

# Annual Report

2018-19



## Our Vision

To create life-changing opportunities for people and communities in regional NSW.

## Our Purpose

Creating and sustaining innovative and effective partnerships to generate employment opportunities through education and skills development for people across regional NSW.

## Our Values

We are motivated by working together to help others, change lives and make a difference to the individuals and communities we support. Our guiding values include:



### Respect

We accept and celebrate diversity and at all times treat each other with fairness, dignity and respect.



### Collaboration

We work collaboratively to create a positive workplace that encourages a high-performance team environment.



### Integrity

We are committed to being honest, transparent, accountable and trustworthy in all of our interactions.



### Professionalism

Our staff are reliable, dependable and responsible, and build lasting relationships based on effectiveness and trust.



### Helping Others

We aim to provide sound advice, guidance and encouragement to help improve the lives of community members we work with.



### Community

We are driven by a common purpose to foster the growth of our regional communities through the high impact services we deliver.



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**Skillset acknowledges the funding and support received from the following departments and agencies:**

- NSW Department of Education
- Australian Government Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business
- The Association of Independent Schools of NSW
- National Apprentice Employment Network
- Apprenticeship Employment Network

Skillset would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work. We are honoured to be on the ancestral lands of those whose cultures are among the oldest living cultures in human history. We pay respect to the Elders, past, present and to the younger generation of the community who will be the future leaders in years to come.





# Chairman's Report

## **Skillset has, at its heart, the vision of creating life-changing opportunities for people and communities in regional NSW.**

In doing so, Skillset delivers significant benefits not just to individuals and organisations, but to the region. This year Skillset commissioned the Western Research Institute to undertake an Impact Report on our 2017-18 operations. This report confirmed Skillset's contribution to Gross Regional Product at \$48.17M, and a Net Present Value of close to \$513M. This is an extraordinary result and highlights the significance of the organisation to the region. More details of the Economic Impact Report are contained on page 7.

In February 2019, we were delighted to open a second Skillset Senior College campus in Dubbo. Feedback from students, parents and carers over the last five years confirms that this model of education is providing life-changing opportunities for predominately disadvantaged young people in our communities. The new campus has been very well received by the Dubbo community. In 2019, the Dubbo campus is offering year 10, but this will expand to years 10 and 11 in 2020, and then years 10 to 12 in 2021.

The Bathurst campus has seen some outstanding results in the past year including:

- two students appointed to the Bathurst Youth Council,
- participation in the Bathurst Royal Show, the Duke of Edinburgh and a student exchange program with the University of Kentucky,
- a new multi-purpose outdoor sports court.

Skillset is proud to work with our talented apprentices, trainees and committed host employers. Our 2019 Skillset Awards was a fantastic celebration to acknowledge our strategic partners, outstanding apprentices, trainees, college students, our amazing staff, and our ever-important host employers. You will find all details of the awards on page 18.

Across all Employment and Career Development Services we have seen increasing demand from 11 local councils in our region. Our Engagement, Skills and Support Services Team have performed well delivering the Youth Connect, Skills4Trade, Mentor Plus and newly integrated Land Works programs. We have seen some new initiatives spring alive via our Land Works team, who have secured some large environmental projects, including a successful bid for the My

Community Project Grant for a new interactive garden at Bathurst Public School.

Behind the scenes, we've transitioned all hosts across to the online payroll system, and delivered a stream of policy and system improvements which have helped manage costs and risks.

We are delighted to report a financial surplus for 2019 – our third successive surplus, which is a culmination of good business strategy, commercial focus, accountability and hard work. Whilst company profits are not our objective, operating within our means is essential for us to continue, and it's the accumulation of these surpluses that funds future growth and sustainability.

On behalf of the board, I'd like to express our thanks to our CEO, Craig Randazzo for his passion and commitment to Skillset throughout 2019. He leads a very impressive team of staff who demonstrate that same passion and drive day in and day out.

I would like to thank all our directors who make up the Skillset Board. It is not an easy company to navigate, and your contribution and on-going stewardship is appreciated.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the 3,000 individuals who Skillset have had an impact on during the past 12 months. Our Skillset team ensure 'Your Future is Our Focus' in everything we do and we will continue to help create life-changing opportunities for our regional communities.



*2018 Skillset Limited Annual General Meeting*





**Skillset has, at its heart, the vision of creating life-changing opportunities for people and communities in regional NSW.**





# Chief Executive Officer's Report

Skillset marks its 37th year in business in 2019 and remains a leading, purpose-driven organisation that continues to make a significant contribution to thousands of individuals and communities across regional NSW. Our reach this year has expanded to cover regional cities and towns across 300,000km<sup>2</sup>, with over 3,000 people benefitting from at least one Skillset service in the reporting period.

In late 2018, our leadership team took some time out to review our strategic direction. We arrived at a unified position with a clear understanding of our organisational character. I encourage you to see our revised statements of Vision, Purpose and Values appearing on page 2 of this report.

The mechanics of delivering on our renewed direction demanded some changes to our organisational structure, which saw the combining of Skillset's service delivery units previously labelled Workforce and Environment, united under the one masthead of "Skillset". This structural change saw Jane McWilliam promoted to the new role of General Manager, which is now responsible for the effective delivery of all Skillset Limited services.

This year we set ourselves a more ambitious target in our annual jobs and skills campaign with the transition from our "Pledge" campaign to the "SkillForce360" campaign. We exceeded our target to engage 360 people in apprenticeships, traineeships, pre-apprenticeships and other employment by nearly 20% with 428 placements, a great reflection of the hard work and passion demonstrated by our Skillset teams.

I also congratulate our many high-achievers who have been formally recognised at awards events, with Skillset proud to have supported one state level winner, one western region winner and nine regional finalists in either the 2019 Apprentice Employment Network NSW & ACT Group Training Awards or NSW Training Awards. We are also keenly following the progress of James Chamberlain, a Skillset apprentice hosted by Moolarben Coal Operations, who is on his way to the national stage to compete in his trade at the 2020 WorldSkills Australia National Championships.

