Australian Government

Net Zero Economy Authority

Communications Toolkit – The Latrobe and Gippsland Region

Introduction

Australia's energy and industrial systems are changing, reshaping how we produce energy and manufacture goods, where investment flows and how regional communities adapt and grow. For regional communities like Latrobe and across the Gippsland region, this transformation, including the global shift to net zero by 2050 is bringing change as well as opportunities. This toolkit provides a resource for anyone seeking or wanting to share information about the transformation.

The Latrobe and broader Gippsland Region

The region has been the heart of Victoria's energy generation for more than a century. Now as coal-fired power generation is reaching end-of-life, new energy and industrial opportunities are emerging. This includes opportunities for future generations as they emerge as a skilled workforce, integral to Australia's energy transformation. It is important now more than ever to work together to ensure benefits are felt across the community.

The Net Zero Economy Authority

The Net Zero Economy Authority (NZEA) is a federal government agency established to support workers, regions and communities in the shift to a net zero economy. The NZEA is a key partner and stakeholder for individuals, businesses and communities in the region. We are here to work with communities and all levels of government to help shape policy, funding and programs that can deliver a better future for the Latrobe region. We also coordinate and work with different levels of government, industry and local communities to support workers impacted by coal- and gas-fired power station closures, through the Energy Industry Jobs Plan.

Help us spread the message

For workers: To build a stronger and more sustainable future, workers are essential to developing and implementing the solutions needed for a net zero economy.

For businesses: The net zero transformation is an opportunity for future industries to deliver long-term prosperity and seize opportunities in resource rich areas.

For communities: Communities have powered the region's energy system for decades, facing challenges and working to support each other. Communities will continue to shape Australia's energy future and benefit from the net zero economy.

What's in this toolkit?

This toolkit provides helpful resources and information on the transformation underway in the Latrobe and broader Gippsland region, including where to find support for developing skills and career pathways, how governments are supporting regions and more.

More information about the changing energy system

Why the changing energy system matters

Net zero means balancing the emissions we produce with those we remove from the atmosphere. It doesn't mean eliminating all emissions, but making sure we don't add more than we take away.

Australia, like many other nations with 2050 net zero emission goals, is managing climate risks and creating new opportunities by transforming our energy systems, industries, transport and land use.

That means shifting from coal- and gas-fired power to renewable sources like wind and solar. It also means building new industries, reshaping existing ones and creating secure jobs.

This transformation requires large-scale investment, long term planning and a focus on supporting workers and communities as well as creating growth opportunities, especially in regional areas.

What's happening in Latrobe and Gippsland

The Latrobe Valley region has a long-standing history with energy and coal, being home to Victoria's brown coal power stations and mines. For many years these industries have brought jobs and economic strength to the region and have shaped the community . The shift towards new energy systems means finding new ways to continue creating jobs and strengthening the economy.

The shift is not just an environmental shift, but a long-term economic and workforce transformation. Success means collaboration between government, industry and community groups, working together to identify opportunities and find pathways for the region to prosper.

An established resource for local news and information is the Gippsland New Energy web portal designed to support community understanding of the transformation to renewable energy.

CASE STUDY

Powering Her Pathway: paving the way for women in clean energy

Tradeswoman Australia (TWA) has launched a pioneering initiative called Powering Her Pathway, aimed at addressing barriers to women in clean energy careers.

The initiative is being delivered by TWA in partnership with TAFE Gippsland and ENGIE Australia with a focus on the Latrobe and wider Gippsland region.

The Powering Her Pathway program provides hands on experience for women interested in entering clean energy trades. The program includes a tailored vocational training course at TAFE Gippsland, followed by support to land a placement, apprenticeship or job in a skilled clean energy position across the Gippsland region.

'This is more than a program; it's a movement. Together with our incredible partners at TAFE Gippsland, ENGIE, and RMIT, and with the support of the Federal Government, we're breaking down barriers, challenging outdated norms, and building real, inclusive pathways into high-demand industries. The future of clean energy is diverse, skilled, and powered by women—and it starts right here, right now.' Clea Smith, CEO Tradeswomen Australia

'Recently, Grace, one of the inaugural graduates of the TAFE Gippsland Program, began a traineeship with the civil contractors for the Delburn Windfarm' said Smith.

The program comprises a workplace culture change component, a structured process that examines how workplace conditions, policies, and practices may affect people differently based on gender. It aims to identify potential inequalities and inform practical actions to support fair and inclusive outcomes.

RMIT University is conducting an independent, multi-year evaluation of the Powering Her Pathway project in Gippsland to assess participant outcomes, training, industry change, and whether the model can drive long-term increases in women entering clean energy trades.

