

Queensland Training Awards 2017 (2016/17)

Large Employer of the Year (Region: Metropolitan)



Hutchinson Builders

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2017 marks the 105th birthday of Hutchinson Builders; one of Australia's largest, privately owned building and construction companies with projects under construction along the East Coast stretching from Cairns to Hobart and across to Darwin. With approximately 1,167 staff, including more than 150 apprentices (internal and external) and cadets, our annual turnover is expected to exceed \$2B in 2016-17. Our company, which is headquartered in Brisbane, undertakes approximately 200 projects around Australia each year ranging in size from relatively small residential and commercial maintenance works to major multimillion dollar commercial and residential high-rise projects. We also include our >10,000 plus subcontractors and suppliers within our extensive 'Hutchies Family'.

In 2007, our Board decided to increase our already robust commitment to the development of our own employee's by creating a Workforce Development Program to increase our capacity and capability. The initial success of this program was recognised when we were awarded Employer of the Year at the 2011 Queensland and Australian Training Awards. We were only the third construction company to do so in 21 years of its existence. Hutchinson's

apprentices, future leaders, cadets and any workforce development activities the company undertakes are managed, supported and delivered by our own highly experienced Workforce Development Team.

Hutchinson Builders also operates its own award winning industry-based registered training organisation; the Gold Coast School of Construction, which has five campuses in Queensland's Southeast corner. Our construction school and Workforce Development Program focus on these key strategies:

1. Attract-attract and develop passionate and committed trainees, apprentices and other new entrants including Indigenous recruits;
2. Train-provide flexible, responsive training solutions that meet the needs of our industry;
3. Retain-develop strategies that dramatically decrease trainee and apprentice cancellations;
4. Maintain-maintain the post trade skills of existing workers at a level that increases their capacity, capability and productivity; and
5. Sustain-support any successful strategies with the necessary infrastructure, support and funding to make them long term and sustainable.

In recent years, Hutchinson Builders has also expanded its operations and capacity to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This involved, from the outset, the forging of long-standing relationships and partnerships between Indigenous Australia and the broader construction industry. We do this through our own full-time Indigenous Program Group within the Workforce Development Team and "Statim Yaga' (begin work) Strategy which together set the framework for how we engage, consult and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This includes the development of employment, training and business solutions that suit the needs of the communities and regions we operate in; our 28 building teams and the broader Hutchies Family.

Over the past 10 years our initial Workforce Development Program has continued to evolve and now covers a spectrum ranging from pre-apprenticeship training through to pre-tertiary level and in-house short training as we expand its internal capacity to include our many subcontractors and suppliers. We take a more altruistic view on workforce development and see that sharing our successful strategies only enhances the industry at large.

Criterion 1: Extent and quality of training for employees

A dedicated Workforce Development Team was set up to implement the Hutchies' Board decision in 2007 to meet its goal to increase the company's capacity and capability. At that time, flexibility and responsiveness were just words that didn't resonate in the prevailing VET/RTO environment ie. User Choice certainly did not offer any choice at all to the user.

Consequently, the Team needed to develop a concept that met the needs of the company and overcame the inflexibility, lack of customer focus and failures of the existing training environment. A more holistic approach was needed which was enunciated through the strategies of Attract, Train, Retain, Maintain and Sustain.

At that point Hutchies did not have its own RTO and instead set up a strategic partnership with SkillsTech, the biggest public provider to initially develop new training pathways and curricula to train our internal apprentices as numbers grew from about 20 to about 200 over a relatively short period of time. This involved a fulltime TAFE curriculum developer/assessor imbedded within Hutchies and both teams working together to develop unique (for the time), task based, curricula and assessment strategies.

Over the years, this has evolved into Hutchies having its own RTO-the Gold Coast School of Construction (GCSC #32409) through an initial State Government School Industry Trade Centre (SITC) grant. This enabled the company to address more effectively, its Attract and Retain strategies to find and hold suitable candidates for its own internal apprenticeship program and that of its subcontractor network. It also allowed the company to develop and deliver a broad range of training products that were either nationally recognised or in-house and met our own criteria of flexibility, responsiveness, innovation and simplicity. Curriculum development expertise has grown to a point where we now develop materials from Certificate 1 through to Diploma in a variety of media from hard copy to on-line.

