

1. What is needed to support workers in affected industries to successfully transition to the electric and alternative energy source vehicle industry?

To ensure a successful and fair transition for workers affected by the shift toward electric and alternative energy source vehicles, targeted investment in skills and training is essential. NECA advocates for industry-led development of pathways from affected industries and skills sets through to the emerging vocational training & qualifications required to service the new infrastructure and equipment.

It is also vital that any transition strategy includes strong regional delivery and support, particularly in areas where coal and traditional energy sectors are declining. NECA supports collaboration between government, employers, unions, and training providers to shape effective pathways. A coordinated, inclusive approach will ensure a just transition that benefits workers, industry, and communities.

2. Do you have any concerns about technical and safety standards in this industry?

Yes. NECA remains concerned about inconsistent application and enforcement of technical and safety standards in the rollout of electric vehicle infrastructure. Compliance with the Wiring Rules (AS/NZS 3000:2018), AS/NZS 5139:2019 (battery storage), and other relevant standards is non-negotiable in any electrical installation. Yet the rapid deployment of EV charging infrastructure, is outpacing inspection and enforcement capacity.

A critical issue is the shortage of electrical inspectors in NSW. The state has not kept pace with the increasing complexity and volume of electrical work, including EV charger installations. This shortage undermines public safety, exposes consumers to non-compliant installations, and creates an uneven playing field for contractors who uphold rigorous safety standards. NECA calls for urgent investment in the recruitment and resourcing of electrical installation inspectors to ensure that safety and compliance remain front and centre in the energy transition. We are working collaboratively with the Government to improve this issue.

3. What role do unions play in shaping training, apprenticeships, and certifications for new energy infrastructure jobs?

Their involvement in the development of training and certification frameworks helps ensure that worker safety, fair conditions, and quality outcomes are upheld. NECA believes unions should be consulted and engaged, alongside employers, industry associations, and regulators in the design and delivery of skilling programs that meet the demands of emerging technologies and infrastructure.

However, the future success of the EV and alternative energy transition will depend on partnerships that leverage the strengths of all stakeholders. Industry-led training providers, such as NECA's GTOs and RTOs, have demonstrated strong performance in delivering highly skilled electrical workers ready for evolving demands and transition of the energy sector. Collaboration between unions and industry will be essential to building a resilient, inclusive, and future-ready workforce.