With a projected surge in the demand for clean energy related skills, ensuring equitable access to opportunities is essential. Through Powering Her Pathway, women in Gippsland are being given the tools not just to enter the workforce, but to shape and lead it.

By operating at major transition hubs like Morwell and Hazelwood, this initiative builds clear career tracks for women, solidifying the region's role as a leader in Australia's shift to renewables.

Powering Her Pathway is creating a sustainable framework for industry-wide transformation, with plans to replicate the success of the Gippsland program in other regions across Australia.

Jobs and skills

The shift means new industries are growing, from renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, sustainable agriculture, bio-energy and more. Investment in these industries opens new opportunities and career pathways which are local and future-focused.

Education and further learning are helping young people gain the skills they need to explore career pathways in areas such as new energy systems, technology, grids and more.

For existing and future workforces, the renewable energy industry creates a pathway to hone new and specific skills. However, for many, their existing skills could be highly transferable to a career in new energy. TAFE Gippsland has developed courses and resources to support and prepare students, job seekers and workers to better understand jobs in the renewable energy sector, read more on their website.

CASE STUDY

A powerhouse in the energy transition: how Amber Leyshan is forging a pathway for women in energy

Across Gippsland, community is shaping the transition and the future of the region, one powered not just by innovation and technology, but by the remarkable women who are paving the way forward.

Amber Leyshan reshaped her path by deferring a teaching degree and diving into a fabrication apprenticeship with AGL at Loy Yang Power Station and enrolling in a Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication Trade – Boilermaking at TAFE Gippsland.

"I am so glad that I decided to take the leap and apply," Amber said. "It was a big shift from what I originally planned, but it turned out to be the best decision I could have made."

With a strong desire to enhance her career prospects, Amber challenged herself in a male-dominated arena, gaining extra welding certifications and mastering advanced techniques. This led to her winning the WorldSkills Regional competition, achieving the highest welding score in Victoria. In 2025, Amber was awarded Apprentice of the Year at the Victorian Training Awards, a recognition of her achievements.

Working closely with TAFE Gippsland and organisations such as Power Her Pathway, Amber actively promotes careers in the trades and has become a tradeswomen advocate.

Amber is future focused and is considering roles in renewable energy, including wind turbine projects, which will allow her to have a lasting contribution to both industry and the Gippsland community.

"My goal is to expand my expertise across different areas to become a versatile, future-ready professional," she said. "I'd highly recommend taking up an apprenticeship. It changed my life."

This case study is credited to TAFE Gippsland.

Opportunities and economic benefits

This transformation is not only an environmental shift but a long-term economic and workforce transformation. With access to the right skills and training, the Latrobe and broader Gippsland community plays an important role in shaping the region's future.

There are many opportunities for diversifying the region's economy by supporting growth in:

- Clean energy supply chain
- Food and Fibre value-add and sustainability
- Bioenergy
- Advanced manufacturing and defence
- Transport and logistics
- Resources
- Data Centres

The Future Made in Australia Innovation Fund administered by Australia's Renewable Energy Agency provides up to $1.5 billion in grant funding to support pre-commercial innovation, demonstration and deployment of renewable energy and low emission technologies, to support Australia's transformation to a net zero economy. To learn more visit the Future Made in Australia Innovation Fund page.

CASE STUDY

First big battery built on an Australian former coal-fired power station site in Victoria's Latrobe region

After the Hazelwood Power Station in the Latrobe Valley closed in 2017, ENGIE began repurposing the site and built the Hazelwood Battery Energy Storage System (HBESS). This is the first big battery to be built on an Australian coal site.

The 150MW/150Mwh battery has the capacity to store the equivalent of an hour of energy generated from the rooftop solar systems of 30,000 homes and can send extra electricity into the grid in times of peak demand, or store electricity that is not being used in times of low demand.

The battery was successfully commissioned in June 2023 and has been in operation for over two years, supporting grid reliability in Victoria.

The battery's innovative design and the site's unique location provides the ability to scale up storage capacity quickly and, in a cost, effective way, in order to respond to network and market demand.

Battery storage, particularly in the Latrobe and broader Gippsland region serves an important role in accelerating the build-out of solar and wind resources. By capturing excess power during periods of high energy generation while discharging to meet peak demand, the HBESS provides critical stability to the grid.

An ENGIE spokesperson said, 'with its location, situation and access to transmission, the Hazelwood site is the perfect location for BESS operation and expansion. The Hazelwood BESS is a tangible example of Australia's energy transition as we move away from coal and toward clean energy technologies.'

Community

Local communities, including traditional owners groups are key partners in shaping how projects should be developed, ensuring that change delivers social, economic and cultural benefits while supporting workers and families through the transformation.