Skillset Senior College made the significant transition to become a separate legal entity. This project took a lot of time, planning and commitment to complete, and although the school's Vision, Purpose and Values remain aligned with those of Skillset Limited, the transition was necessary

to set the school up for more effective and transparent compliance in regards to ownership, governance, operations, and reporting. With Skillset Limited as the single owner of the school, and Abbey Barrett as Head of College, the model provides a robust structure with secure ownership and a separate school governing body to determine the strategic direction of the school. Read about the exciting achievements of the school, including our expansion to Dubbo on pages 21 to 23 of this report.

I'd like to thank and acknowledge Senior Manager Ashley Bland who left us in late 2018 to pursue his own business interests in the energy sector. Ashley made a significant contribution to Skillset over his nine years of service and was instrumental in establishing and delivering Skillset's high performing Green Army program in alliance with Campbell Page. I also acknowledge Chairman David Cooke, and Skillset Directors for their guidance, advice and stable governance that has allowed Skillset to remain an agile and innovative organisation, yet meet all our compliance requirements in some highly regulated operating environments. I thank and commend our Senior Managers who demonstrate professionalism and passion in the work we do. Our broader staff, teachers, students, business partners and clients are also critical to our success and deserve our thanks and appreciation. I look forward to the year ahead where we will continue our work to deliver on our life-changing vision and purpose throughout regional NSW.



*The Hon. Dr Geoff Lee, MP NSW Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education and Skillset CEO and AEN NSW & ACT Chair Craig Randazzo*



# Impact Report: 2017-18

We are focused on helping others, changing lives and making a positive difference to all individuals, businesses and communities we support. Skillset engaged the Western Research Institute to complete an Economic and Human Capital Impact study for the 2017-18 Financial Year. This report measured the substantial impact Skillset's services are making in our regional communities.



**1,727** people

provided with employment, education and skill development programs



**562** people

in Full Time Equivalent Employment



**10<sup>+</sup>** years

40% of clients have worked with Skillset for more than a decade

**72%**

of students would have left school if they hadn't enrolled at **Skillset Senior College Bathurst**



**\$3.03**

worth of public benefits are generated for every \$1 spent by Skillset

**\$48.17M**

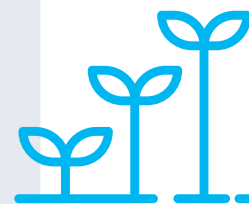
in Gross Regional Product

**\$993,739**

estimated justice and welfare payment savings through our Youth Connect and Skills4Trade programs

**\$6.60**

worth of public benefits are generated for every \$1 spent by **Skillset Senior College Bathurst**



**92%**

of Skillset's employment and skills development participants felt more positive about their future as a result of their participation with Skillset



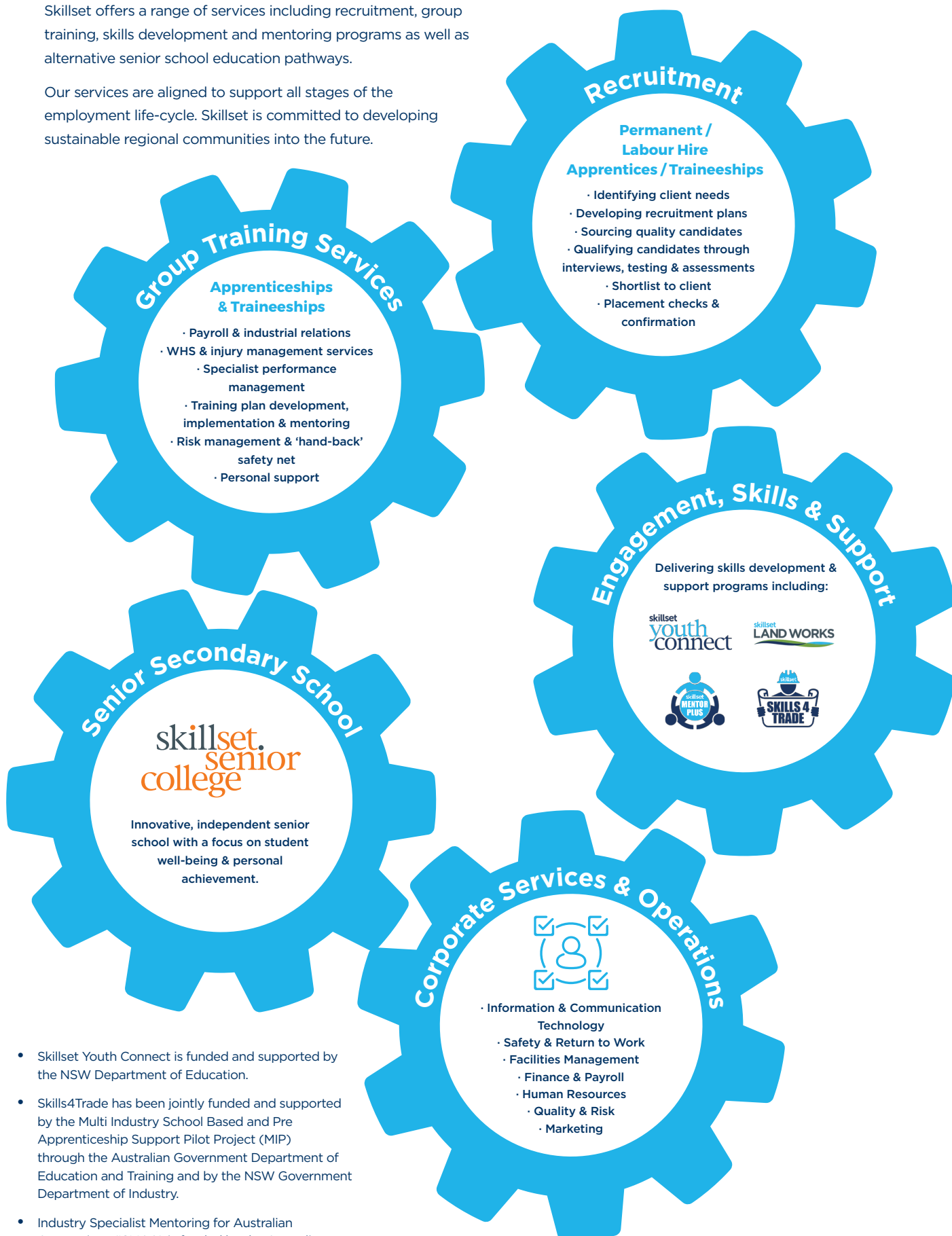
**81%**

of Skillset's clients believe Skillset is successful in creating life-changing opportunities for people and communities in regional NSW

