

## 2023/2024 CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to present the Chairperson’s Report for the Electrotechnology Training Institute Limited (formerly the Electrical and Communications Association of Western Australia Inc) for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

### Formation of the Electrotechnology Training Institute Ltd

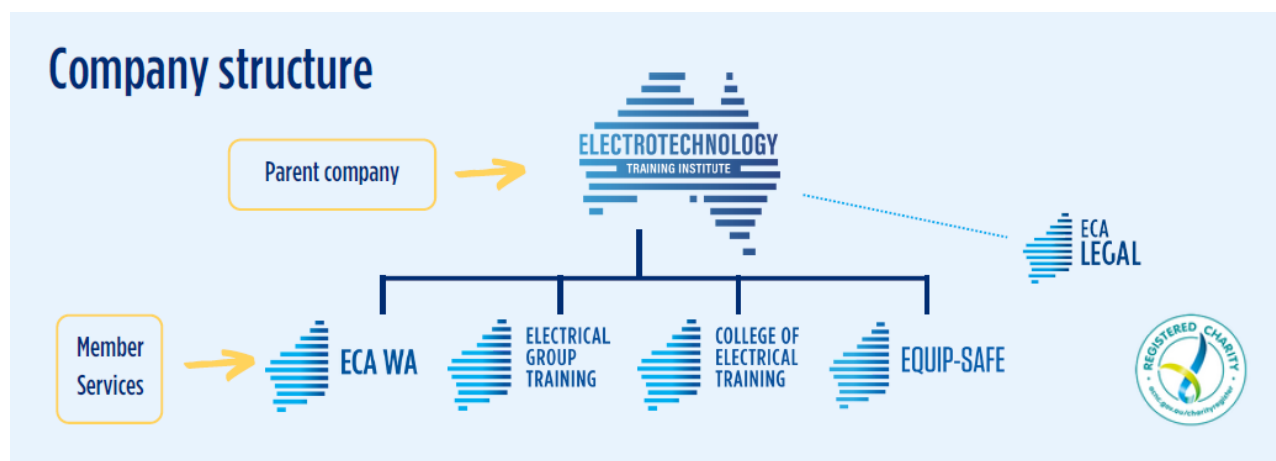
This year saw a significant change in the legal structure of the former Electrical and Communications Association of Western Australia Inc (ECA WA) from a registered association to a company limited by guarantee with a charitable purpose. This change was designed to support the next step in the organisation’s growth and evolution, as well as ensuring ongoing regulatory compliance requirements.

Following member consultation over a period of months the legal structure changes were approved by members, enabling ECA WA to:

- establish a new constitution to govern its operations as a company;
- transfer its registration from the *WA Association’s Incorporation Act 2015* to the *Corporations Act 2001*; and
- adopt its new name of the Electrotechnology Training Institute (ETI).

These changes have maintained ETI’s status as a respected not-for-profit charity while cementing the organisation’s commitment to building a diversified electrical industry through advocacy, representation, employment, education and training.

While there has been an organisational name change, ETI’s business units and services have continued to trade under their former trading names and branding. The following diagram shows ETI’s company structure:



## About the Electrotechnology Training Institute

ETI provides a variety of educational and employment services, tailored to the unique needs of anyone currently working, or seeking to work, in the electrotechnology industry. Through the charity, members also have access to professional advice, training, advocacy and representation, and industry-relevant information on a range of technical, legal, safety and business issues.

ETI delivers services in the following areas, each with an important role to play in the development of the electrotechnology industry:

- Member services, which as at 30 June provided key services for 1668 full members and 746 associate members. This is the highest number of full members on record.
- A registered Group Training Organisation (GTO) trading as Electrical Group Training (EGT), which at 30 June employed 563 apprentices. Throughout the year, EGT hired its apprentices out to approximately 240 host contracting businesses located across WA.
- A Registered Training Organisation (RTO) with two business units trading as:
  - o the College of Electrical Training (CET), which at 30 June provided vocational training to 2,134 apprentices and post-trade training for more than 2,000 licensed electricians and contractors; and
  - o EquipSafe, which meet's industry's demand for high risk, forklift and elevated work platform courses.
- ECA WA Legal, a separate company owned by ETI that provides members with advice on a range of contract, industrial relations and employment issues.

### Vision and Purpose

ETI's **vision** is to educate and service the electrical and communications industries in Western Australia.

Its **purpose** is to strengthen a diversified industry through education, training and advocacy by providing leadership, integrity, networking, employment opportunities and knowledge.

Through its services, the charity supports the following community groups:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- adults - aged 25 to under 65;
- adults - aged 65 and over;
- families;
- females;
- general community in Australia;
- males;
- people in rural/regional/remote communities;
- people who are unemployed;
- veterans and/or their families; and
- youth - 15 to under 25.