CASE STUDY

Gippsland Climate Change Network connecting community

Community is at the heart of the transformation underway in the Latrobe and broader Gippsland region. The Gippsland Climate Change Network (GCCN) is one organisation which is a part of the unfolding story. GCCN is a not-for-profit charity that has been operating since 2007, created to provide up-to-date information and education on climate change, renewable energy and sustainability.

The GCCN has established several successful initiatives, bringing the transition underway in the region to the forefront.

The Gippsland New Energy Conference is a key event for anyone interested in renewable energy and the region's transition to clean power. Bringing together industry experts, governments, community leaders and stakeholders, the conference offers insights into current projects, emerging technologies and opportunities for Gippsland's sustainable future.

The Gippsland New Energy Portal is an online resource for up-to-date information about renewable energy projects and infrastructure across Gippsland. The portal highlights technology types, development locations and opportunities for community involvement, supporting Gippsland's leadership in Australia's clean energy transition.

The Energise Gippsland Renewable Energy Fund is powering positive change, providing ongoing lease funding for solar and battery installations across five sites in the region. This initiative has delivered over 200kW of renewable energy capacity, cutting 330 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually and representing a total investment of $260,000.

Visit the Gippsland Climate Change Network website for more information.

Resources

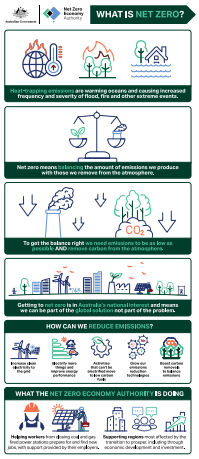
Infographics

Infographics have been designed to communicate information about what net zero means, what the transformation looks like for the Latrobe-Gippsland community. The infographics can be printed for notice boards, shared on your social media channels or website and shared in newsletters.

See Appendicies, ready for use

A pathway forward: Latrobe-Gippsland infographic

What is Net Zero infographic



Social media posts

Social tiles have been designed and are available for use on your social media channels. We encourage you to download these social media tiles and upload them to your social media channels. We also ask that you tag the Net Zero Economy Authority in any post that you make using the handle: @Net Zero Economy Authority.

See Appendicies, ready for use

Latrobe new energy investment projects

State of the workforce 2026

Read more case studies on our website

We have developed a range of written and video case studies spotlighting businesses and people who are working on the ground to drive the transformation in Latrobe-Gippsland. If you're interested in sharing your transformation journey or story reach out to the Net Zero Economy Authority at media@nzea.gov.au.

- Latrobe Magnesium: creating jobs, driving innovation and paving a path for reduced emissions | nzea
- Opal: bringing energy from waste to the Latrobe-Gippsland region | nzea
- Storing renewable energy: How does battery storage work? | nzea
- Earthworker Energy: A community-owned business powering Latrobe's clean energy future | nzea
- Turning scraps into strategy: Gippsland cooks up a compost comeback | nzea

See more stories on our website.

Visit our Investment Map

We have developed a Net Zero Investment Map to keep up to date on renewable energy and research projects across Australia, including in the Latrobe-Gippsland region. Currently there are more than 800 Commonwelath Government-supported renewable energy and research projects taking shapre across Australia's cities and regions.

Scan the QR code visit our Investment Map page to explore the map yourself.

Appendices

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A pathway forward: Latrobe-Gippsland

The Australian Government is supporting workers and communities as they move towards a net zero economy. The transformation will see Australia move away from emissions-intensive energy systems and grow our renewable energy workforce. This will create jobs in new industries and supply chains that support them.

For the Latrobe and broader Gippsland region, the transformation has implications beyond the energy sector. The region has a long and proud history in industries including power generation, mining, forestry, oil and gas extraction and agriculture. The upcoming closures of Yallourn and Loy Yang power stations requires a coordinated effort to support new opportunities and bring new investment.

What are the changes

The region is becoming a hub for renewable energy generation and storage, including:

- Battery and energy storage systems
- Wind energy projects
- Large-scale solar farms

These projects are being designed to provide reliable electricity while significantly reducing emissions. In addition, there are opportunities for diversifying the region's economy by supporting growth in:

- Clean energy supply chain
- Food and fibre
- Bioenergy
- Transport and logistics
- Advanced manufacturing and defence
- Resources

What are the opportunities

The transition is creating new employment pathways across a range of industries, such as:

- Renewable energy construction, operation, maintenance
- Electrical and mechanical trades
- Engineering and technical services
- Clean energy infrastructure manufacturing
- Project planning, logistics, and management

These roles could offer long-term career prospects and opportunities for skills development. To support future generations, workforce transition and emerging industries, there is room for investment in:

- Further training and education focused on clean energy skills.
- Retraining and upskilling opportunities for existing workers.
- Partnerships between industry, education provides and various levels of government.

