



# Australian Foundry Institute



08/05/2024

To: Jobs and Skills Australia

## **RE: Core Skills Occupation List – For Consultation**

### **322114 – Metal Casting Trades worker and 323411 – Engineering Patternmaker**

This submission is to support the inclusion of 322114 – Metal Casting Trades worker and 323411 – Engineering Patternmaker to the final Core Skills Occupation List.

The Australian Foundry Institute (AFI) is a national industry body representing the Australian metal casting industry. Our mission is to support our industry throughout Australia through providing a forum for exchange of ideas, advancement of technical knowledge, advocating on behalf of our membership, and highlighting the circular economy credentials of the industry. We are active in promoting the metal casting industry as a career path of choice.

For 6 consecutive years the AFI National Executive have commissioned a survey of metal casting businesses throughout Australia. The Industry Reports that are collated from data provided from this annual survey, repeatedly show that one of the biggest issues our businesses face is access to skilled personnel and access to suitable training for personnel.

The Australian Metal Casting Industry Annual Report for each year from 2019 through to 2023 are publicly available on the Australian Foundry Institute website. The 2024 Industry Report is currently in the process of being collated and will be tabled at the October 2024 AFI National Council meeting.

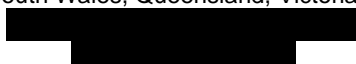
With 2000+ direct employee's in the metal casting industry, we are relatively small industry. However as a supplier to very many other much larger industries operating within Australia, we consider that the Australian metal casting industry is essential to a future with a degree of supply chain instability. Our local industry enhances sovereign capability. Largely we do not compete in high volume markets, but do offer a high level of technical expertise which delivers high quality service and product to the small to medium volume markets both nationally and internationally.

We have an ageing workforce with a "retirement cliff" looming in the mid-term. This applies to each of 234912 – Metallurgist, 312912 – Metallurgical or Materials Technician, 322114 – Metal Casting Trades worker and 323411 – Engineering Patternmaker. The first 2 occupations are currently designated as "Definitely On" the CSOL.

Some of our businesses (eg: Central Foundry, NSW) are currently working through the process of sourcing skilled employees for 322114 – Metal Casting Trades workers.

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Incorporating the Divisions of New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia & Western Australia



With training opportunities improved for 322114, our apprentice numbers for the related qualification of MEM31719 – Cert III Casting and Moulding are growing from a critically low base. However in the short to medium term there remains a need to allow skilled migration for 322114 to cover existing long term unfilled positions (eg: NIBF, Innisfail, Qld).

A similar situation exists for 3232411 – Engineering Patternmaker. From 2025, a 2<sup>nd</sup> training organisation will offer training in this qualification, with several of our businesses committing to employing Engineering Patternmaker apprentices. There still remains the need for skilled migration to cover vacancies in the short to mid-term.

Total number of vacancies are relatively small but remain critical to our businesses. We experienced significant on-shoring through the covid years. Our businesses continue to have strong order books but are limited in their ability to expand their operations due to the skills shortages.

Data on jobs ad's are publicly available. I assume that the JSA have accessed this data.

Note that the AFI is a volunteer organisation. As a volunteer and retired metallurgist, I have no vested interest in any of the metal casting businesses in Australia. I do believe that a stable local metal casting industry is vital for a strong Australian economy into the future.

The Australian metal casting industry looks forward to a positive outcome to this submission in support of inclusion of 322114 – Metal Casting Trade sworker and 323411 – Engineering Patternmaker.

Regards,

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Australian Foundry Institute

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