## Key Programs

The programs ETI delivered in the 2023/24 financial year included:

1. *Education:*

- Apprentice employment and training.
- Mature age female and indigenous programs.
- Self-funded mature age male program.
- Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) programs.
- Post trade training.
- General Training.
- Assessment services.

2. *Member support:*

- Advocacy and representation.
- Technical Knowledge Base Library.
- Technical hotline.
- Safety education.
- Business and industry educational evenings.
- Legal advice and debt collection.

3. *Home safety advice for the community.*

ETI is required to report to the Australian Not-for-profits and Charities Commission (ACNC) on one charitable objective per year; however, each year it reports on ten objectives, which is a significant achievement and testament to its valuable contribution to industry.

## The Electrotechnology Industry

The electrotechnology industry in WA continues to go from strength to strength, playing a key role in the state's high standard of living and economic development. The industry continues to provide a broad range of opportunities for contractors supported by:

- a strong residential sector;
- growing investment in non-residential building construction;
- consistent expenditure on maintenance and repair works; and
- high commodities prices.

This has ensured that contractors experience high demand for their services.

In achieving its charitable objectives, ETI is well positioned to support contractors, industry and the broader WA community to maintain a strong workforce and economy. Providing skilled, qualified tradespeople and helping contractors maintain resilient, adaptable businesses is at the core of everything ETI does.

## Apprentice Employment

Through its group training services, ETI provides employment and training opportunities, producing highly skilled and motivated tradespeople and ensuring a continuous flow of qualified electricians into industry.

## Promoting Industry Careers

Promoting the electrical industry as a positive career option was a key focus this year, with staff from all business units contributing to a wide range of events and major careers expos including the Skills West Expo, Skills Beyond the Boundary - Initial Taster Program (AFL), Workforce Australia Perth South and Perth North Jobs Expo, CALD Jobs Expo, Supanova Comic Con & Gaming Expo, and the Recruit WA Job Ready event. EGT also promoted apprentice employment pathways while attending approximately 45 careers expos held at public and private high schools across Perth's metropolitan area.

In addition to school careers nights and expos, EGT has actively marketed its services across the WA community, drawing on partnerships with Perth Motorplex, the WA Sporting Car Club, Carco.com Raceway (formerly Barbagallo Raceway), the WA Football Commission, and D1WA Drift Club (Perth's premier drifting club) to promote electrical apprenticeships. It's promotion through these events has included a mix of event naming rights, signage, trade stands, branding and event advertising.

In addition, staff have been actively involved in the following initiatives:

- ongoing project work with Workskil and Impact services;
- working with the Department of Corrections including attending an expo at Woorloo Prison Farm;
- the 2023 WorldSkills National Competition held at Melbourne Convention Centre;
- ongoing work to support women entering the electrical industry with 40 female apprentices employed through a mix of CTF funding and self-funded by ETI using funds donated by the former ECA WA (Union of Employers);
- the inaugural Women in Non-Traditional Trades (WINTT) scholarship, which was introduced in January 2024 and provides funding for an additional 15 female apprentices to be employed EGT and trained at CET by December 2024;
- ongoing work to build relationships with indigenous organisations and promote opportunities;
- employment of seven indigenous apprentices in the 2024 financial year bringing the total number of indigenous apprenticeships to 16;
- contributing to the Education Department Participation Team, which provides pathway information to students not attending school; and
- actively contributing to the Perth North and South local jobs taskforce, working on ways to build and create better visibility of the electrotechnology industry with a focus on the renewable energies.

These worthwhile promotional initiatives have seen increases in website and social media traffic, and a steady stream of applicants applying throughout the year, supporting EGT's growth in apprentice numbers.

With apprentice numbers sitting at 563 this year, EGT's numbers are the highest they've been since the last mining boom in the 2012 financial year, and the best recovery year since the 2016 financial year. WA's electrical industry has enjoyed a steady, high demand for electricians enabling EGT to proactively recruit apprentices in a three-week recruiting pattern. While it has been important to meet recruitment targets, EGT has maintained its focus on quality, with the ultimate goal being to enable all apprentices to successfully complete their four-year commitment and achieve their electrical licence. EGT is committed to providing apprentices with the best possible employment experience and this is reflected in their high average retention rate of 90.9%, which continues to remain well above industry averages.

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## Creating New Opportunities

By raising community awareness, ETI generates significant community interest in industry careers. It receives regular applications from mature-aged apprentices; however, there is lower industry demand for these apprentices due to their higher wage costs. This is a particular issue for female applicants, with many entering the industry via a change in career rather than applying straight from school. ETI has long lobbied for gap-funding so it can provide more job opportunities for mature-age applicants.

In 2023/24 ETI continued to make significant inroads into this issue with approximately 84 mature-age apprentices employed. These apprentices are supported by funding from:

- CTF;
- funds gifted from the former ECA WA (Union of Employers);
- ETI funds specifically allocated to achieving ETI's charitable objectives; and
- the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

## Partnering with Host Employers

EGT's host employers play an integral role in providing a broad variety of training and employment opportunities for the next generation of apprentices. Their continued commitment has been greatly appreciated and this year, EGT held its third annual Host Sundowner event, which provided an opportunity to thank contractors for their loyalty and support during the previous twelve months.

