



Priority Start Policy Fact Sheet 1 – Overview

What is the *Priority Start Policy*?

The *Priority Start Policy* (Priority Start) aims to increase the training effort in the Western Australian building and construction industry. To this end, head contractors working on State Government building, construction and maintenance contracts are required to meet a specified training rate.

What is the target training rate?

The target training rate is the required percentage of construction trades workers who are apprentices and trainees (in the occupations in scope of the policy) and working in WA for the head contractor and the subcontractors used for the contract.

The target training rate is the benchmark head contractors must meet each reporting period.

The training rate is calculated as follows:

Training Rate % =	$\frac{\text{number of in-scope construction apprentices/trainees in training in WA}}{\text{number of in-scope construction trades workers in WA}} \times 100$
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The target training rates are based on the construction industry's average training rate for apprentices and trainees. The following target training rates apply:

- 11.5% for general building construction and maintenance contracts; and
- 5% for civil construction contracts.

Who is responsible for meeting the target training rate?

The head contractor is responsible for ensuring that the target training rate is achieved for the contract. The training rate is calculated using the combined in-scope WA construction trades workforce of:

- the head contractor; and
- all subcontractors used on the contract.

This allows head contractors to engage contractors that have varying training rates.

The head contractor must collect all apprentice/trainee and construction trades' workforce information from all subcontractors they engage each reporting period.

Which State Government contracts does the Priority Start apply to?

Priority Start applies to State Government construction and maintenance tenders issued from 1 April 2019 with a total value over \$5 million (inclusive of GST).

Government trading enterprises are encouraged to consider the policy when procuring construction and maintenance contracts.

Which contractors are in scope of the Priority Start?

The head contractor and all subcontractors used for the contract are in scope of the policy. To be included in the training rate calculation in a reporting period, contractors must:

- be working on the contract; and
- employ in-scope construction trades workers working in Western Australia.

Please note: Manufacturers and suppliers of materials are not in scope of the policy.

What is the construction trades workforce?

The construction trades workforce includes all in-scope construction trades workers, apprentices and trainees working in WA for the head contractor and subcontractors used for the contract.

Apprentices and trainees may be employed:

- directly (new and existing employees); or
- through a group training organisation (GTO) or a skill/labour hire company.

The lists of in-scope construction trades occupations and apprentice and trainee qualifications are available on the Department's Priority Start website page at dtwd.wa.gov.au/prioritystart.

Please note: The construction trades workers – including the apprentices and trainees – do not have to work on the contract or construction site to be counted in the total construction trades workforce but must be working in WA.

What are the compliance requirements?

Compliance requirements will be outlined in the head contractor's contract and monitored by the government contracting agency.

Head contractors may be audited to verify the subcontractors used on the contract and the construction trades workforce figures provided in their report.

What is the difference between Priority Start and WAIPS?

The Western Australian Industry Participation Policy (WAIPS) is a State Government policy. Like Priority Start, one of the objectives of WAIPS is to increase employment and training opportunities on State Government contracts. The main differences between Priority Start and WAIPS are outlined in the table below.

	PRIORITY START	WAIPS
Objective	To increase apprentices/trainees in the building and construction sector	To increase participation by local industry, including employment and training opportunities
Scope	Building and construction industry	All industries
	Contracts over \$5 million	Contracts \$500K and above
	Specified construction apprentices/ trainees	All apprentices/trainees
	Specific construction trades workforce	All workers
	Combined TOTAL WA workforce of all contractors	Applies to CONTRACT workforce only
Compliance	Head contractor to meet a target training rate	No targets
	Reports 12 monthly – financial year or on contract anniversary	Reports due 12 monthly on contract anniversary
Contract	No tender weighting - commitment to comply	Qualitative/weighted criteria in tender
	Training rate variation requests considered by a Priority Start Compliance Panel	Exemptions available via the Department of Energy and Economic Diversification

Further information

The Department of Training and Workforce Development provides information on Priority Start. Visit dtwd.wa.gov.au/prioritystart for more information.

Jobs and Skills Centres

WA's TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres provide an online jobs board, to connect jobseekers with employment opportunities and to help employers attract and recruit employees. Visit the Jobs and Skills WA website jobsandskills.wa.gov.au for further information.

How to employ an apprentice or trainee

The Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) can help companies who want to attract and recruit apprentices and/or trainees. For more information, or to find an AASN provider in your area, call 13 38 73 or visit australianapprenticeships.gov.au.

Financial assistance to employ apprentices and trainees

The Construction Training Fund provides incentives up to \$25,000 to companies to employ an apprentice or trainee. Visit the Construction Training Fund website ctf.wa.gov.au for further information.

Western Australian Industry Participation Policy (WAIPS)

The WAIPS was developed as a requirement of the *Western Australian Jobs Act 2017* (WA Jobs Act). The WAIPS is designed to increase participation by local industry in the delivery of State Government Agency contracts. The WAIPS aims to enhance the opportunity for local industry, particularly small or medium enterprises to compete for State Government work. Visit the Western Australian Industry Participation Strategy [WA Industry Link](#) for more information.