With the right skills and training, the Latrobe-Gippsland community will continue to shape the region's future.

How is NZEA helping

The Net Zero Economy Authority is coordinating and supporting efforts for worker transition through the Energy Industry Jobs Plan, Regional Workforce Transition Plan, Transitioning Workforce Fund and other collaborative initiatives across government. We will continue to work closely with federal and state government partners, local council and community groups.

Find out more about how the Net Zero Economy Authority is supporting the transition and the Latrobe-Gippsland region.

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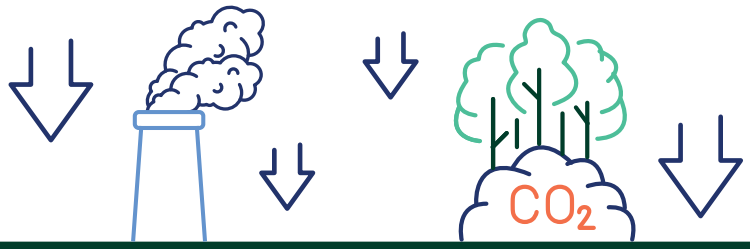
WHAT IS NET ZERO?

Heat-trapping emissions are warming oceans and causing increased frequency and severity of flood, fire and other extreme events.

Net zero means **balancing** the amount of emissions we produce with those we remove from the atmosphere.



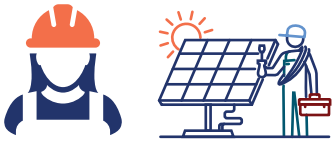
To get the balance right **we need emissions to be as low as possible** AND **remove carbon from the atmosphere.**

Getting to **net zero** is in **Australia's national interest** and means we can be part of the **global solution** not part of the problem.

HOW CAN WE REDUCE EMISSIONS?

- Increase clean electricity to the grid
- Electrify more things and improve energy performance
- Activities that can't be electrified move to low carbon fuels
- Grow our emissions reduction technologies
- Boost carbon removals to balance emissions

WHAT THE NET ZERO ECONOMY AUTHORITY IS DOING



Helping workers from closing coal and gas fired power stations prepare for and find new jobs, with support provided by their employers.

Supporting regions most affected by the transition to prosper, including through economic development and investment.

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Renewable energy investment projects in Latrobe-Gippsland

Marinus Link Transmission Line

Marinus Link is an undersea and underground electricity and data interconnector between North West Tasmania, through south Gippsland and into the Latrobe Valley in Victoria spanning 345km.

Job creation:
3,300

Investment:
$3.8 billion

Status:
in progress

Wooreen Bess Energy Storage System

Energy Australia has committed to building the Wooreen Energy Storage System scheduled to be operational prior to the end of 2026, boosting the economy and helping to secure some of Victoria's energy supply.

Job creation: 80

Investment: $700 million

Status: in construction

Alinta Loy Yang B Stage 1 Synchronous Condenser Research Project

This is a current research project aiming to repurpose Loy Yang B's spare generator stator and rotor, and spare generator transformer to provide critical grid stability and system strength to Victoria's National Electricity Market.

Investment: $5.36 million

Status: in construction

COMPLETED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Latrobe Valley Microgrid Feasibility Study

This research project assessed the viability of creating a local energy marketplace for dairy farms, residential participants and commercial/industrial customers.

Investment:
$775, 000

Status:
complete

Opal Australia Paper - Aquaculture Geothermal Heating Study

Opal completed a feasibility study for the use of a closed loop geothermal heating system to provide process heat adjacent to the Maryvale Paper Mill in the Latrobe Valley, Victoria.

Investment:
$232, 000

Status:
complete

$3.8 Billion

Total of investment projects in the region to date

Want to learn more about the net zero transition in Latrobe-Gippsland?