Attachment A provides details of the Workforce Development Program, with the matrix at Page 8 demonstrating the connection between the strategies and the training programs that support them.

The qualifications and courses that our employees and subcontractors are undertaking cover a broad range as detailed at Attachment B. From this data following statistics can be ascertained:

-Training expenditure as a percentage of annual payroll is

\$4.67M : \$153M or 3.05%

-The numbers of employees actively engaged in training in any given year will average 651 of a total of >1167 (plus > 328 subbies) which equates to 55%.

(NB: Hutch Safe Induction figures have been removed to give a more normal indication)

-Average hours per month that our employees spend in training equates to 2031hrs. (NB: This figure is an average over 18 mths including Hutch Safe training and Subbies)

The Workforce Development Team consists of 22 employees who largely come from a construction/training background with collectively over 255 years of experience. We passionately believe that the best training is still face-to-face but can be enhanced through a blended delivery approach which depends on the product being delivered. Some examples of this approach would be as follows:

-Apprentice training and assessment resources (carpentry and painting) have been developed around the notion that the best training occurs on-the-job but this can only occur if the process has constant support with quality resources; clear understanding of what is required by apprentice and mentor; and off-the-job training when there are no on-site experience opportunities. We have developed training/assessment resources around themes (tasks) that tradies can understand, in simple hard copy and on-line formats. In addition, we have our own full time Apprentice Development Coordinators who constantly monitor and support the apprentices and their mentors. They also deliver off-the job training in areas that are mandatory, but unlikely to be experienced in commercial construction, such as pitched roofs, steps and stairs-but we deliver them on-site to ensure that it stays 'real' not simulated. See Attachment C for Hutchies Truth article titled "Apprentices train on site".

-Elevated Work Platforms/Working at Heights are critical areas of training for our apprentices, existing employees and subcontractors as a number serious accidents have occurred across the industry over recent years. Consequently, we have worked closely with the Elevated Work Platforms Association of Australia (EWPAA) to become registered to also deliver the industry recognised 'Yellow Card' which adds another layer of expectation and scrutiny to our training program to ensure we are delivering to industry 'best practice'. Through close cooperation with EWPAA, we have taken a blended delivery approach ie.hard copy learning resources and on-line learning delivery of content, combined with reinforcement of key concepts and operating principles face-to face. This enables us to maximise the amount of time students have to practice with a variety of machines, all delivered on a real job site.

Criterion 2: Achievements of the business and its employees that can be attributed to training

The Chairman of Hutchinson Builders' Board-Scott Hutchinson is determined to keep feeling part of a 'family' an important component of being an employee and subcontractor of the largest privately owned builder in Queensland. This can be a challenge in a rapidly growing company with a large number of employees and subbies;and geographic dispersion across Australia. Consequently, the activities of the Workforce Development Team contribute to a feeling of 'family' through a number key activities:

-Publication of the many training activities undertaken through our Hutchies Truth magazine that is published quarterly on-line and in hard copy with a distribution numbering in the thousands. See Attachment C for examples.

-Our annual national Apprentice and Cadet of the Year Awards that are held at Scott's entertainment venue 'Triffid' in Brisbane which nominees attend from across Australia. Attachment D is a photo of Lauren Cockburn, a runner-up at these awards. Lauren started as a school based apprentice in our Toowoomba Team through our long association with Oakey SHS. Lauren has also won Queensland Master Builders (SW) Apprentice of the Year and has gone on to become a Future Leader and is currently a Foreperson. See also Attachment J photo of Minister D'Ath at our 2016 awards with our winners, sponsors and Hutchies Board members.

-Another of our best and brightest who demonstrates our longitudinal strategy detailed in Attachment A is Chantelle Love whose story appears in Attachment C in a Hutchies' Truth article titled "Forging a career in construction".

