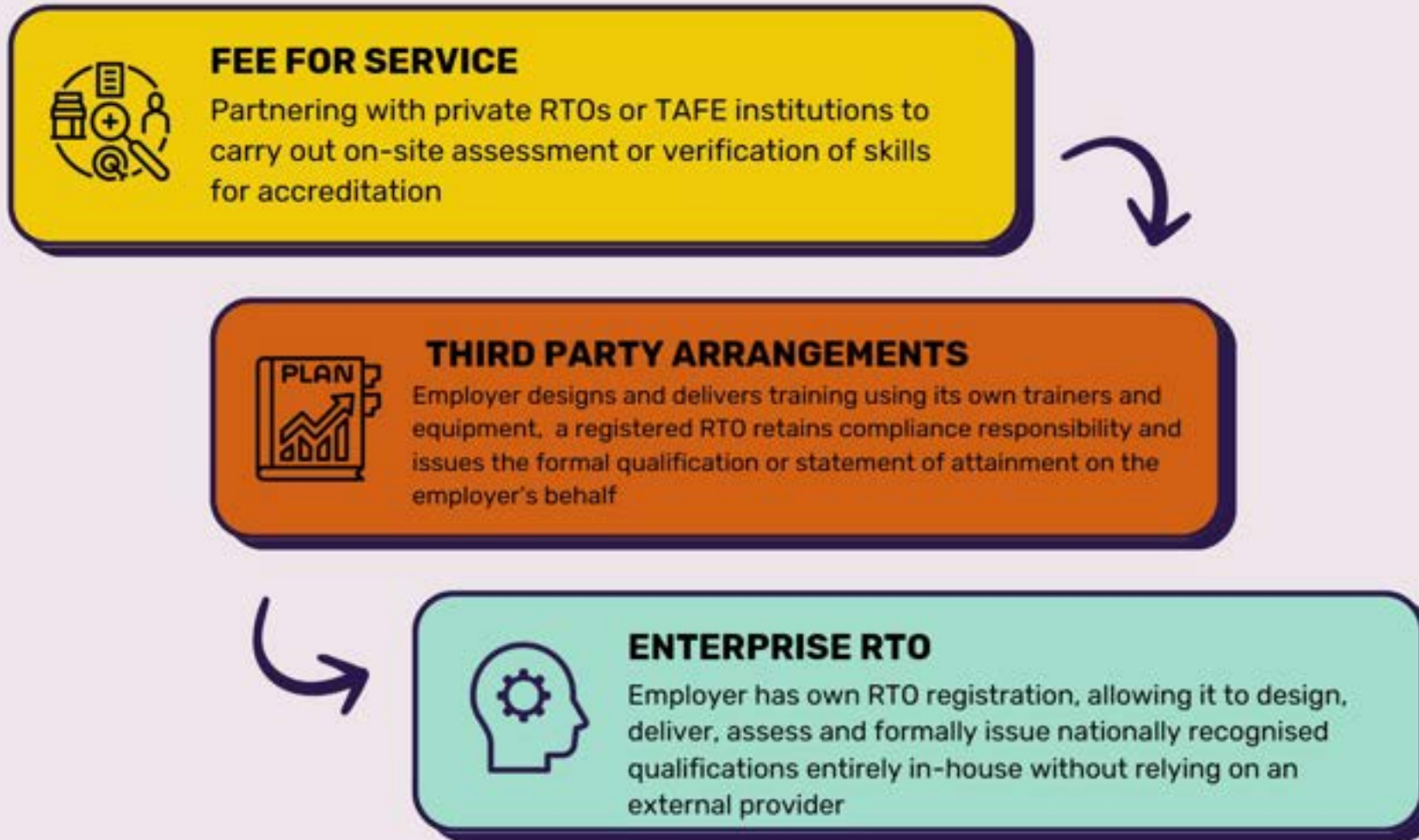
Certifications & Licences

The only certifications or licences consistently referenced across job advertisements were **First Aid and CPR qualifications** and the **White Card**, both of which were generally listed as either preferred credentials or requirements that could be obtained upon commencement.

Why Engage in Prior Accredited Learning?