Visit the NZEA toolkit

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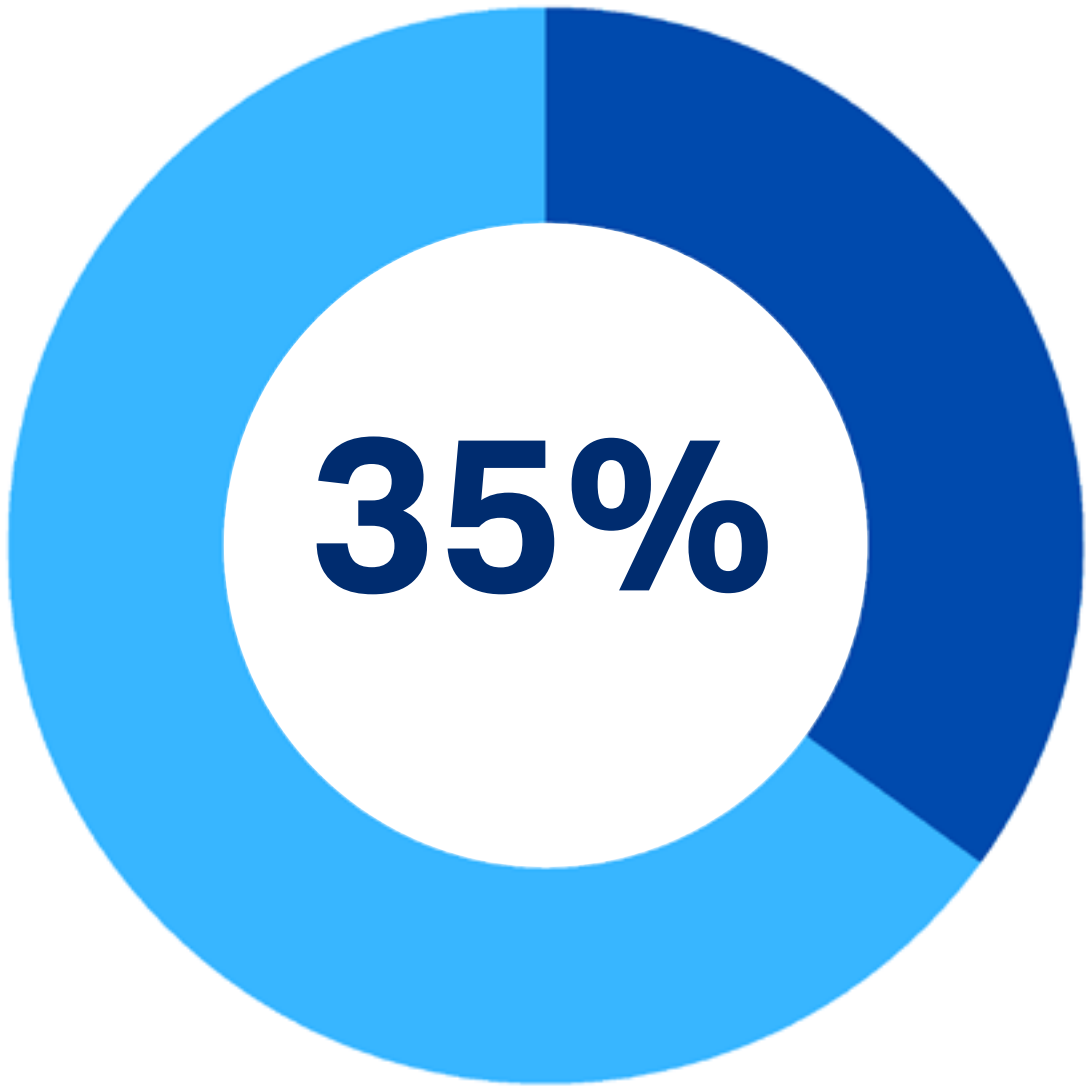