# Skillset's Services

Skillset offers a range of services including recruitment, group training, skills development and mentoring programs as well as alternative senior school education pathways.

Our services are aligned to support all stages of the employment life-cycle. Skillset is committed to developing sustainable regional communities into the future.



- Skillset Youth Connect is funded and supported by the NSW Department of Education.
- Skills4Trade has been jointly funded and supported by the Multi Industry School Based and Pre Apprenticeship Support Pilot Project (MIP) through the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and by the NSW Government Department of Industry.
- Industry Specialist Mentoring for Australian Apprentices (ISMAA) is funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business.





Employment and Career Development Services Team

**Jane McWilliam | General Manager**

## Employment and Career Development Services



**The past financial year was a time of strategic progress for Skillset in what was a challenging economic environment. We delivered solid performances across our integrated workforce services of Recruitment, Group Training and Engagement, Skills and Support.**

Skillset has placed importance on supporting career development and it is a vital element of the employment life-cycle as we assist people to navigate their way through education and training into employment, leading to more fulfilling working lives.

Overall our services have gathered momentum this year with 3,051 individuals engaged in 2018-19 across a regional geography of over 300,000km<sup>2</sup>. We strengthened our group training model with strong leadership and support from our internal Human Resources and Safety Teams.

We also saw the introduction of our new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, JobReady Direct in September 2018. Through the use of smarter technology, we are able to drive market-leading operational performance and outcomes. We are focused on automating processes, saving time and reducing paperwork to allow our staff to have more one-on-one time with our candidates and clients.

For the year ahead, we will continue to push the boundaries and strive to be at the forefront of creating employment opportunities through education and skills development for people right across regional NSW.





## Recruitment

The Recruitment Team has continued to provide professional recruitment services to over 129 businesses across our region in the past year. It has been encouraging to see consistent results across our group training, labour hire and permanent recruitment services with 440 placements.

Skillset continued to promote apprenticeships and traineeships as a valuable career pathway into further education and employment. Skillset had 202 apprentices and trainees commence in 2018-2019, 42 more than the previous year. These results indicate an increase in trade-uptake which goes against the national trend which saw apprenticeship commencements decline. Skillset are proud that our clients see the value in using Skillset's Group Training service to recruit and manage their apprentices and trainees to give them the best chance at success, with research from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research showing Group Training apprenticeships deliver between 5% and 10.5% better completion rates than those employed directly. Skillset's completion rates have proven to be up to 20% higher when compared to direct employment in the SME sector.

We saw strong engagement with Skillset's permanent and labour hire services to source candidates for roles in the manufacturing, construction and health sectors, which reflects the current growth of these industries in Australia.

With the implementation of a new CRM, the team will be developing an enhanced focus on candidate experience in the new financial year. Skillset is committed to providing excellent service for ongoing and new client relationships to provide flexible staffing solutions.

## Group Training Services

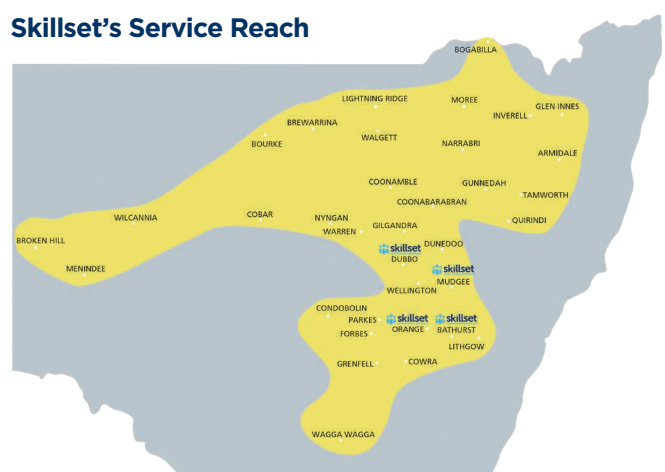
Coaching, mentoring and a positive and supported work environment are vital for apprentices and trainees to thrive, be productive and complete their training.

Another key focus has been ensuring the safety of our apprentices and trainees. Our Workforce Consultants, together with our Safety Department, have developed and delivered tool box talks about key issues such as mental health challenges and fatigue management.

We have strengthened our relationships with our Registered Training Organisation providers, Training Services NSW and Australian Apprenticeship Support Network provider MEGT to ensure we are monitoring all of our apprentices and trainees progress against their individual training plans as well as facilitating the integration of training and employment experiences.

Providing services to the local government sector remains a strategic focus for Skillset. We are fortunate to have secured business partnerships with 11 councils throughout regional NSW, allowing us to deliver Group Training Services throughout the region. Developing the skills of young people contributes to the growth of regional centres and keeps both skills and jobs local, leading to stronger economies, and more rewarding careers.

## Skillset's Service Reach





# Creating Positive Impacts in Our Regional Communities



## From Youth Connect to Trainee of the Year Laycee Covington-Gorst

Laycee came to Skillset and was referred to Youth Connect after finishing her HSC. Youth Connect Consultants worked with Laycee to identify her skills and interests and focused on numerous career planning activities.

Skillset let Laycee know about an IT traineeship advertised by Skillset and with great excitement, Laycee applied and was successful in getting the job.