Financial benefits and competitive salary packages while training on the job, with limited prerequisites

Industry 'in-house' training models identified



Fee for Service Model

Challenges & Opportunities

⚠️ CHALLENGES

- 1 Commercial incentives reward cost and convenience over quality – RTOs “ticking boxes” and not focusing on learning outcomes
- 2 ASQA is making training compliance-driven, which can distract from learning
- 3 Industry lacks the knowledge of training models to evaluate what it is purchasing, creating space for providers to sell inadequate training (Standard 11 delivered completely online)
- 4 Compressed training from employers (eg RIIRIS301 reduced to a few days)

🟢 OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Provides flexibility for training to be tailored to specific organisational needs
- 2 Typically rely on ongoing training contracts, which create long-term relationships between RTOs and industry
- 3 Allows training to be industry-driven
- 4 Employees who have a full accreditation qualification then complete their TAE and transfer to the trainer side, creating a self-replenishing internal training capability

Third-party Arrangements

Challenges & Opportunities

⚠️ CHALLENGES

- 1 Employers can have a conditional approach to RTO partnership, which can concentrate content control with the employer
- 2 Quality issues with internal mapping sometimes done against outdated or incorrect RII units
- 3 ASQA audits RTO not the employer

OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Allows employers to contextualise training to their specific operational environment while still producing nationally recognised qualifications (including equipment and resources)
- 2 This model can enable a scale of accreditation that neither a standalone RTO or a standalone employer could achieve independently
- 3 Allows smaller RTOs to remain operative

Enterprise RTO

Challenges &
Opportunities

⚠️ CHALLENGES

- 1 Costly to run due to dedicated resources (RTO registration, ASQA compliance infrastructure, trainer and assessor accreditation, and ongoing review cycles)
- 2 Potential structural issues with enterprise RTOs sometimes awarding full qualifications to formally enrolled trainees but delivers identical training to the broader workforce as enterprise training without statements of attainment

🟢 OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Can fully control content, directly addressing skills gaps (soft skills, digital literacy, technical skills)
- 2 Removes the dependency on external trainer availability
- 3 Allows for full control of employee training, including specific induction programs to improve retention

In Conclusion, RII *is* being used

- ◆ **Reliance on RII is not declining; traditional VET learning pathways are**
Employers are moving away from external RTOs for both technical and non-technical training
- ◆ **RII remains the benchmark for employer-controlled models**
Internal training is typically mapped off RII and given accreditation, yet allows for contextualisation and organisational procedures
- ◆ **Limited consultation responses describing a functional issue with the way RII is structured**
Limited VET uptake due to traditional delivery
- ◆ **Entry-level recruitment is not contingent on prior RII training or accreditation**
Lack of perceived value in undertaking VET training

Why?

Most conclusive reasons for decline across consultations

Resource and equipment issues for external training providers (no operational environment)

Difficulties delivering to remote workforces and locations

Trainer and assessor scarcity within TAFE and RTO

Cost and funding barriers for VET students and organisations

Perceived lack of value of formal accreditation for transferable skills

Unable to keep up with emerging technology (autonomous dozers)

Internal training can address shortages, retention, and site specific relevance at a faster rate

TAE

- ◆ **Trainee-to-trainer pipeline**

Enterprise RTO has built a pipeline where TAE completion moves a competent worker into the internal training function

- ◆ **Sourcing qualified trainers**

Difficulty of sourcing trainers with a combination of TAE and current industry experience (RTO)

- ◆ **TAE contextualisation needed**

TAE needs to be contextualised within RII because TAE is more compliance-focused

- ◆ **Training package vs delivery**

Focused on the training package rather than delivery – not creating real trainers?

- ◆ **Low willingness to complete TAE**

Six-month time commitment and limited perceived value among experienced practitioners (Industry)

Way forward

01

RII specific skill set for teaching

Teaching and assessments within a mining environment



02

Data Transparency

Data transparency from internal training programs



03

Better RPL Practices

Improved Recognition of Prior Learning practices (Project)



04

Simulation-Based Training

Leverage simulation-based training for larger equipment in RTO and TAFE



Discussion - Mentimeter



Thank you

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