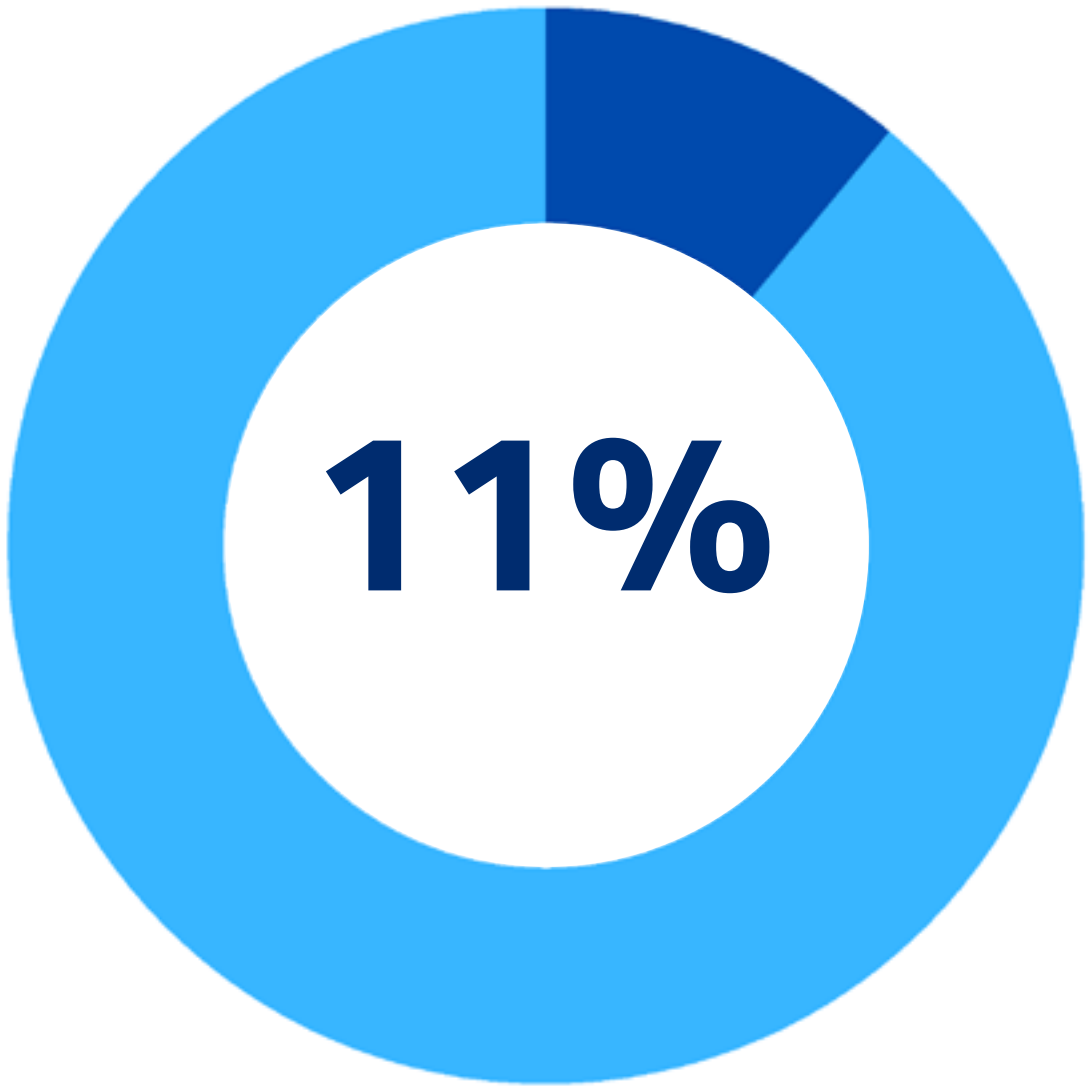
Workforce strengths of the Latrobe-Gippsland region