During Laycee's traineeship, her host employer Devro Pty Ltd. commended her for her commitment, professionalism and loyalty shown towards the company.

Laycee now has a full-time role as a technical resource for Devro's IT infrastructure across Australia and New Zealand. In recognition of her achievements she has been awarded 2019 Western NSW Training Awards Trainee of the Year, and named Trainee of the Year Finalist for the 2019 NSW Training Awards and the AEN NSW & ACT Group Training Awards.



## 2018 Skillset Christmas Scholarship Sam Dent

In 2018, Skillset launched their inaugural Christmas Scholarship which is a \$1,000 prize awarded to an individual who has excelled in their area of education or employment. Sam Dent, who completed a Skills4Trade Construction Course at TAFE NSW Mudgee campus, was announced as the 2018 Scholarship winner. Sam has been acknowledged as a dedicated and compassionate student with a passion and natural talent for the trade.

Sam said he felt incredibly grateful to have been considered for this Scholarship. "For so long, I was made to feel as though there was no chance of me succeeding, but I've now found my passion. This Scholarship has made me even more driven towards achieving my goals and taking advantage of the many opportunities available."

Sam has since continued to develop his skills by attending an additional Skills4Trade course and securing work in the construction sector.

## National World Skills Finalist James Chamberlain

James Chamberlain, a second year boilermaker apprentice hosted by Moolarben Coal Operations, competed at the regional WorldSkills competition in Dubbo in late June 2019. A group of 12 TAFE NSW students from Orange, Dubbo, Bathurst, Lithgow and Forbes competed in the construction steel work and welding competitions, where students were judged on six different welds. James impressed the judges with his welding skills and was recognised as a regional winner who will now go on to compete at the WorldSkills Australia National Championships in Perth WA in 2020.

# Engagement, Skills & Support Services

**The Engagement, Skills and Support (ESS) team provides intensive support for individuals across regional NSW who are embarking on their education and employment aspirations.**

**ESS offers programs including Mentor Plus, Skills4Trade, Youth Connect and Land Works focused on developing enterprise skills and providing career guidance.**



**Mentor Plus launched in March 2018 to provide tailored mentoring to Australian apprentices and trainees in their first two years of training in the mining and construction industries, in an effort to improve national completion rates.**

Mentor Plus continued gaining momentum, exceeding expectations and achieving 106% of target in participant numbers for 2018-19. The Mentor Plus team are currently mentoring 1,456 apprentices in NSW. With full participant numbers, the team has focused on continued engagement with students across TAFE campuses, and building a rapport with students and TAFE teachers alike.

Mentor Plus extended its program coverage to include the Far West of NSW in Broken Hill and also the Riverina in Wagga Wagga, new areas of service delivery for Skillset.

A key focus has been ensuring our team are equipped with the appropriate training and knowledge to handle and advise on a range of apprentice and trainee issues. Training highlights included cultural awareness and motivational interviewing along with attending industry and mental health talks with TAFE Mining Teachers, Master Builders Association, headspace and LegalAid.

The team also developed further resources and techniques to successfully roll out the program, such as fact sheets to promote conversations on relevant issues and the introduction of group sessions to allow mentors to reach a greater number of participants to discuss common challenges affecting them in everyday life and the workplace.

*Industry Specialist Mentoring for Australian Apprentices (ISMAA) is funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business.*







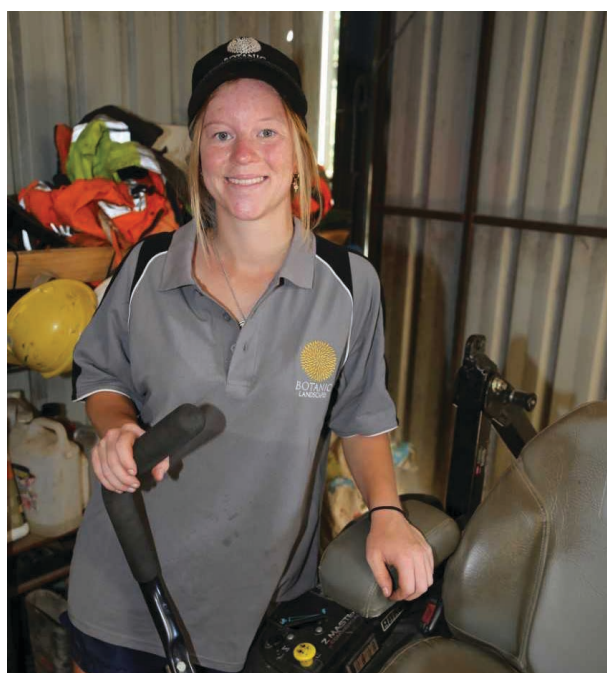
**Skills4Trade is a fully funded pre-apprenticeship program offering people aged 15 – 40 years the opportunity to complete a pre-apprenticeship course to build skills, experience a variety of industries and gain the necessary tools to support work-readiness. In 2018-19, we have seen 291 Skills4Trade participants engaged through the program.**

The program offers a variety of pre-apprenticeship courses focusing on a range of industries such as construction, engineering, automotive, horticulture, mining, childcare, civil construction, heavy vehicle, and auto electrical.

An outstanding feature of the program is the opportunity for students to gain work experience whilst completing the course. Work experience placements allowed host organisations to gain the opportunity to discover outstanding talent, share industry knowledge and give back to the community.

Our team has developed strategies to retain and engage participants for the duration of the course. We have seen 24% of participants gain an apprenticeship at the conclusion of the course which is a great outcome.

Skillset will continue to support and promote the benefits of pre-apprenticeship programs to clients, agencies, industry and the broader community, as well as helping individuals to become job-ready for apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities.