This year, ETI continued to support host employers working on Government construction projects. In January 2024 EGT was pleased with the announcement of a further 150 funded apprenticeships through the State Government's Group Training Wage Subsidy program, which has delivered an excellent outcome for industry. With 18 apprentices employed on the program between January and June, this initiative has built on the existing 45 places EGT received across 2022 and 2023. This program funds 100% of the junior wage component for apprentices who commenced in the funding year and are working on state government programs. Valued at \$134,500 per apprentice, this funding is passed entirely on to host employers.

## Quality, Well-trained Apprentices

ETI is proud of the quality of employment and training opportunities it provides, and every year it encourages apprentices to nominate for industry awards. The submission process provides an important opportunity for apprentices to reflect on their training, the personal and technical skills they've gained and their future career plans. This year many EGT apprentices were acknowledged as finalists or winners of several industry awards.

In this year's Master Builders WA Apprentice Awards, three EGT apprentices won awards with one taking out awards in three different categories. Dylan Bin Omar won the Aboriginal Apprentice of the year. Kaire Raik took home the 1<sup>st</sup> year electrical apprentice award and Bianca Vaz De Oliveira won the Apprentice Safety Award, 3<sup>rd</sup> year Electrical Apprentice and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Overall Apprentice.

ETI was proud of three Apprentice Employment Network WA (AEN WA) Award winners: Dylan Bin Omar won the Aboriginal Apprentice of the Year, Sanduni Senanayake won the Woman in Building and Construction Award and Corrine Bass won the Apprentice of the year Award.

Five EGT apprentices and one staff member entered the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) WA awards with staff member Kat Born taking out the Crystal Vision Award.

Additionally, EGT apprentices continued to perform well in the NECA WA awards taking out the First, Second and Third Year Award Categories, with the winners being Sanduni Senanayake, Chelsy Quintana and Michael Duncan respectively.

## Apprentice Training

CET has been delivering an outstanding level of service for almost thirty years. It is now Western Australia's largest electrical training provider and is known for a progressive approach that ensures the electrical industry has a constantly growing pool of trained and qualified tradespeople. ETI has greatly appreciated industry's continued support for CET as evidenced by a 52% market share of the total WA apprentice market for 2023/24.

In the past few years CET has experienced its highest annual apprentice intakes in its history, with both campuses operating at well above normal capacity. CET pioneered the rolling intake, and with this effective process in place, it was able to accommodate all new apprentices as quickly as possible. Throughout this time, CET has juggled the challenges of continued high demand for training combined with instructor shortages, and it would like to take this opportunity to thank employers for their patience while it addressed these matters. Revisions to CET systems combined with an increase in instructor applications has reduced wait times from almost nine months down to four months.

CET has also been moving to new class scheduling software which will be launched in late 2024. This will enable staff to more efficiently schedule and revise class arrangements, simulate enrolment scenarios, communicate with students who are affected by scheduling changes and rollover schedules from one year to the next.

To continue to improve access to industry training, CET is investigating potential new online training platforms aimed at enhancing service delivery and communication with students. With capabilities for online delivery of theory units, automated assessment marking and profiling automation features, it is expected CET will start to transition to the new arrangements in 2026.

## Industry-relevant Training

This year, the Australian Government's new Jobs and Skills Council structure saw the creation of the Powering Skills Organisation (PSO). ETI's CEO sits on PSO's Strategic Industry Advisory Body, taking a lead role in ensuring industry-relevant skills are factored into training and employment priorities, and upholding the integrity of WA's training and licensing needs.

With contractors operating in a rapidly changing electrical landscape, ETI is staying at the forefront of innovation. This year ETI was awarded \$3.1 million in funding through the Construction Training Fund's (CTF) Private RTO Infrastructure Grant, which will be used for infrastructure upgrades at the Joondalup and Jandakot campuses and to build a training environment on land situated across from CET's Joondalup campus. The grant will be used to provide construction-ready electricians for the clean energy and renewables sector to meet the State Government's clean energy transition commitments.

Having now completed its first full year under the new training package, CET's training has a strong focus on renewables, including established sources such as photovoltaics and batteries, and new technology such as hydrogen and the EV market. CET has welcomed the challenge of embedding these technologies into its training and looks forward to showcasing some of these new technologies when its additional training environment is established.

## Independent Moderation and Validation

An important service offered by ETI for all of industry, is the moderation and validation of the Capstone assessment process. CET provides industry with a database that delivers a visual, real-time presentation of current Capstone data to ensure consistency in delivery and assessment. ETI has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Electrical Licensing Board, which ensures we can continue to deliver this valuable industry service.

## Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools

CET has a long-established Pre-Apprenticeships in Schools (PAiS) program, collaborating with thirty-one schools across the metropolitan area and fifteen schools in the Bunbury region. Following funding changes, this program was completed at the end of 2023, with CET delivering 112 VET in schools places in the 2023 training year.

## Post-Trade, General Training and Assessments

Through its two RTOs, CET and EquipSafe, ETI offers a broad range of post trade, general training and assessment services to support tradespeople to build on their skills. This year CET was pleased to grow its fee-for-service registrations by 20% and EquipSafe has continued to successfully tender for high risk, elevated work platform and safety training.

The variety of post-trade courses on its scope includes:

- Contractors' Registration;
- ACMA Open Cabling;
- Instrumentation and PLC;
- Checking and Testing;
- High Voltage Switching Training;
- Structured Cabling;
- WP Meter Exchanges;
- Restricted Electrical Licences;
- Photovoltaic (PV) Grid Battery Endorsement;
- PV Grid Course;
- Standalone Power Systems;
- Solar inspection and maintenance;
- Electrical Trade Licensing;
- Electrical Trade Licensing Gap;
- Safe Electrical Isolation;
- Western Power Meter Exchange and Western Power Replacement and Disconnect refresher courses;
- Fibre Optics;
- First Aid;
- Low Voltage Switchboard Rescue; and
- Safety Awareness Training.

CET's training supports people who obtained qualifications overseas and are seeking to have them recognised in Australia. Through its trade recognition services, CET provided onshore skills recognition services for electricians currently living in Australia. This year, CET participated in Trade Recognition Australia's RTO Advisory Group, and was invited to provide 61 fast-tracked Skills Recognition Assessments.

CET also provided free assessment services for 21 military veterans wanting to transition into civilian life with worthwhile qualifications. While the public training system charges for this service, CET delivered it at no cost as a thank you to service personnel. CET believes that delivering equivalency of trade certification as an important service, and helps veterans with their transition and ability to find meaningful work in a civilian setting.

## Advocacy and Representation

ETI has defined three key policy positions. To:

1. maintain the current apprenticeship system and make it easier for employers to employ apprentices either directly or via Group Training Organisations like EGT;
2. protect electrical worker and contractor licences by maintaining WA's current electrical licensing system and the associated training requirements; and
3. educate the electrical industry to ensure they are kept up to date regarding environmental, social, and governance practices, technology, apprentice supervision, regulations, standards, licensing, work health and safety, legal issues and training.

These policies have featured in many of ETI's discussions with industry stakeholders.

### Advocacy

As the largest employer and trainer of electrical apprentices ETI has a strong advocacy role. ETI is considered a 'go to' organisation for government departments seeking industry feedback across a range of issues, enabling it to effectively represent industry's education and training interests to government, Building and Energy, Western Power, the Electrical Licensing Board and other industry bodies.

ETI also continues to build relationships with state and federal politicians and shadow ministers including WA Premier Roger Cook and Ministers Ms Sue Ellery, Ms Simone McGurk, Mr Bill Johnston, Mr Reece Whitby, Mr Peter Rundle, Mr David Templeman and Ms Sussan Ley.

### Comprehensive Industry Representation

ETI provides important representation through forums such as:

- Liaising with state and federal governments regarding apprenticeship funding, workplace health and safety legislation, and industrial relations legislation.
- Meetings to discuss the significant underfunding across the RTO industry and the disparity between TAFE and private RTO funding.
- Advocating for increased female industry representation through various events and forums, for example, the Women's Industry Forum and Women's Advisory Group Meetings.
- Contributing to the judging panels for the WA Training Awards and NECA WA Excellence Awards.
- Attending Electric Vehicle Council meetings.

ETI was also pleased to work with the newly formed Powering Skills Organisation to provide input on the national training package and its implementation, and participate on the UEE-EC Technical Advisory Group.



ETI's Chief Executive Officer participates in the:

- WA Electrical Industry Working Group (as the Chair);
- Utilities, Engineering, Electrical and Automotive Training Council (UEEA);
- Industry Advisory Group – UEEA Training Council (as the Chair);
- Ministerial Future Battery and Critical Minerals Industries Developing our local capability Working Group;
- Premier's LNG Skills Taskforce Working Group;
- Ministerial LNG Jobs Taskforce - Education and Operations Working Group;
- Ministerial Future Battery and Critical Minerals Industries – Supporting Energy Storage Applications Working Group;
- WA Building and Construction Consultative Committee;
- Standards Australia EL001 Committee;
- Construction Industry Strategic Group;
- National Industry Reference Committee for Electrotechnology;
- Technical Advisory Committee for the Electrotechnology Training Package;
- Premier's West Australian Skills Summit;
- Electric Vehicle Advisory Group;
- Hydrogen Industry Advisory Group and
- Electrical Training Advisory Group – National Electrical and Communications.

