



Premier's Circular

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TITLE

PRIORITY START POLICY

POLICY

The Western Australian State Government is committed to developing a strong training culture and maximising opportunities for apprentices and trainees within the building and construction industry.

To achieve this, the State Government, through the *Priority Start Policy* (formerly *Government Building Training Policy*), will use the awarding of government building, construction and maintenance contracts to increase the training commitment in the construction sector.

Under the policy, all head contractors awarded in-scope State Government construction and maintenance contracts will be required to meet a target training rate each year. This will be achieved through the employment of construction apprentices and trainees by the head contractor and subcontractors used for the contracts.

The *Priority Start Policy* applies to State Government building, construction and maintenance contracts with a total value over \$5 million (including GST). This includes public-private partnerships and joint venture arrangements. It applies to tenders issued from 1 April 2019 in scope of the policy.

All public sector agencies must comply with the Priority Start Policy. Government Trading Enterprises are also encouraged to apply and/or consider the policy when procuring building, construction and maintenance contracts.

Head contractors still reporting under the Government Building Training Policy have the option to transition to the new policy.

Government contracting agencies must:

- stipulate in all relevant procurement documentation that head contractors are required to comply with the policy;
- monitor head contractor compliance;
- provide yearly reports from head contractors to the Department of Training and Workforce Development to validate apprentice and trainee information;
- determine the annual reporting date with head contractors, as outlined in the policy;
- provide information on policy implementation to the Department of Training and Workforce Development by 30 September each year to be included in a report for the Minister for Education and Training;
- audit head contractor compliance in consultation with other government contracting agencies using the Priority Start Compliance and Audit Framework; and

- address non-compliance by head contractors as part of their agency’s regular contract management processes.

Requests for variations to the target training rate may be approved in exceptional circumstances as outlined in the Priority Start Policy. A cross-agency Compliance Panel will consider such requests. Appeals by head contractors against the decision(s) of this panel will be considered by a cross-agency Appeals Panel.

BACKGROUND

The State Government, through the *Plan for Jobs* initiative, made a commitment to maximise opportunities for local apprentices and trainees through expanding *Priority Start*, which was first introduced in 2007.

The policy replaces the *Government Building Training Policy*, which was in place from 1 October 2015.

The policy has an enhanced scope and stronger compliance monitoring measures to ensure the procurement of building, construction and maintenance contracts supports the State Government’s training and job creation agenda.

The *Priority Start Policy* is available on the Department of Training and Workforce Development’s website at dtwd.wa.gov.au/psp.

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PREMIER

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Other relevant Circulars:	n/a
Circular/s replaced by this Circular:	2019/04, 2015/02