*Skills4Trade has been jointly funded and supported by the Multi Industry School Based and Pre Apprenticeship Support Pilot Project (MIP) through the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and by the NSW Government Department of Industry.*





In late 2018, Land Works moved across to our Engagement, Skills and Support division with a strong focus on providing natural environment services whilst empowering people through skills development and employment across regional NSW. Key services include revegetation and planting, environmental restoration and landscape maintenance. In 2018-19, Land Works has engaged 348 people across 103 projects implementing 260 hectares of landscape maintenance, 144 hectares of weed control and planting more than 27,000 trees.

### Supporting Local Government

Land Works supports local government through environmental and landscape services. Our Bathurst crew has been contracted by Bathurst Regional Council to complete landscape maintenance along the Great Western Highway, bush regeneration at Sofala, weed control at Mount Panorama and erosion remediation along the Macquarie River. Our Mudgee crew has been contracted by Mid-Western Regional Council to complete passive riparian revegetation, targeted weed control and tree planting along the Cudgong River. The diversity of sites and activities is the perfect training environment for Land Works interns, trainees and crew members.

### Servicing Industry Through Best Practice

Land Works implements best practice methods for environmental and landscape works. Land Works has worked with Hy-Tec Austen Quarry, Peabody's Wllpinjong Mine, Yancoal Moolarben Coal Operations, Regis Resources and KEPCO to implement environmental rehabilitation and management. Land Works ensured clients achieved their priorities through seed collection, revegetation, weed control, environmental assessments and nest box installation.

### Indigenous Land Management

Land Works works closely with Indigenous organisations across regional NSW. The Yawarra Ngurambang-gu (Caring for Country) Land Works crew was established in the Mudgee and Kandos region through a partnership with the North East Wiradjuri Company (NEWCO). Since September 2018, the crew have engaged 77 people across 15 projects controlling 12.1 hectares of weed control, installing 13,180 plants, and maintaining 15 hectares of landscapes. The Lake Cargelligo Indigenous crew work closely with CO2 Australia across central and western NSW. Crews complete tree plot carbon surveys and collect data to calculate Australian Carbon Credit Units. Since November 2018, Lake Cargelligo Land Works crews have surveyed 5,458 trees across 244 plots and travelled more than 14,500km.







## skillset youth connect

**Skillset's Youth Connect program is in its third year of operation and offers one-on-one career advice, support and training to 15-19 year olds who are disengaged from education and employment.**

Common barriers for young people being supported include lack of job search skills, mental health challenges and some with underutilised enterprise and foundation skills. To combat these barriers, our consultants work with clients to connect them to opportunities that best suits their needs and aspirations. Youth Connect has successfully reached and exceeded targets for engagement, education or employment outcomes. In the last financial year, the team reached 120% of target by placing 161 participants in education or employment.

Building community partnerships has also been a focus for the Youth Connect team. A new partnership with Housing Plus and JobLink Plus saw the launch of the Opportunity Pathways program in May 2019. This program supports social housing clients in Bathurst, Dubbo and Orange looking to improve their employment situation to leave social housing and live independently.

Another key partnership is with Veritas House and the Premier's Youth Initiative program. Skillset's role is to provide education and employment mentoring to these young people to establish a career path and goals to prepare them for leaving Out of Home Care and prevent homelessness. This partnership has been well developed over the last 12 months and we have engaged 57 young individuals across the broader western region as far as Brewarrina, Condobolin and Lightning Ridge.





# SkillForce360

In October 2018, Skillset launched its annual jobs and skills campaign, SkillForce360. The campaign aimed to increase employment and skills development opportunities across regional NSW.

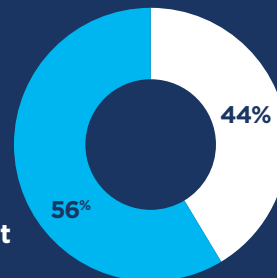
The campaign ran from 1 October 2018 and concluded on 31 March 2019. We exceeded the target of placing 360 people into employment, education and training by 19% with 428 placements. The SkillForce360 campaign has given Skillset the opportunity to partner with local organisations to create positive impacts for thousands of people in our local communities.



**428** people

placed into employment, education & training in 2018-19

Employment



Education & Training



**24** years

The average age of placement

## Leading Regional Contributors



Mudgee

**144**



Bathurst

**103**



Dubbo

**81**



Moolarben Coal Operations (MCO) was our biggest contributor to SkillForce360 with 35 people employed. Since 2009, MCO has trained 178 apprentices and trainees. A fantastic achievement by MCO to support skills development in our region.

## Industry Placements



**108**

Construction



**93**

Mining



**58**

Agriculture,  
Forestry  
& Fisheries



**43**

Administration  
& Support  
Services

**22%**

of placements were Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait Islander







## 2019 Skillset Awards

Each year, Skillset recognises individuals, businesses and organisations who have shown commitment and dedication through Skillset's employment, skills development and education programs and services.

In August 2019, over 200 people gathered in Bathurst to recognise the achievements of our apprentices, trainees, organisations and students from across regional NSW over the 2018-19 financial year.



### Gordon Hawkes Apprentice of the Year

**Jordan Ticehurst**

**Host:** Thales Australia

**Qualification:** Certificate III in Engineering (Mechanical Trade).

Jordan has shown a confident skill-base well beyond his years of experience in all facets of Engineering, CNC Manufacturing, Toolmaking and Optronics. This year, Jordan has commenced his Mechatronics degree to further grow his knowledge and skills.



### Joyce Hawkes Trainee of the Year

**Laycee Covington - Gorst**

**Host:** Devro Pty Ltd.

**Qualification:** Certificate III in Information, Digital Media & Technology.

We first met Laycee as a Youth Connect client and during that time she discovered her passion for technology. Laycee now has a full time role as the technical resource for Devro's IT infrastructure in Australia and New Zealand.



### Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Trainee of the Year

**Kianna Mason**

**Host:** Parke Street Specialist Centre

**Qualification:** Certificate III in Business Administration (Medical).

Kianna excelled at all tasks during her traineeship. In 2019, Kianna was a finalist for the Western Sydney Training Awards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Trainee of the Year. Kianna's host is hoping to provide further development training for future work in practice management.



