

Media Release

Evidence wins the day with auto core skills migration reform

4 December 2024

The Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) welcomes the Australian Government's landmark decision to include all core automotive trades in the new Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL), marking a significant milestone for the automotive industry's workforce development.

The announcement confirms the inclusion of nine essential automotive trades among the 456 occupations eligible under both the new Skills in Demand visa and the Direct Entry stream of the Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186) visa, effective from 7 December 2024.

"This outcome represents a major victory for the automotive sector nationwide," said MTAA CEO Matt Hobbs. "Our comprehensive submission, backed by extensive economic research from Deloitte Access Economics, clearly demonstrated the critical necessity of including these automotive trades in the CSOL."

This successful outcome validates MTAA's evidence-based approach, which included detailed wage analysis and industry data highlighting the severe skills shortages facing the sector. It also highlights the strength of state motor trade associations (MTAs) and the Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce network in presenting member issues and well-crafted solutions to government.

"The sheer number of businesses and diversity of the MTA member network is the strength of the MTAA. We represent the Australian automotive industry from dealer to recycler and everyone in between. This result highlights what can be achieved when we work together as one industry," Matt Hobbs said.

The submission demonstrated that automotive trade wages consistently exceed the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT), underlining the sector's capacity to support skilled migration pathways.

The approved automotive occupations encompass:

- Diesel Motor Mechanic (321212)
- Automotive Electrician (321111)
- Panelbeater (324111)
- Vehicle Painter (324311)
- Motor Mechanic (General) (321211)
- Vehicle Body Builder (324211)
- Vehicle Trimmer (324212)
- Motorcycle Mechanic (321213)
- Small Engine Mechanic (321214)

"This decision addresses a critical workforce challenge facing automotive businesses across Australia," Mr Hobbs emphasised. "The inclusion of these occupations will provide much-needed access to skilled workers, supporting the sustainability and growth of our industry across Australia."

The CSOL forms a key component of the government's reformed temporary skilled migration programme and will operate alongside the new Skills in Demand visa, which replaces the previous Temporary Skill Shortage (subclass 482) visa.

MTAA will maintain close engagement with Jobs and Skills Australia and relevant government departments to ensure these reforms effectively address the industry's ongoing workforce needs.

The MTAA submission to the CSOL review can be found here:

https://www.mtaa.com.au/images/docs/submissions/2024/MTAAs_response_to_Jobs_and_Skills_Australias_JSA_Draft_Core_Skills_Occupation_List_CSOL.pdf

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About MTAA

The Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) is the peak body representing the interests of the automotive retail sector across the nation. Through proactive engagement, MTAA helps shape sound public policy on issues that affect the retail motor trades, small businesses and consumers.

MTAA's member associations include the Motor Traders' Association of New South Wales, the Victorian and Tasmanian Automobile Chamber of Commerce, the Motor Trade Association of South Australia and Northern Territory, the Motor Trade Association of Western Australia, and the Motor Trades Association of Queensland.

At the national level, MTAA acts as a unified voice, representing the interests of the automotive sector to the federal government and influencing key policy decisions. Its work includes identifying and addressing issues impacting the sector and advocating for the needs of automotive businesses through ongoing discussions with government.