

Media release

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Apprentice assessment days help shape Essential Energy's workforce of the future

Essential Energy's commitment to supporting regional NSW was in full force as potential recruits were recently assessed with the ambition of joining one of Australia's most successful apprentice training programs.

Essential Energy is recruiting more than 30 apprentices and trainees for the annual intake of its award-winning apprenticeship program, creating new job opportunities in regional communities and helping build capability right across the State.

Candidates participating in the assessment day are vying for an opportunity to start in February 2020 based in Cobar, Coffs Harbour, Condobolin, Cooma, Crookwell, Deniliquin, Dubbo, Gunnedah, Kempsey, Leeton, Lismore, Mudgee, Murwillumbah, Port Macquarie, Queanbeyan, Tamworth, Tenterfield, Tweed Heads, Wagga Wagga, Walgett, Wyallda and Young.

Luke Jenner, General Manager for Customer and Network Services, said "Considerable investment goes into the recruitment of each apprentice, so selecting the right candidates is vital. The apprentice assessment days have been important in assisting Essential Energy selecting the right apprentices to ensure they go on to thrive in long-term careers.

"We are proud of our apprenticeship program, with about 1300 apprentices engaged since 2003. This continued investment in apprentices brings significant employment and development opportunities to regional, rural and remote communities across NSW.

Essential Energy's apprenticeship program boasts high rates of completion, with 93 per cent of employees completing their apprenticeship, well above national averages of 63 per cent. Once employees complete their apprenticeship, the majority stay with the business, with retention rates of 92 per cent. One in four apprentices go on to higher technical roles within the business.

The program combines formal training with on-the-job experience in what it takes to operate a modern electricity network that covers around 95 per cent of NSW.

"Our apprenticeship program reflects our geographic dispersion, with apprentices being recruited from, and being able to live and work in many of the regional towns containing field depots across our footprint," continued Mr Jenner.

The program also has a focus on diversity, with 18 per cent of our apprentices being female and 26 per cent being of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background

Essential Energy assessors said they were impressed with the enthusiasm and eagerness demonstrated by candidates throughout the assessment.

Essential Energy's apprenticeship program recently won an Australian Training Award for excellence in training and education, reflecting the success of the program for both apprentices and the business.

Applications for the 2020 Apprenticeship Program are now closed. Expressions of interest for the 2021 program will open in 2020 via the Essential Energy website.

FACT FILE:

- Essential Energy builds, operates and maintains one of Australia's largest electricity distribution networks, servicing 855,000 customers across regional, rural and remote NSW
- Our footprint covers 95 percent of NSW, traversing 737,000 square kilometres of landmass with 183,612 km of powerline, 163,417 of those in designated bushfire zones
- The network services more than 855,000 customers with approximately 4.6 customers to each kilometre of powerline, which is almost one-tenth the customer density compared with our counterparts in NSW
- Essential Energy's footprint also includes 1.38 million power poles, equating to 1.6 power poles per customer.

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