

Northwest Workforce Development and Industry Participation (WFDIP) program

January 2020



Sydney Metro Pre-employment graduates.

The \$8.3 billion Sydney Metro Northwest is the first stage of Sydney Metro, stretching from Rouse Hill to Chatswood. The first fully automated metro rail system in Australia delivered eight new railway stations, five upgraded stations, 4000 commuter car spaces, 36 kilometres of new metro rail and a reliable public transport service to a region with the highest car ownership levels per household in Australia. Four Principal Contractors were engaged to deliver the Northwest project:

- TSC - Tunnel and Station Civils Work: TJHD (Thiess, John Holland and Dragados).
- SVC - Surface and Viaduct Civil Works - Impregilo Salini Jv.
- OTS - Operations, Trains and Systems NRT - Northwest Rapid Transit.
- FAW - Finishing and Auxiliary works - Georgiou.

Sydney's first metro line, the Metro North West, opened on 26 May 2019.

Initiative

Sydney Metro identified an opportunity to build skills, jobs, and industry capacity through its Northwest delivery program. In 2012, the Sydney Metro Northwest Workforce Development (WFD) strategy was developed in support of the Sydney Metro Northwest Sustainability Strategy. The WFD strategy was developed in consultation with key industry, government and education stakeholders. Objectives included:

- Support local labour-force participation.
- Resolve skills shortages locally and nationally through targeted skills development.
- Maintain competitiveness of the construction sector by attracting skills locally and nationally.
- Ensure procurement decisions in the transaction management phase support efforts by NSW and Australian governments to increase workforce participation.
- Encourage the next generation to pursue careers in engineering and construction.

Approach

Sydney Metro developed a collaborative model working with industry and government to ensure the Sydney Metro Northwest Workforce Development (WFD) strategy was achieved.

Minimum requirements

Sydney Metro was one of the first infrastructure projects to set minimum workforce development and participation requirements for delivery partners. These included:

- Minimum number of small to medium enterprises engaged in the supply chain.
- Minimum percentages for local (Greater Western Sydney) and local sustainable employment - supporting the workforce with sufficient experience to achieve future employment.

- 20 per cent of the workforce to participate in accredited training – supporting skills development and skill shortages experienced by wider industry.
- Minimum number of apprentices and trainees – supporting sustainable work experience and encouraging successful completion.
- Minimum number of under-represented diversity and disadvantaged groups employed on the project.
- Minimum number of work experience and graduate placements on the project.

Collaborative model

Sydney Metro identified that further benefits could be achieved by bringing industry expertise and government partners together. In 2014, Sydney Metro formed the Sydney Metro Skills and Employment Advisory (SEAG) group to inform, advise and support the delivery of the Sydney Metro Workforce Development strategy and associated programs. SEAG members have a shared interest in delivering jobs, skills and increased diversity participation through infrastructure projects. Members include:

- State and federal government agencies
- Skills sector organisations
- Sydney Metro
- Sydney Metro delivery partners
- Guest members as appropriate to drive Sydney Metro strategies

Client led programs

Sydney Metro recognised that greater outcomes could be achieved through client led programs resulting in consistent quality delivery.

Sydney Metro pre-employment program model

A sub-committee of the Skills and Employment advisory group formed in 2014 specifically to address pre-employment issues and requirements of the project and major contractors. The Pre-Employment Program sub-committee identified entry level opportunities and key milestones to ensure that emerging workforce demands would be met. As a result the first program was piloted in November 2014. The program is targeted towards long term unemployed candidates and other under-represented groups. Its aim is to equip participants with key technical skills and the ability to communicate and work as part of a highly functioning team. The program provided a collaborative multi agency approach to deliver key priorities for NSW.

Critical success factors

- Project Leadership commitment, support, resourcing and championing key initiatives
- Government and Client side subject matter experts to support and drive consistent delivery of WFDIP outcomes through the development, delivery and operations of Sydney Metro projects.
- Collaborative and consultative approach with industry to drive outcomes
- Skills and Employment Advisory Group
- Client led programs and initiatives to support delivery of targets
- Lead Job Active – acts as a lead contact to work with Sydney Metro and contractors on initiatives that support those with barriers into employment.



Sydney Metro Pre-employment graduate.

Achievements

The creation of the Sydney Metro Workforce Development collaborative model resulted in significant outcomes and a replicable model which has been utilised by wider government. The model enabled the Sydney Metro Northwest contractors to deliver significant outcomes which support jobs, skills and diversity as the project was delivered:

over 22,000
people worked on the project

566
ANZ SMEs participated in the supply chain

over 750
jobs established through ANZ SMEs
participating in the supply chain

over 3,000
people in local sustainable jobs (new employment
working on the project for a minimum of 26 weeks)

1,525
local sustainable jobs for people from
Greater Western Sydney

over 400
apprentices and trainees on the project with 210
of those working on the project for over 20 weeks

over 20%
of the workforce from Greater Western Sydney

over 20%
of the workforce in accredited skills
development training

224
work experience and graduate placements
on the project



Sydney Metro Pre-employment graduates.

Diversity groups employed on the project

76
people with a registered disability

2,943
people from culturally and
linguistically diverse backgrounds

over 3,000
young people under 25

over 1,000
long term unemployed

over 250
young people not in education,
employment or training

Lessons learnt

- Robust and defined contractual requirements reflective of policies and industry priorities and drivers.
- Tailored initiatives and targets to reflect the project scope of works and skill shortage areas.
- Targeted approaches to support skills development and skill shortages rather than a blanket approach.
- Robust, clear and consistent reporting requirements.
- A collaborative and supportive approach to driving outcomes is critical to success.

Initiatives and programs

- Creation of the award winning Pre-Employment Program provides a collaborative multi-agency approach to deliver job outcomes for under-represented groups:

Winner Premiers Award

in 2015 for 'Making NSW a better place to live'

89

participants

93%

successful completion rates

78%

employment outcomes

35%

continued onto apprenticeship
or traineeship pathways

49%

Aboriginal participation

35%

young people under 25

8%

female participation

- Creation of Skills and Employment advisory group - one of the first multi-agency and industry groups formed to drive outcomes.
- Tunnelling Competency program: Industry wide competency framework, describing minimum occupational competency requirements and career pathways across the tunnelling industry. This resulted in training and recognised qualifications to 1000 tunnellers, providing future capacity and capability and individual transferable skills required for major projects.



Sydney Metro Pre-employment graduate.

- Inclusion of Process Manufacturing Traineeship on NSW Skills List developing new capacity and capability in process manufacturing through pre-employment and new traineeship programs.
- The success of the Sydney Metro Northwest Workforce Development program resulted in Sydney Metro City and Southwest becoming a demonstration pilot for the Infrastructure Skills Legacy program.

The WFDIP program continues to support the delivery of Infrastructure NSW as well as Premier's Priorities of improving the economy and creating jobs, increasing diversity and Aboriginal participation, improving vocational education outcomes and delivering infrastructure. The program delivers effective use of funding, with a significant return on this investment for under-represented groups and supporting skills development and skill shortage areas. The model goes above and beyond standard practice, with it being recognised as a best practice approach by state and federal Government and replicated across other industries and jurisdictions.

sydneymetro.info