Through EGT, industry had representation that aimed to progress apprentice employment initiatives including:

- Participation on the Australian New Zealand Electrical Training Alliance (ANZETA) Management Committee. This year EGT hosted the ANZETA AGM and Directors Meeting at CET Joondalup.
- Participation on the National Apprentice Employment Network (NAEN) and the Apprentice Employment Network WA (AEN WA) Committee. EGT's General Manager serves as the state-appointed Director on the National Board and chairs the WA Committee.
- Regular meetings (via AEN WA) with the WA Department of Training and Workforce Development to discuss group training issues, wage subsidies and funding.
- Meetings with the Federal Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and NAEN to review the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System.
- Participation in the Perth North Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce initially as a guest speaker and as a member representing AEN WA. This Taskforce comprise up to 10 members with representation from local stakeholders such as employers or industry groups, education and training providers, employment services providers, and local and state governments. Members are highly valued for bringing their industry perspective to the region.
- Participation in group training stakeholder forums, risk management meetings and round table discussions with the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

CET's advocacy focused on progressing industry training initiatives. It continued to explore opportunities to collaborate with a range of forums and government departments including the:

- Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation;
- City of Joondalup Business Forum;
- Joondalup Economic Development Initiative;
- Joondalup Education Network; and
- New City of Cockburn Economic Development Lead.

## A Holistic Industry Focus

ETI has also represented industry and advocated on a range of other issues relevant to all industry contractors including:

- security of payments legislation;
- workplace health and safety legislation;
- training for electric vehicles and related infrastructure;
- mandated apprentice numbers on key government-funded projects;
- restricted electrical licensing and gas-fitting training;
- apprentice supervision requirements;
- changes to Electricians Training Licence requirements;
- funding to make mature age apprentice employment more affordable for small business;
- funding to increase female and indigenous participation in industry;
- the proposed federal automatic mutual recognition (AMR) program;
- continuing professional development for the electrical industry; and
- reforms to the clean energy sector.

### Member Support – Safety

As an industry leader, ETI maintains an ongoing commitment to safety.

#### Accessible Services

The number of members now using ETI's HSEQ system has reached an all-time high, finishing the year with the record number of 313 HSEQ clients. The growing uptake and member feedback both indicate that the system is making a significant contribution to members' businesses.

Custom designed for the electrical industry, the safety system is accessible and easy to use. The ECA Safe Digital app, which was a new feature last year, has continued to be popular with members and allows users to complete pre-starts/toolboxes, vehicle inspections, risk assessments (RAC and SWMS), electrical installation tests and incident and hazard reports digitally via phone or tablet.

With significant cultural changes now embedded and operational through WA's safety legislation, and high levels of responsibility and accountability resting on employers, safety remains an important service for members.

#### Building Industry's Safety Culture

High standards are key to driving cultural change within industry and supporting improved safety outcomes for host employer members. Following the implementation of ETI's Negative Outcomes Reduction Plan, ETI has seen improvements in its:

- internal safety culture;
- communication and host, supervisor and apprentice engagement;
- supervisor training;
- safety systems; and
- risk assessment processes.

This outcome was reflected in the results of ETI's annual cultural perception survey, with this year's survey showing an improvement in all cultural elements and demonstrating that safety culture is trending positively. This is particularly notable given the number of apprentices employed and the challenges associated with managing safety when apprentices are not under EGT's direct supervision.

EGT also continues to perform well with regards to safety in comparison to its peers in the ANZETA network. ANZETA is an association of electrical GTOs from each state in Australia and from New Zealand that meets twice a year primarily to collaborate and share learnings and resources. It collects and collates incident and injury data from all member organisations and uses the data for benchmarking and for identifying common trends, which inform strategies and campaigns to reduce the incidence of these events.

### Member Support - Legal

Having a professional legal service is continually rated as important and valuable by members. Through ECA legal, members have exclusive access to free generalist legal advice via telephone, or a 30-minute consultation. The fee-for service rates are also substantially lower than non-member rates and the fees charged by private practices.

This year ECA Legal provided 1007 hours of free legal advice to members. If conservatively valued at the private practice cost of \$500 an hour, that equates to almost half a million dollars' worth of legal advice provided at no charge to members.

### Industry Specific Support

The legal team provided information and advice on a range of issues including commercial contracts, payment disputes under the new *Security of Payment Act*, enterprise agreements, electricity licensing regulations, terms and conditions, superannuation, business structures, award interpretation/coverage, employment contracts, employee conduct, redundancies, unfair dismissals, adverse action and discrimination claims, leave entitlements, union right of entry, and wage rates and allowances.

The legal team also supported members with debt recovery. During the past twelve months, ECA Legal assisted with the recovery of almost \$233,330 worth of debts at little or no cost to members.