-Our own Workforce Development Team also have a few achievements to be proud of with Rai Malisaukas (West Village GCSC campus trainer) being appointed Chief Judge at World Skills (See Attachment E) and Mark Kucks (Indigenous Program Manager) recently winning a scholarship to attend the prestigious MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) Global Entrepreneurship Bootcamp which offers only 100 places to applicants from across the Globe.

In addition to these examples, our flexible, responsive focus on training, pays productivity benefits as per below:

-Our record for being the most responsive to a site based training need occurred last year when we received an urgent request to deliver a Materials Handling course on one of our Gold Coast sites to avert an industrial relations incident. We received the call at 11.00 and were delivering the course using one of our Brisbane based staff by 1.00pm, thus avoiding a planned walk out and loss of productivity.

-Our flexibility enables us to deliver quality training across Australia in competition with local RTOs. We recently delivered Yellow Card training to a group of subbies on one of our Tasmanian sites using a Brisbane based trainer cheaper than the local RTO who probably used Tasmania's relative isolation as a reason to escalate prices. The training was delivered in context with the Hutchies' and subbies' own safety systems and on-site using their equipment that they were very familiar with. This ensured maximum takeup of the new skills and improved productivity.

Our 'Hutchies Family' approach to sharing our Workforce Development capabilities also extends to not only our subbies as described above, but also to our peers/Tier 1 competitors in the industry. Whilst our building division might be tendering in competition with Lend Lease, Grocon and Multiplex, this doesn't stop the Workforce Development Team forging links with their management and site teams to establish GCSC campuses on large, long lead projects that will yield maximum exposure to potential employers for our GCSC graduates. Our GCSC campus we are setting up at Lend Lease's Yarrabilba residential village near Beenleigh is a good example of this collaboration. See letter at Attachment F. In addition to this we also have a campus at Grocon's Parkside CGV site and previously at Brookfield Multiplex's site at 1 William Street.

To understand how training has improved productivity and profitability it is first important to understand what these words mean in the context of building and construction. Commercial construction is a world where a \$2.2B turnover ends up a slender \$48M nett profit before tax! This is a world where major defects can shave another 10% of that profit and productivity is not clearly defined or understood and therefore not pursued effectively. The diagram at Attachment G demonstrates the relationship between our workforce development activities in a pragmatic and 'real' way. Our focus on

Our measurement of training benefits are as pragmatic as our strategies. In an industry where apprentice cancellations are in the order of >40% our cancellation rate is <2%. The age profile in the industry is skewed towards an aging workforce whereas Hutchies profile is skewed the other way and focused on a young workforce brought about by replacing our older workers/mentors as they retire with apprentice/tradespersons/future leaders who have been recruited and 'Hutchified' over the past 10 years.

Criterion 3: Integration of training into business planning

As outlined in our Workforce Development Program in Attachment A, we focus on our greatest resource-our employees (and subcontractors). Our program has five main aims:

1. Attract-attract and develop passionate and committed trainees, apprentices and other new entrants including Indigenous recruits;
2. Train-provide flexible, responsive training solutions that meet the needs of our industry;
3. Retain-develop strategies that dramatically decrease cadet, trainee and apprentice cancellations;
4. Maintain-maintain the post trade skills of our existing workers at a level that increases their capacity, capability

and productivity; and

5. Sustain-support any successful strategies with the necessary infrastructure, support and funding to make them long term and sustainable.

Our experience has shown us that we need to have a planned approach to developing the capacity and capability of our people, Therefore our program reaches right back into recruiting in schools and extends through the full working life of our workers. The only step missing from our Program is the final articulation of all that into a tertiary outcome. We already do the reverse of that with our cadets (currently 44) who are usually part way through a construction degree but we are now working on establishing a tertiary option with credits for those who took a longer, practical, apprentice-tradesperson-future leader pathway.

If we were to characterise our 'training culture' it would be that our learning design is Confucian philosophy based-'I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand'. A more modern interpretation is probably Bloom's Taxonomy but the emphasis is the same. Everything we do must be 'real' and practical given the audience we working with. As a result, we have the GCSC based in currently, five live site campuses and a network of Training Coordinators based in each of our 28 teams who work closely with our GCSC Coordinator and Post Trade Coordinator to address the emerging human resource and skill needs in their teams.