### **Skillset Partnership Award** **Warren Saunders Insurance Brokers**

Warren Saunders Insurance Brokers (WSIB) have provided the expertise and knowledge required to support the management of Skillset's Recover at Work program and general insurances. WSIB align with Skillset's values making the partnership strong and one built on trust and integrity.



### **Host Excellence Award** **Moolarben Coal Operations**

Skillset and Moolarben Coal Operations (MCO) have developed a long term partnership that has provided great benefits for the Mudgee community with 178 apprentices and trainees completing since 2009. MCO has achieved a retention rate of 87 per cent of their graduates. MCO was also a finalist for the AEN NSW & ACT Group Training Awards Large Host of the Year.



### **Jim Todman Safety Award** **Robert Oatley Vineyards**

Robert Oatley is a valued Skillset partner and have invested heavily into its manufacturing and bottling lines to reduce the risk of injury and manual handling of staff when working around machinery. The investments have enabled them to increase bottling capacity to 10,000 bottles per hour.



### **Host of the Year (SME) Award** **Scott Camery Welding and Fabrication**

As long-time hosts, the team at Scott Camery has highly experienced tradesmen guiding the apprentices. They currently host six apprentices and ensure each individual is receiving the highest level of support and the best possible learning experience.



### **Host of the Year (Large) Award** **Peabody's Wilpinjong Mine**

Peabody's Wilpinjong Mine currently host 13 Skillset apprentices and 32 employees in their Upskilled program, making it a total of 45 engaged individuals. The Upskilled program is a partnership between Peabody and Skillset to provide employees with extensive and additional training and mentoring to give them the best chance at successful completion.



### **Local Government Award** **Bathurst Regional Council**

Bathurst Regional Council has been recognised for its ongoing commitment to skills development. Apprentices and trainees have the opportunity to use state of the art equipment they might not receive in a typical workplace. Bathurst Regional Council also engages Land Works for a vast range of natural environment projects.





## Land Works Award

### Central Tablelands Local Land Services

Central Tablelands Local Land Services (LLS) has been recognised for its contribution to the Upper Dingo Swamp Internship Program. The program provided 15 Lithgow participants the opportunity to complete Skills4Trade training, 16 days' work experience, engage with industry professionals, and develop foundation skills.



## Mentor Plus Award

### TAFE NSW

Skillset are proud to continue a strong partnership with TAFE NSW, in particular, through the Mentor Plus program. TAFE NSW has alleviated the challenge of getting access to students and has allowed Skillset to provide holistic support through liaising with teachers and connecting students with various campus support services.



## Youth Connect Award

### Chelsea Stam

Chelsea was introduced to our Youth Connect service which provided her with career planning advice and personal support. Chelsea has proven that anything can be achieved when you have the right support around you and are driven by passion. Chelsea has secured casual work in retail and plans are in place for her to continue further education in the beauty industry.



## Skills4Trade Award

### David Carriage

A dedicated individual, David completed a Skills4Trade Horticulture course. During the course a labour hire position at Dubbo Regional Council became available and it was the opportunity he was looking for, even riding his pushbike to training each day and then going to work after class. After impressing his supervisor with his skills and keen nature, David secured an apprenticeship with Dubbo Regional Council.



## Colleague Choice Award

### Julie Cross

Julie is the Manager of the Engagement, Skills & Support division. She is responsible for overseeing the program areas, including Mentor Plus, Skills4Trade, Youth Connect, and Land Works. Julie makes a positive impression on everyone she deals with at Skillset. Julie's commitment to supporting young people and their communities is always evident in the collaborative, professional and respectful manner in which she manages the diverse ESS team.



## Skillset Service Award

### Rodney Ney

Rodney has been with Skillset for nine years and is a Senior Workforce Consultant in the Group Training Services Team, looking after the Western region. Rodney is passionate about his role to support apprentices and trainees to complete their qualifications and believes it is vital to work collaboratively with the hosts with whom they are placed. Rodney has been recognised as a strong team member who goes above and beyond to help others and never fails to bring his sense of humour to work each day.



**Abbey Barrett | Head of College**

# skillset. senior college

**In 2018-19, we continued to achieve our purpose of providing an alternative senior school pathway for young people in our region to complete the HSC, whilst expanding our footprint and building a strong suite of opportunities and services for our students.**

We had the privilege of seeing 11 of our students graduate with their HSC. This was a proud moment for the school and for all those great young people, their families, friends and carers. This achievement is magnified when we reflect on how many of these young people report they never imagined that they would have completed school or their HSC with many being “first-in-family” to attain this qualification. Being our second cohort of Year 12 graduates, we continue to show how when a young person is given holistic, student-centred support they have the ability to push through significant personal and educational challenges to achieve their goals.

In early 2019, we saw the organisational structure of the school strengthen and expand with the opening of a new campus in Dubbo. This has allowed for increased enrolments,

continuous improvement of student support services and protocols as well as our Skillset Senior College family expanding through new teaching and support staff across both campuses. Roles have additionally expanded to include Campus Co-ordinators, Student Support Co-ordinator, Learning Support Co-ordinator, Leading Teacher, intensive learning support and research roles. We have held strong enrolment numbers, with 102 students across both campuses, and the exciting prospect of growth in Dubbo as students progress to Year 11 in 2020.


The introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh Award and Outdoor Education program lead by Chris Harris has provided our students with the opportunity to obtain an internationally recognised qualification whilst building well-rounded, transferable skills. We see outdoor education as a tool that can assist students engage with learning and break down barriers some students face in traditional school settings. We are looking forward to the development of our Outdoor Education program to eventually include bushwalking, abseiling, canoe trips and canyoning.

The students involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award have participated in numerous skill building activities, opportunities to give back to the community and extending themselves physically, mentally and emotionally. The most notable highlights being students embarking on hikes in the Blue Mountains, providing food for services in the community who support those less fortunate, visiting aged care facilities and learning new skills such as archery, cooking and drawing.



