

EV Skills Mapping Project – Mapping the Skills Needed for Australia's EV Servicing Workforce

This document summarises discussions from the AUSMASA EV Skills Mapping Project webinar, held on 9 September 2026. It was hosted by Dr Aneeq Khan, Senior Manager, Workforce Planning and Policy at AUSMASA, with panellists Brian Savage, Deputy CEO of the Australian Automotive Dealer Association, and Jodi Ryan, General Manager, Apprenticeships at the MTA of South Australia and Northern Territory. It captures the themes raised to inform the reform of training packages and industry engagement.

Industry Context and the Data Problem

- The automotive workforce is about 320,000 people, with VET delivery concentrated on the east coast.
- Automotive does not appear as a division in ABS data, being split across manufacturing, retail, wholesale and other services. What cannot be measured cannot be tracked or incentivised, and there is no data on EV technicians.
- Almost all key automotive occupations are in critical shortage, with fill rates below 67 per cent.

The Scale of the Skills Gap

- Around 20 per cent of new vehicle sales are hybrid or battery electric, but EVs remain under 1 per cent of vehicles on the road, so combustion servicing continues for decades.
- A ballpark range of 6,500 to 10,500 additional technicians with EV or electrical skills was projected, against enrolments in the hundreds rather than the thousands.
- The challenge is three-fold: training new entrants, upskilling existing technicians and training the trainers. A 20-year veteran will not return to a 4-year apprenticeship.
- Electrical skills are not EV-specific, with combustion vehicles carrying increasing electrical content.

The Skills Map

The project lists every task performed on a vehicle in a workshop and classifies each by electrical hazard, covering over 100 tasks against 31 occupations.

- **Poses a high voltage hazard.** Direct work on the battery.
- **A hazard until depowered.** Removing and refitting the battery pack, traction motor work and structural repair, covering much of the body repair work.
- **Does not typically pose a high voltage hazard.** Windscreen replacement, wiper fluid and wheel alignment, though regenerative braking qualifies the last of these.
- Not every technician needs the depower unit. Designated staff isolate the vehicle before handing it on, and arc flash equipment is applied narrowly.

Current Training Products

- Depowering and reinitialising battery electric vehicles was identified as the single most important unit of competency and a sound foundation.

- The inspection and servicing skill set has moderate uptake, still in the hundreds. The diagnose and repair skill set had no enrolments until 2024, and the Certificate III in Automotive Electric Vehicle Technology has around 248 enrolments.
- Panellists considered the products broadly fit for purpose. The gap is battery-level work, which relies heavily on OEM processes and may warrant legislation.

Market Shift and Where the Work Is Going

- August was the first month in which EVs outsold petrol and diesel vehicles and used EV demand rose 19.4 per cent month on month.
- NVES targets manufacturers and importers, not workshops or dealers. Jodi Ryan framed it as a workforce capability policy rather than an environmental one.
- EVs need less routine servicing, so the work arriving is fault-driven and diagnostically demanding. Some dealers now open battery packs under OEM instruction.
- Most EVs are under warranty and go to dealers, leaving independents behind but expecting the work.

Avoiding a Two-Speed System

- Regional dealers face access problems even where technicians are available. One Victorian dealer sends technicians to Melbourne, costing 3 days out of the workshop plus travel.
- OEM training varies. Some new brands have focused on sales and are less equipped for after-sales, pushing dealers toward external providers.
- Responses raised included investment regardless of location, mobile delivery, modular or online learning, and access to OEM equipment to enable more targeted and industry-led training

Consumer Understanding

- Misconceptions include assuming any workshop can repair an EV, underestimating the need for qualified technicians on accident-damaged vehicles, and post-collision battery safety.
- Reported EV fires often involve e-bikes rather than vehicles and rarely occur in a workshop. South Australia has no licensing body, raising concerns about unqualified work.
- Repair costs and insurance premiums are higher, and consumers should be forewarned about diagnostic time and equipment costs.

Overall Session Summary

Key themes identified were:

- Poor data visibility makes the workforce, and EV technicians in particular, hard to quantify.
- Demand far exceeds enrolments, and upskilling needs a pathway other than apprenticeships.
- High voltage hazards attach to tasks rather than to EV work in general.
- Training products are broadly fit for purpose, with battery-level work the clearest gap.
- Regional access to training and to vehicles is the strongest equity risk.

Consultation remains open, and the skills map is available on request. These insights will help inform future training package reviews and workforce planning.

The views, claims, and recommendations in this summary are based on discussions during the AUSMASA EV Skills Mapping Project webinar and do not necessarily reflect AUSMASA's official

position. They are presented to capture industry feedback and inform further discussion, not as AUSMASA policy.