Learn More →

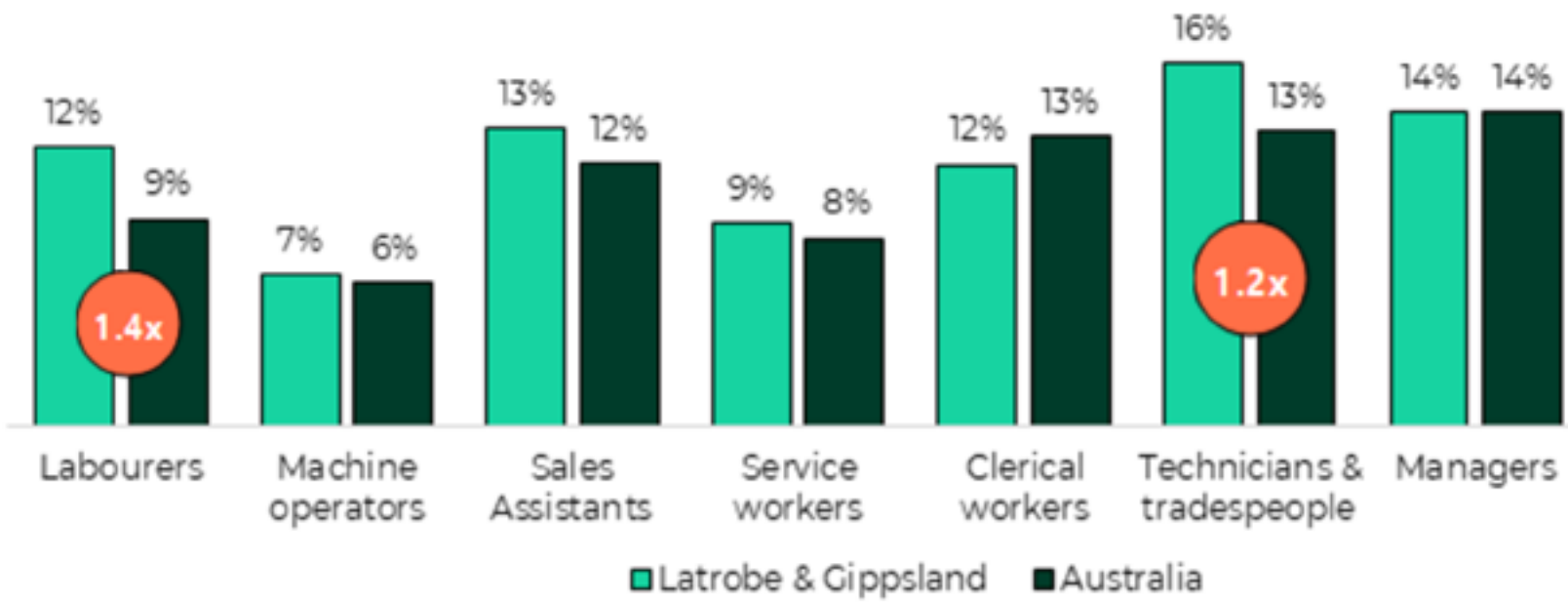


The Latrobe-Gippsland workforce has a higher concentration of blue-collar workers at 35%, compared to the national average of 29%.

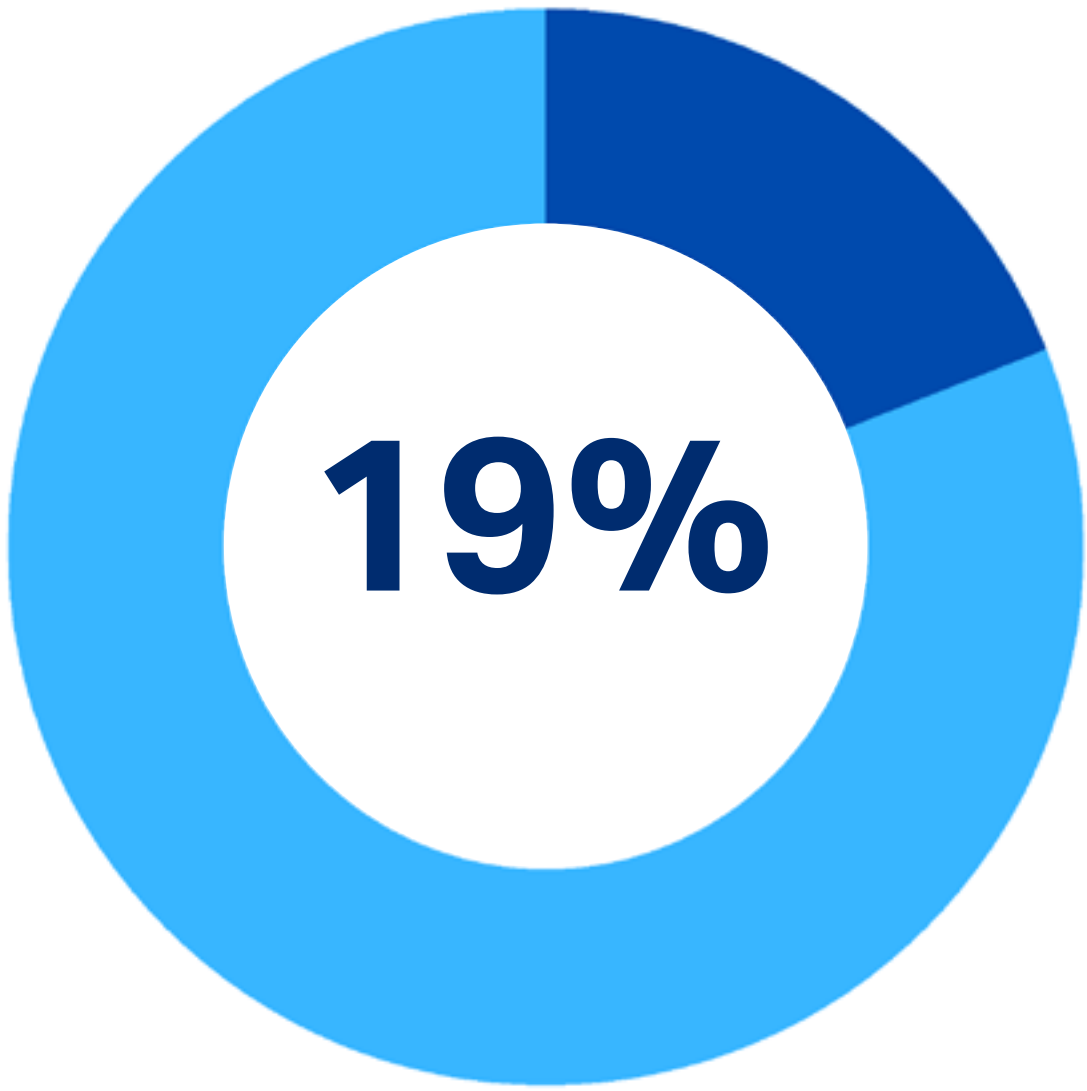


The number of employees in construction roles is 13,861, making up 11% of the workforce living in the region.