Essentially, the Workforce Development Program that was started nearly 10 years ago was actually a change process that embedded into our company an awareness of the need to develop our workforce including our subbies. Each year our immediate workforce development goals are reviewed at our CEO's Business Planning meeting to ensure they enhance the current direction being taken in the core business side of the house-commercial building. This means that everything we do is kept real and industry feedback is immediate. The skills of our subbie workforce also figure prominently in our plans as we understand if we help our subbies we also help ourselves.

Commitment to training at Hutchies is characterised by continued 'top down' support from our Board and CEO; and 'bottom up' engagement from our teams and subcontractors. Through the annual business plan the Board expresses that commitment and the teams/subbies are engaged through our Training Coordinator network, former apprentices who are now in leadership positions and formal plans such as the Career Plans and training plans developed for all our internal and external apprentices, future leaders and cadets. See Attachment H for an overview of apprentice career planning that is negotiated for every apprentice. Our commitment to training is not a 'knee jerk' reaction to immediate skilled labour issues but a more considered commitment over the past 105, but particularly over the past 10 years, to growing the capabilities and capacity of our workforce of employees and subbies. In 2007, our employee numbers were roughly 400 and included 20 apprentices and a handful of cadets. Since that time, we have graduated over 300 apprentices and cadets with about 57% still with the company.

In addition to a network of Training Coordinators in each team keeping an eye on the big picture, individual existing workers, including subbies, are engaged through a marketing campaign that targets sites through posters in crib rooms backed up by toolbox talks. Our Apprentice Development Coordinators (ADCs) undertake this as a secondary duty as they are always on our sites as part of their apprentice support duties. See Page 33 of Attachment A for a sample of the poster we use to promote our training services.

We are also keen to share our experiences with our peers so that they can learn and adapt our processes. Examples of this are:

- Our National Training Manager is a national Apprentice Ambassador
- He was invited to write and present a paper for a national NCVET conference last year on the Future of Australian Apprenticeships see:

<https://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/publications/all-publications/the-future-of-australian-apprenticeships-report-of-the-stakeholder-forum>

- Our mentoring program was used as a case study for a 2016 NCVET research paper- Beyond mentoring: social support structures for young Australian carpentry apprentices.

Criterion 4: Innovation and excellence in design and delivery of training

As discussed previously, when we set up the Team to develop and implement a Workforce Development Program that the Board supported, we needed an approach that departed from the usual offerings and offered flexibility, responsiveness and innovation. Our significant experience told us that it was time for a change regardless of what was considered to be the norm. Examples of this approach include:

-We collaborated with our SkillsTech partner to redesign the traditional mode of apprentice training (Train) around a more flexible, logical 'task based' approach with on-the-job training being a key focus. This was initially difficult, as our partner-SkillsTech was partly responsible for our Board's decision to go our own way as User Choice had been a frustrating and totally inflexible option at that point. To their credit, SkillsTech supported what we planned as they innately knew that this was the way of the future.

-Having managed a project when part of Construction Training Queensland (the construction ITAB at the time), that identified why apprentices cancel; we developed a radical recruiting strategy (Attract/Retain) which serves us to this day. We decided we would not consider any recruits unless they had first undertaken a pre-apprenticeship course (Certificate 1 in Construction) that entailed a significant amount (160hrs) of Structured Workplace Learning (SWL). In addition we developed a Life Skills program that all our recruits must complete (40hrs) that gave them skills in such areas as personal finance, nutrition and personal relationships as we knew these issues contributed to cancellations. Subsequently, we enjoy a consistent cancellation rate of <2% when the industry average is >40%. See Attachment C for Hutchies Truth multiple articles on these programs.

