

Strategic Review of the AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIP INCENTIVE SYSTEM

2024



Final report – Fact sheet for Regional and Remote Apprentices

There has been an increasing interest in apprenticeships among people in regional and remote areas. However, people in regional and remote areas experience challenges with finding an apprenticeship close to home and travelling to take up other opportunities or to attend off-the-job training. They need better access to flexible, accessible training as well as financial support for those who choose to relocate.

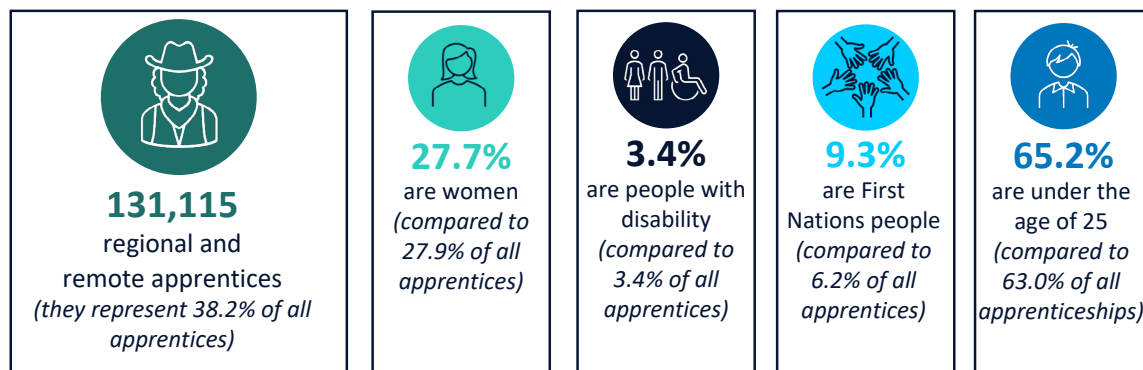
Background

The Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System, led by Dr Iain Ross AO and Ms Lisa Paul AO PSM, considered the effectiveness and efficiency of the current incentive system in supporting the uptake and completion of Australian apprenticeships. In particular, it considered the incentive system with regard to addressing Australia's skills needs and its ability to deliver on economic priorities and social equity objectives.

For more details on the review as a whole, please refer to the Overview fact sheet.

The proportion of all apprenticeship commencements in regional and remote areas has been trending up since 2012. In 2023, around 38% of all apprenticeship commencements were from regional and remote areas (unpublished review analysis based on NCVER 2024). This is higher than the proportion of the population living in regional (26%) and remote (2%) communities (AIHW 2024).

Regional and remote apprentices



Source: Review analysis based on NCVER (2024) apprentices and trainees data.

Key Issues

The review identified the following issues that affect Regional and Remote apprentices:

- Apprentices in regional and remote areas often have to travel into major cities, otherwise they are limited to occupations and industries in their region.
 - This issue is exacerbated by low population density, resulting in low levels of enrolment in some courses. This can often result in apprentices working in regional and remote areas having to travel long distances to conduct off-the-job training in another area.

- The need to relocate or to travel long distances for training results in additional costs that apprentices in major cities often do not face.

Recommendations

The final report made 34 recommendations that aim to address the key issues identified through the review.

The following is a summary of recommendations relevant to Regional and Remote apprentices:

- All Governments work together to provide more financial support to apprentices through subsidies for their travel and accommodation expenses, purchasing tools, and reforms to apprentice support payment to increase the amount and frequency of payment.

- Increase the Living Away From Home Allowance payment and then index payments on an ongoing semi-annual basis in line with the Consumer Price Index, consistent with Youth Allowance.
- Training providers provide more flexible training options for Regional and Remote apprentices such as block release training or with 'pop up' training centres.

For details on recommendations that are beneficial to all apprentices, please refer to the Apprentice fact sheet.

References

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) (2024) *Rural and remote health*, AIHW.

NCVER (National Centre for Vocational Education Research) (2024) *Apprentices and trainees 2023: December quarter*, NCVER.