Compared to the national average, there are 40% more labourers and 20% more technicians and tradespeople in the local workforce.



This means the region has a strong and compatible workforce to transition to lower emission industries.

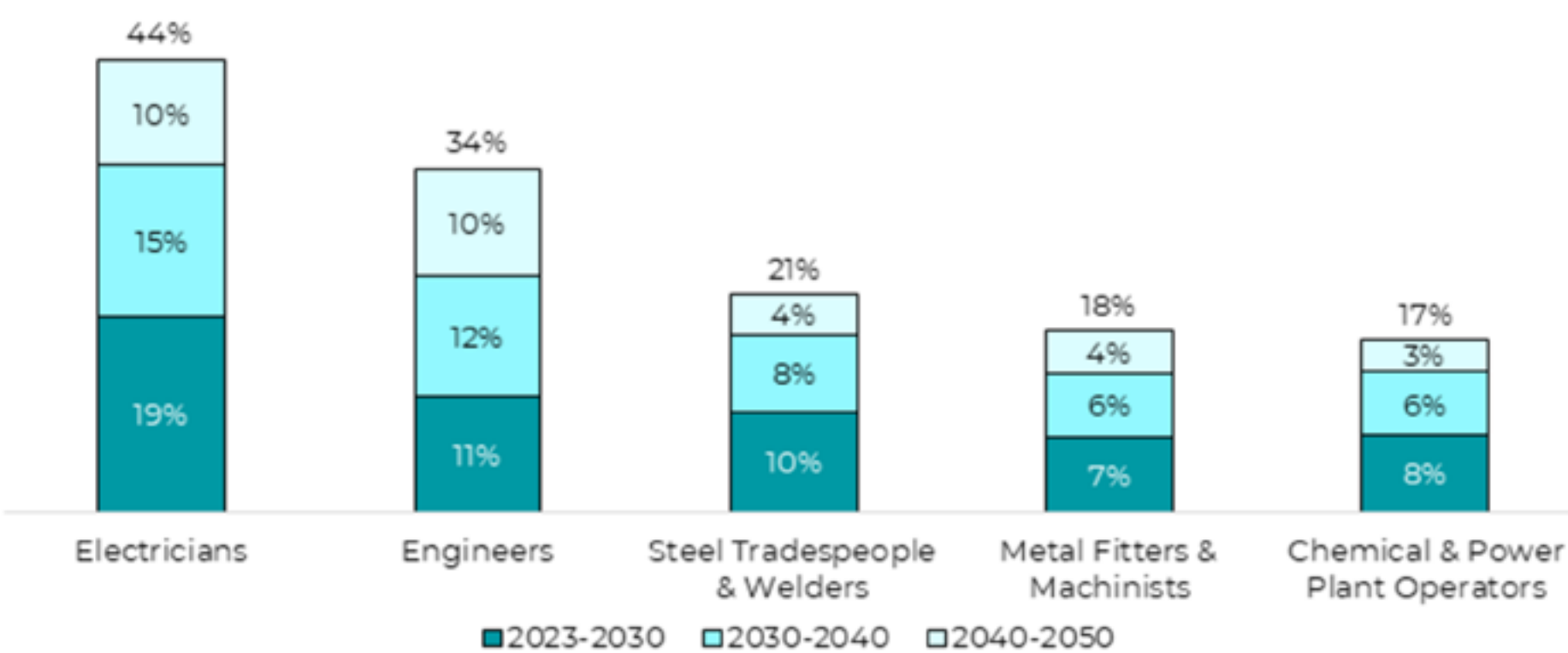


In Latrobe-Gippsland, 19% of workers are in clean energy compatible jobs.

Demand for workers in these areas will increase in line with clean energy investments to meet emission-reduction targets.

Job Skills Australia models job forecasts based on demand of renewable energy uptake as a share of national electricity by 2030.

Looking at their central scenario of 82% renewable electricity generation, the below graph forecasts job requirements from 2023 until 2050.



Want to learn more about the net zero transition in Latrobe-Gippsland?

Visit the NZEA toolkit

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Latrobe and the broader Gippsland region and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We recognise the deep and unbroken relationship that the Traditional Owners have with the land, waters, hills and valleys of the region and their significant role in shaping both the history and future of the area.

We extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the local community.

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