-When we became frustrated with the standard of recruits we were getting from the school system and other providers who did not have the characteristics described above, we set up our own RTO-GCSC #32409 and determined its campuses were always to be based on a working construction site to ensure we met our goals of 'real people, real skills, real jobs'-not simulated, funding grabs. Currently, our pre-apprenticeship program is offered in two forms: Ready for Construction (R4C)/Build8 which we deliver to >30 high schools in South East Queensland; and Tradestart, Get Ready for Construction, Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) which is for post school participants. These courses enjoy some of the highest completion rates for any RTOs (over 90%) and fulltime employment rates of >70%. See Attachment C for Hutchies Truth articles.

-In 2015 we decided that we needed to develop an on-line Learning Management System (LMS) to give us a more blended delivery options. We were very cognisant of industry resistance to on-line learning especially through negative experiences with such as mining inductions that did not validate who the learner actually was and consequently were often done by others. After extensive research and testing, we adopted an LMS that uses a web camera to monitor the learner's identity and learning continually. We initially trialled it by developing and delivering our in-house Hutch Safe Induction that is mandatory for all new workers on any Hutchies site. The Induction has now been undertaken successfully by over 17,000 workers and replaces the previous labour/time consuming one hour face to face induction. It represents the most successful training initiative we have undertaken and has yielded a massive productivity saving of many thousands of man hours. The technology has now been extended to support our pre-apprenticeship and trade curriculum.

As stated in Criterion 2 above, we have developed strong partnerships with a number of other Tier 1 builders and other high profile organisations to ensure our graduates get exposure to the real world of construction. These include:

-Grocon-GCSC campus on Parklands CGV site

-Lend Lease-GCSC campus on Yarrabilba development

-West Village-GCSC campus on West End site

-Brisbane Broncos-Tradestart program on Training Ground redevelopment site (Hutchies managing the building project)

-Hansons-we have a very strong partnership with our major provider of concrete across Australia, Each year our future leaders (>50) group and senior apprentices spend a day at Hansons extraction and concrete batching plants to understand the origins and characteristics of our base building material.

-Professional Development (PD) of 3 days/year for up to 30 teachers from schools participating in our R4C program. See Attachment I.

Our apprentice, Future Leaders and Cadet programs also have the support of in-house mentors such as our fulltime Apprentice Development Coordinators (ADCs). These tradespersons/trainers/mentors monitor the personal and skills development of our apprentices, future leaders and cadets to ensure they stay on track with their training, careers and personal lives.

In 2016, one of our senior apprentices-Matthew Williams won Master Builders Queensland, Apprentice of the Year Award. Attachment A, Page 6 lists the other awards we have won through recognition by our peers of our innovative programs and the quality of our graduates.

Criterion 5: Commitment to equity in training

We understand that to have a capable workforce, we need a diverse one as well. We want the best and brightest to be a part of the future of construction and Hutchies particularly. Hence, we have to provide opportunities for under-represented groups and cast our recruiting 'net' the widest. Examples of the practical implementation of this philosophy include:

-Statim Yaga (Begin-Work), our Indigenous Workforce Development Strategy, which is featured on Page 19 of Attachment A, started as an effort to engage more indigenous workers on our projects in remote communities such as Palm Island. It was so successful we were approached by the Federal Government to become one of 12 large iconic businesses to commit to facilitating the engagement of a number of indigenous workers (including 40% apprentices) in targeted industries. We mirrored our implementation strategy around our successful Attract, Train, Retain, Sustain strategies and committed to facilitating the engagement of 350 additional full time indigenous workers across our teams and subcontractors/suppliers network over three years. Currently, we are on target having achieved 147 full time placements which includes an increase in Hutchies indigenous employees from 1.3% to 2.7% (15-34) and a retention rate of 84.5%. 55 of our full time placements are apprentices/trainees and 7% are female. Initial and ongoing training along with mentoring are key components of this success. See also Attachment C for Hutchies Truth articles on Palm Island and the Pilbara.