To keep contractors informed of developments in workplace relations and other relevant areas of law, the legal team wrote a series of articles, which were sent out to members fortnightly via ETI's "eNews" newsletter and NECA's quarterly magazine "NECA News". These covered topics such as the new right to disconnect after hours, the new definition of casual employees, enterprise bargaining changes, new requirements for public holiday work requests, how to manage unpaid leave during annual shut-downs, Fair Work Information Statements, changes to Sex Discrimination Laws and new limits on fixed term contracts, new "closing loopholes" legislation, paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave, sham contracting, medical marijuana and mine sites. Australia has been going through a significant period of industrial relations reform, and ECA Legal has ensured that members are informed of the many changes that they need to be aware of.

### Member Support – Technical Hotline

Surveys and member feedback continued to rate the Technical Hotline as ETI's most in-demand member service, with feedback being consistently positive.

This is a unique service delivered by WA-based staff catering specifically for WA businesses and issues. It draws on the technical team's diverse experience and knowledge, supporting contractors with

compliance, technical knowledge, installation requirements and understanding Western Power and Building and Energy's rules.

The service provides members with direct technical assistance from 7.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). In 2023/24, the technical team received 15,551 enquiries from members, including phone calls, email enquiries and face-to-face appointments. The top enquiry topics related to interpretation of AS3000 and Western Power's rules for subdivisions.

ETI has been pleased to offer outstanding support provided free of charge for all members.

### Member Support – Technical Knowledge Base

ETI's Technical Knowledge Base (TKB) has continued to be a significant strength, receiving the second highest number of compliments from members (after the technical hotline service). ETI receives regular member feedback about the speed and helpfulness of the responses provided.

Drawing on ETI's licence arrangements with Standards Australia, TKB is an online service that allows members to view and search Australian Standards, industry alerts, Energy Bulletins, FAQs and more. It also provides the ability to ask the technical team specific complex questions. This initiative has meant members can access an extensive range of technical information at any time of the day or night. The in-built 'submit a question' service is very popular as it enables members to attach photos to their questions whilst on the job, and allows the technical team to provide written responses for those members who prefer that format.

TKB is regularly updated with new information, making this an extremely valuable resource. This is reflected in TKB's high usage rates, with more than 90% of members using the system via almost 5,000 unique logins. In 2023/24, members conducted 12,671 searches (up from 10,934 in 2022/23) and viewed 46,656 articles (an increase on last year's 45,799 views). ETI invests a considerable amount of its own funding into maintaining and delivering the service, which is provided free of charge for members and EGT apprentices.

### Community Support and Engagement

ETI actively works for the betterment of the electrotechnology community and the broader WA community. It's approach is one of the main reasons the charity is so successful in consistently achieving positive outcomes.

ETI and NECA WA continued to work together this year. Under the service level agreement, NECA WA members received full access to ETI's member services. ETI also collaborated with the Master Electricians Association attending their conference and industry awards night. These collaborations support business development and networking and enhance ETI's ability to further its charitable activities.

New member recruitment continued to show positive results this year, with net growth being 3.3%. 20% of new members were regionally based, demonstrating ETI's services are valued state-wide. Member attrition has declined across the past ten years, with the main reason for resignation being business closure. Feedback has shown that ETI's high level of services has contributed to this year's continued growth.

Member Services held approximate twenty member events, at various venues around the state. Members have been highly engaged, with many events continuing to draw an excess of 100 registrations. Attendees consistently stayed on well after the formal presentations to network with each other, industry suppliers, representatives from Western Power and Building and Energy, and ETI staff. This year we also welcomed Horizon Power who presented at our Carnarvon member night. These events are greatly valued and in many cases, when non-members attend these evenings, they sign up for membership.

In addition to providing relevant industry and business information, these events are important avenues for building local contractors' collective strength and a sense of community. This is particularly important given that 91.3% of members are small businesses up to and including five employees. For small businesses with limited in-house resources, having access to quality, external business support is highly regarded.

ETI also builds communities through sponsorship and this year supported the following organisations:

- Tradie HQ is a world-first co-working space specifically for tradespeople. This 'business incubator' initiative acts as a stepping stone for small businesses transitioning from a home-based set up to their own workshop/office.
- The MEA Power Up Charity facilitates fundraising and provides logistical support to electrical contractors who give up their time, volunteering to help re-energise or establish a new power supply in under-privileged communities. This year's project was a Girls refuge project in East Timor, which has enabled the refuge and clinic to provide a safe haven for young girls in the area and maintain a maternity section for birthing mothers and their new born babies in an area that experiences a high mother and infant mortality rates.
- The Swan Athletic Sporting Club has a progressive approach that has enabled them to successfully integrate their women's team into a club that has been fielding men's teams since 1930. This is the fourth year in a row EGT has supported the women's football team.
- The WAFL Colts League as a naming rights sponsor, Perth Football League Colts with naming rights of six leagues, and the Baldivis Junior Football Club in support of an EGT apprentice with children at the club.
- The WA Training Awards for the twelfth consecutive year, including participating in the judging process.