*Skillset Senior College Bathurst and Dubbo Teaching and Support Team*



A group of approximately 15 people, including students and staff, are posing for a group photo on a rocky, moss-covered trail. They are dressed in outdoor gear like backpacks, hats, and hiking clothes. In the background, a waterfall cascades down a lush, green, and vine-covered rock face. The scene is set in a dense forest with many ferns and hanging vines.

**“The staff are genuinely there for the students and want them to achieve. They give so freely of their time and the mutual respect between teachers and students has set a good base for success. I believe SSC has been life-changing for my daughter.”**



# Skillset Senior College Awards



## Skillset Senior College Partnership Award

### Outdoor Education Group

With the introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh International Award, Skillset Senior College has been fortunate to work with the Outdoor Education Group. The Outdoor Education Group generously donated top quality camping and hiking equipment to assist with the commencement of the Outdoor Education program. The significant donation of tents, sleeping bags, tarps, wet weather gear, gators and much more is of tremendous benefit to the program.



## Skillset Senior College Agriculture Award

### Glen Esk & Rose-lea Corriedales

We congratulate and commend Glen Esk & Rose-lea Corriedales for their ongoing support for the Corriedale program at Skillset Senior College. Through their generosity, Owner Rick Hoolihan helped initiate the Corriedale program, which has resulted in multiple awards for the school at the Royal Bathurst Show and countless opportunities for the students to learn and build skills in sheep husbandry practices. Rick has given his valuable time to the agricultural students, imparting over 15 years of experience and wisdom.



## Skillset Senior College 2018 Randazzo Award

### Thanina Limani

Thanina Limani was awarded the 2018 Randazzo Award for citizenship, scholarship and leadership, Skillset Senior College's highest honour. Thanina started with Skillset in 2016 as a Year 10 student facing personal barriers that had previously stopped her engaging in education. Throughout her time at Skillset Senior College, Thanina grew into a studious and exceptionally committed citizen and Senior Leader. Thanina is completing a Diploma in General Studies at Charles Sturt University and will progress into a teaching degree in 2020.



## 2019 Skillset Senior College Senior Leaders

Congratulations to the Senior Leaders for 2019. With 20 Year 12 students graduating, this is Skillset Senior College's largest ever Year 12 cohort. This achievement will place our students in good stead for all adventures which lie ahead, both personally and professionally. The Senior Leaders have been committed to providing support to our junior students. Skillset wish the Senior leaders all the very best for the future.

**Our Year 12 Graduates:** Rachael Brawley, Kristian Clayphan, Keisha-lee Cook-Robinson, Anna Coombes, Caleb Cosier, Paris Crouch, Adrian Edwards, Travis Farrell, Kelly Knight, Shane Lockery, Audrey Lord, Brandie Macdonald-Blake, Henry McCartney, Lillian Nairne, Oliver Pascoe, Nyssa Reynolds, Markus Stephens, Travis Thompson, Brianna Welton and Jake Williams.



Emma Thomas | Chief Financial Officer



## Financial Services

**This financial year, it was encouraging to achieve our third consecutive operating surplus and positive cash flows from operating activities, despite a challenging economic environment, several capacity constraints and in some cases weak demand.**

Skillset continued to service all its operations debt-free and remain in a secure financial position, with impressive financial indicators. Some key financial achievements during the year included net asset growth of 3% and ongoing positive current ratios held during the year with an average ratio of 1:2.5. Recruitment Services achieved superior results during the financial year across all locations. Group Training revenue also increased by 4.4% when compared to the same period in the prior financial year. Engagement, Skills and Support had ongoing success with both the Mentor Plus and the Youth Connect programs receiving 100% of funded revenue due to over-achievement in all outcomes of the program. In addition to this, the Land Works program revenue increased by 65% when compared to the same period in the prior financial year.

Skillset operates in highly regulated domains, and completed a number of compliance audits during the year with both government departments and several external audit companies including Ernst & Young and our audit partners HLB Mann Judd. All audits had positive results finding Skillset and Skillset Senior College compliant in all assessed areas. Skillset also received positive feedback from external auditors on the detail orientated control and monitoring environment we foster when it comes to financial processing, analysis and reporting.

During the past 12 months, the Finance Department spent time developing and improving our contract management processes and successfully re-negotiated several large host contracts, and also implemented new KPI reporting tools. Refining Skillset's debtor management process was also a

priority, which resulted in successful recovery of bad and doubtful debts resulting in a reduction of provisioning. The Finance Team also spent time assisting the Operations Team in their system and process developments with the introduction of a new CRM and ensuring workflows within Skillset are efficient, effective and streamlined to ensure minimal disruption to our external clients and stakeholders.

The Finance Department worked closely with Skillset Senior College to implement new accounting software and develop detailed controls, budgeting and monitoring processes. This body of work has ensured that Skillset Senior College remains compliant with all legislation, regulations and guidelines, and is utilising best practice financial management systems for secondary schools.

In the coming financial year, a major project for the Finance Team will be transitioning to a new accounting package that will streamline processing and increase functionality and reporting transparency. This initiative, along with the integration of other software currently utilised by Skillset, will further enhance the effectiveness of the Finance Department which supports the operations of both Skillset and the Skillset Senior College.

### In 2018 - 19 we achieved:

**18,384 timesheets** processed and paid for apprentices, trainees, labour hire and internal staff

**Managing 73 locations** across NSW where our employees are located

Managing payroll services across **45 modern awards and enterprise agreements**

**2,632 invoices paid** toward investment in our local communities



Financial Services Team



**Kim Ellis | Senior Manager – HR & Business Services**



## Business Services

**2018-19 has been a productive period for the Business Services Team, with many plans coming to fruition to better support Skillset Limited and Skillset Senior College.**

The responsibilities of developing and facilitating the Risk Management Framework were transitioned into our unit successfully. We also began our partnership with Warren Saunders Insurance Brokers (WSIB), who have changed the way Skillset are able to manage the Recover at Work program, Workers Compensation and General Insurances.