-Introduction to Construction, which is a course specifically designed for Hutchies and subbie employees who are in non construction roles but are considering a change of career into the 'pointy end' of the construction industry. We understood that, like our pre-apprentice students, they needed to make informed decisions about their future careers which in turn required an understanding of the many roles in the industry. Page 9 of Attachment A details the program and shows how the participants are engaged by our highly qualified builder/trainer to grow their understanding of the unfamiliar. Our initial trial course late last year involved five women from our Brisbane Head Office and was so successful that the National Association for Women in Construction (NAWIC) has invited others to participate in an expose of the course in their first newsletter of 2017. See also Attachment C which has a Hutchies Truth article titled 'New introduction to the world of building and construction'.

-LL&N. Our industry has traditionally had a very high rate of workers with poor LL&N skills or come from Non English Speaking (NES) backgrounds. Much of our training is technical by nature and demands a reasonable LL&N capability. To assist students with these issues we developed our 'Construction Tutor' which was specially written to improve learners' understanding of basic literacy and numeracy common in construction. Traditionally LLN has involved a heavy emphasis on text based solutions which seems somewhat strange given the issues. Instead we developed a web based tool that contextualises the concepts around a real Hutchies building project with animation and voice over to enhance the learner's understanding.

The Workforce Development Team itself is a model of what we expect of others. Of a team of 22, 30% are female, 10% are indigenous. One female is undertaking a business traineeship whilst four of the women are part time with flexible hours to assist with their parenting duties.

Of our broader workforce of 1167, 164 (15%) are female with about 25% in cadet and senior roles such as senior management, project management, safety and environmental management.

Attachments

Please attached the following:

- 1 x business logo in .eps or .jpg/.jpeg format - minimum file size - 500kb

Where a business does not have a logo, a high resolution picture may be submitted to represent the organisation or collaboration.

Provide supporting material, such as:

- newspaper articles
- photocopies of awards or certificates
- letters of support or commendation
- publicity photos of achievements relevant to key aspects of your nomination.

Attachment file sizes cannot exceed 10MB. Accepted file types include JPG, JPEG, PNG, GIF, PDF, DOC, DOCX, XLS and XLSX. No multimedia items (e.g. YouTube videos) or discs will be accepted with nominations. **No more than 5 attachments** will be accepted.

I have attached my business logo

| ✓

I have read and understand the **Queensland Training Awards conditions of entry** and submit this nomination in accordance with these conditions.

| ✓

I consent that:

| ✓

1. All nominees whose applications are shortlisted must be available during the judging period in May and August for telephone interviews. It is the responsibility of the nominee to make the QTA team aware for any commitments that they may have during this period. If unavailability is not communicated in advance, there is a chance that the nominee will not be able to progress as a finalist.
Round 1 telephone interviews : 1-16 May 2017
Round 2 telephone interviews : 1-11 August 2017
2. All finalists are required to attend the regional, state and national awards presentation ceremonies, if applicable, as presence for the announcement of the winner is mandatory. Winners of the Queensland Training Awards (excluding the categories: Community Training Initiative and Equity VET Student) will be nominated by Queensland for the Australian Training Awards (ATA). All nominations will be considered by national judging panels and finalists for each award category will be required to attend the ATA finalists week in any state the ATA nominate.
3. By applying, all applicants of the Queensland Training Awards agree that all non-confidential details from their nominations, photographs and recordings can be used online, in any broadcast and print media and in a range of publicity, social media and promotional materials by the Queensland Government. The Queensland Government reserves the right to use all or part of any material generated (photographs, film footage, application submissions or any detail) for the purpose of the Queensland Training Awards or for publication online, in print or other broadcast media, for publicity, promotional materials (including departmental and ministerial Christmas cards and social media activity) or campaigns related to the Queensland Government.
4. Finalists and winners of the Queensland Training Awards may be required to participate in media interviews, promotional events and activities. *

I have read my/our submission and agree that all content and claims are correct to the best of my/our ability.

| ✓

I have entered the necessary information and attached the files needed for this entry.

| ✓

Special requirements (eg. hearing impaired, etc)

| Nil

Sign by entering your name

| Alan Waldron


How did you hear about the Queensland Training Awards?


| Other

You selected *Other* from above, please let us know how you heard about these awards:

| We are a sponsor and former winner


Log in to qta.awardsplatform.com to see complete nomination attachments.

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