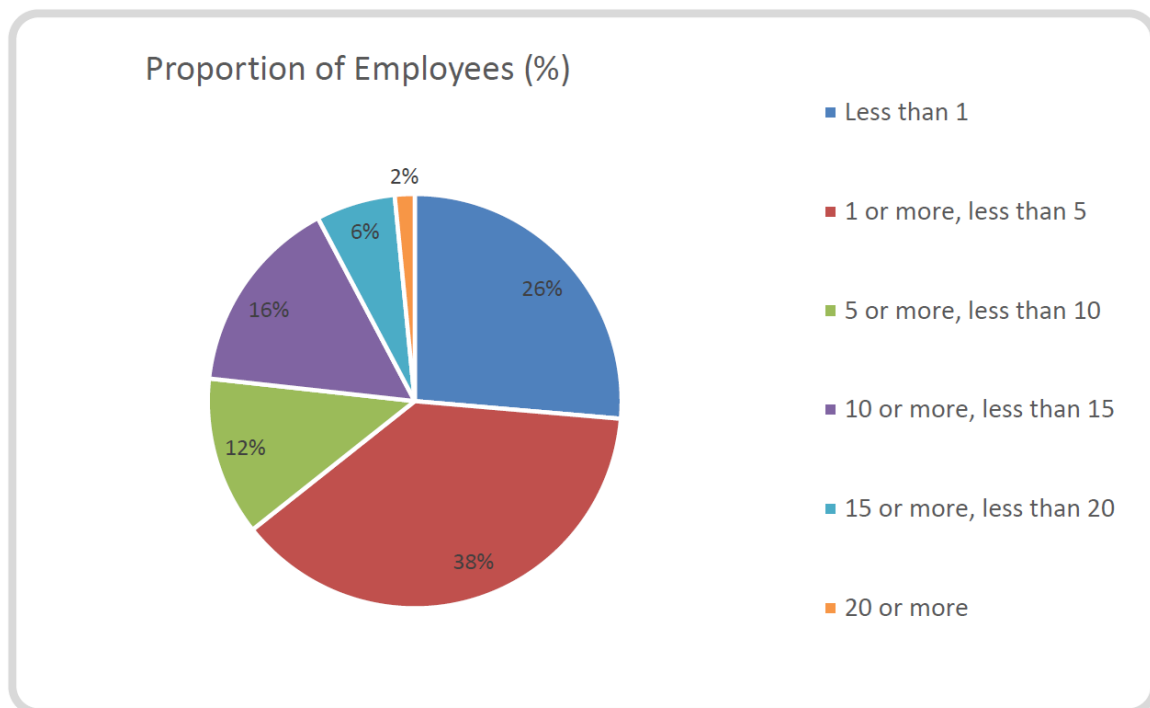
ETI is committed to supporting its staff with their personal initiatives to build better communities. For the fourth year in a row, ETI staff member Jo Odgen managed a project to help Street Doctor, a mobile GP clinic that helps the transient and disadvantaged in Perth's community. ETI and a number of staff, donated goods and financial support to help prepare backpacks with sleeping bags, beanies, socks and other personal items that could be provided to Street Doctor's clients.

## Maintaining a Dedicated Team

ETI's success in achieving its charitable objectives is a direct result of its dedicated team. The management team places a strong emphasis on building a positive, engaging staff culture and its success in this area is evidenced by high loyalty and staff retention and positive results from this year's culture survey.

The 2023/24 year saw a reduction in turnover and the average tenure increased slightly. ETI also marked three staff milestones with Carl Copeland and Chris Boelens celebrating fifteen years of service and Stuart Diepeveen celebrating twenty years of service.

ETI's average tenure was five years and six months at 30 June 2024 as outlined in the following graph, which shows the proportion of staff and their length of service.



ETI reviewed its staff loyalty program and implemented a four day work week for most CET staff. In addition to maintaining its effective retention strategies, the management team also explored a range of recruitment options including holding two successful recruitment nights at CET's Joondalup and Jandakot campuses and working in close partnership with several high schools and job agencies.

### Gender Equality

The 2024 Gender Equality Report provided a snapshot of ETI's gender composition and showed that ETI is tracking positively with an increase in the number of women in managerial roles. Additionally, 7.3% of EGT's apprentices are female. This is well above industry's average, which shows that 3%<sup>1</sup> of Australia's electricians are female.

In early 2024, ETI created a Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, which has already had a positive impact. The group has established an ALLY<sup>2</sup> network within the organisation, created an online presence on the staff intranet, and planned a number of events including a Harmony Day morning tea. The group is also working with HR to draft new diversity policies.

### Supporting Staff Wellbeing

ETI has implemented a number of HR projects this year, which have been designed to continue to maintain staff wellbeing. These projects have included:

- Mental health initiatives to complement ETI's current health and wellbeing offerings.