As a team we have collaborated directly with Senior Leadership to support the development of strategies to enhance the value and cost-effectiveness of all outcomes within our functional areas of responsibility: Human Resources, Quality and Risk, Safety and Return to Work, Marketing, Information Communications Technology, Strategic Projects and the all-important Head Office Front Reception. We have continued to work diligently behind the scenes to ensure existing and emerging programs and services are in compliance with relevant standards and regulations, company policies and procedures and recognised best practice.

### Human Resources

Human Resources (HR) played an instrumental role with the broader Business Services Team to develop and implement the revised Company Values. A collaborative approach with all staff was taken and the staff survey received a 79% response rate.

Additional improvements were made to our on-boarding and off-boarding processes. These include improved formal inductions for internal stakeholders to ensure internal processes are adopted.

HR was responsible for supporting the internal recruitment for Skillset Senior College. With the decision to open a Dubbo Campus at the start of 2019, HR had to work quickly to successfully fill all roles.

Significant progress has been made with the Employee Engagement program with overall components developed. Training material has been designed to launch Annual Performance Appraisals. The newly developed appraisal process will cover key performance areas, competencies, company values and learning and development as part of our succession planning process.



## Safety

Work Health and Safety (WHS) is integrated into everything we do at Skillset. Our stance is to always have our employees return 'home safe' with the expectation that no one will come to harm in the workplace. The Safety Team has achieved significant results in 2018-19:

- **52%** reduction in injuries compared to the last financial year
- **125+** WHS Site inspections completed
- **441** WHS Inductions completed
- **9,051** inspection forms were completed on iAuditor
- **81%** of all claims logged were not premium impacting claims
- **86%** reduction in budgeted premium cost vs actual premium cost
- **17** different toolbox talks topics delivered across all regions.

To ensure safety across all areas of the organisation, Skillset continues to upskill its staff by providing the following training:

- Mental Health First Aid
- First Aid, CPR, Asthma Management
- Emergency Preparedness.

## Quality & Compliance

The new WorkPro online induction training modules were an important implementation for Skillset with the induction process for all employees improved.

Another area of focus was improving governance policies and procedures for both Skillset Limited and Skillset Senior College, with a number of new policies being implemented to comply with new legislation.

In collaboration with the ESS Team, 35 Safe Work Method Statements, a new operations manual and supporting procedures were developed for Land Works. This assisted Skillset with winning tenders and better positioned us for future tender submissions.

## Risk

The Skillset Risk Management Framework and supporting Organisational Risk procedures were developed and implemented based on the ISO31000:2018 standard. Risk management has now become an all-staff responsibility (along with Quality, Work Health & Safety and Environmental responsibilities) linked to each role. Quarterly meetings with Risk Owners and Stakeholders are held and updates are provided through the Audit and Risk committee.

## Strategic Projects

A number of tenders were completed in 2018-19 resulting in new opportunities for Skillset including:

- RMS Weeds Maintenance
- Wilpinjong Plant Propagation
- Bathurst Regional Council environmental projects
- Dubbo Regional Council Group Training Contract.

There has also been a strong focus on enhancing and maintaining our key partnerships with Veritas House, Housing Plus and Western Zone Aboriginal Land Council as well as ongoing strategic activities with our key Registered Training Organisation partner TAFE NSW.

Identification of being included on panels for services has also been a focus with a successful application for the NSW Government Contingent Workforce.

## Marketing

The Marketing Team continues to develop strategies to maximise brand awareness for Skillset and its programs and services. The highlight of these has been embarking on new branding for the organisation. We are extremely proud of the new logo and the colours are fresh and contemporary. A new addition to our brand identity is the people icon which represents our focus on creating life-changing opportunities for people across regional NSW.



An important marketing activity has been continuing to promote apprenticeships and traineeships as an attractive career pathway. We do this in a number of ways including exhibiting at Jobs Expos, annual Try-a-Trade days, school presentations, targeted campaigns via social media and jobs and skills campaigns like SkillForce360.

Another major focus has been enhancing our digital presence. We have employed a new marketing resource to head up our social media activities. We have seen significant growth of our social media pages with a 165.6% increase in followers in 2018-19 compared to the previous financial year.

## Information Communications Technology

In 2018-19, ICT has completed a number of projects to improve operational capabilities of Skillset. Major projects include commissioning the Skillset Senior College Dubbo campus network and recycling over 3 tonnes of eWaste.

We continue to move our network architecture into the cloud, a journey that requires care to avoid any interruption to operations. To date, Skillset Senior College is 100% serviced by cloud applications and 30% of corporate applications have been moved across, with the remainder to occur over the next 12 months.

## Board of Directors



David Cooke, Chair



Jacqueline Woods



Ian Tooke



Craig Hort



Leigh Haywood



Cr Graeme Hanger



Cr Reg Kidd



Cr Alan Ward



Cr Maree Statham

## Member Organisations



PARKES SHIRE COUNCIL



orangebusinesschamber



JUL 2018 - JUN 2019

# Skillset Snapshot



**3,051**

Individuals we engaged through Skillset services



**\$23M**

Investment in our local communities

## Employment and Career Development Services



**434**

Apprentices and trainees employed by Skillset



**291**

People engaged in training and work placements



**1456**

Apprentices and trainees mentored



**282**

Young people supported



**384**

Individuals engaged through projects

## skillset senior college



**88**

Students enrolled



**32**

RoSA completions



**11**

HSC graduates





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**Bathurst**

341 Havannah Street Bathurst NSW 2795

**Orange**

2/150 Lords Place Orange NSW 2800

**Dubbo**

34a Victoria Street Dubbo NSW 2830

**Mudgee**

48a Market Street Mudgee NSW 2850

**Skillset Senior College Bathurst**

390 Panorama Avenue Bathurst NSW 2795

**Skillset Senior College Dubbo**

Corner of Bultje and Fitzroy Streets Dubbo NSW 2830

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