<sup>1</sup> Based on May 2024 data from ANZSCO: <https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/data/labour-market-insights/occupations/3411-electricians>

<sup>2</sup> A person who supports the rights of a minority or marginalised group without being a member of it

- Holding the third all-staff connect meeting in August 2023, which was themed ‘collaboration and connection’. The event was well received, generating positive feedback from staff.
- Conducting digital performance reviews.
- Ongoing work to review policies and procedures including onboarding, leave policies, exit checklists and the employee handbook.
- Supporting the ETI’s rebranding and staff communication about the changes.
- Ongoing succession planning for critical roles.
- Employee training in cybercrime, mental health first aid and diversity and inclusion.

In addition, ETI has continued to offer its employee assistance program, which is actively promoted and made available to both staff and apprentices.

## Prudent Financial Management

ETI has established an effective business model, placing it in the top 4.5% of charities in Australia. Its prudent financial management has made it possible for it to fund many of its programs and initiatives.

As at 30 June 2024, ETI achieved a total turnover of \$52,943,749 achieving a surplus of \$353,237 across ECA Legal Pty Ltd, CET, EGT, EquipSafe and Member Services. ETI’s total assets were \$50,643,172.

The key factors contributing to these results included:

1. ETI’s membership numbers have reached an all-time record high.
2. Continued industry demand has seen a steady recruitment drive and minimal downtime for EGT’s apprentices.
3. With CET operating at full capacity, EGT delayed the commencement of off-the-job training for their first-year apprentices. As a result, the apprentices spent more days on the job with host employers than was initially budgeted. The increased number of chargeable hours, contributed to EGT’s positive results. With changes to CET’s operations and reduced wait times, EGT apprentices are now commencing training within four to six months and are being charged out accordingly.
4. There has been a general increase in apprenticeship employment across industry, resulting in high demand for apprentice training at CET. CET introduced initiatives to reduce commencement wait times and ensure all apprentices can complete on time, improving access to commencement and completion funding.
5. With CET’s apprenticeship funding held static since 2016, and operational costs increasing by 60% in recent years, ETI continued to lobby for improved contract arrangements. This saw the Department of Training and Workforce Development increase funding to \$4.30 per student contact hour, a welcome outcome that had a positive impact on CET’s performance.
6. EquipSafe has been successful in a number of tenders, demonstrating that it’s training is valued by industry. A mix of quality enhancement initiatives and instructor recruitment strategies were employed to lift EquipSafe’s financial performance.
7. ECA Legal has fully paid off its initial start-up loan to ETI and is now operating at a profit. While it predominantly supports members, it also offers services to non-members and continues promote its offering online and via industry publications.
8. ETI’s agreements have continued to provide a reliable source of income for the charity.
9. As part of its governance arrangements, ETI maintained three investment properties and two investment portfolios through ANZ and the Commonwealth Bank. The funds are invested in accordance with ETI’s risk profile and support the organisation’s positive financial position.

While all of ETI's activities are charitable; the Board has identified that there are specific opportunities that benefit from additional funds to enhance outcomes. ETI has allocated 20% of its annual surplus towards projects that achieve its charitable objectives. This year, those funds were directed into supporting:

1. mature age apprenticeships;
2. female apprenticeships; and
3. indigenous apprenticeships.

ETI has developed a positive budget for 2024/2025 that aims to consolidate the charity's position. It will continue to use its surplus to self-fund existing and new industry programs, and further its charitable objectives.

## Thank You

ETI's continued success is made possible through the collective efforts of many people.

Firstly, I would like to thank host employers, customers and members for their ongoing support for ETI's services. Their loyalty enables ETI to continue to develop and maintain a high level of service and contribute to a stronger industry.

Our Board Members volunteer on the Board and its subcommittees, taking considerable time out of their businesses to support ETI's effective governance and ensure its services continue to remain relevant and up to date with industry's needs. I would like to thank all Board Members for their time and commitment. In particular, my thanks go to Chris Sweeting who stepped down this year after contributing to the ETI Board, and the Boards of its former entities, for over 20 years. Chris' considerable contribution during his tenure has been greatly valued.

This year we also said goodbye to Steve Hall who made a positive contribution to ETI and industry as CET's General Manager. Now working with PSO, Steve continues to collaborate with ETI to achieve its charitable objectives. We also farewelled Charlie Villani who retired after almost 19 years of service with EGT.

ETI's achievements would not be possible without the efforts and expertise of its staff. Thank you to CEO Carl Copeland, General Manager EGT Stuart Diepeveen and General Manager Member Services and Training Aidan O'Grady for their outstanding leadership. Thanks also to all the staff whose dedication and hard work continue to make ETI a success. I would also like to acknowledge all the apprentices who've chosen to work with EGT and add value to their host employers' businesses.

Having moved to a new structure, and with an ongoing commitment to providing a range of valuable services, ETI is now in the best position to deliver on current and future industry needs in WA and beyond. I look forward to working with you all as we move into 2024/2025 and benefit from the many opportunities available to our industry.

**Greg Warren**  
Chairperson  
The Electrotechnology Training Institute Inc