

Media Release

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Trailblazing graduates power through Australian-first program

The first participants have graduated from an Australian-first training program to grow the country's own transmission line construction workforce to build the critical infrastructure to enable the clean energy transition.

Sixteen participants from the [Legacy 100 program](#) have completed their training on [EnergyConnect](#) – Australia's largest transmission project – and gained valuable qualifications, knowledge and experience in building high-voltage electricity towers and lines.

Another 33 participants are currently at various stages of their training under the Legacy 100 program which allows participants to earn while they learn and gain a Certificate II in Transmission Line Construction.

Transgrid and its EnergyConnect construction partner Elecnor Australia launched Legacy 100 last year as the nation's first training initiative to boost skills in the power transmission sector across regional NSW.

"We are committed to investing in the nation's energy workforce to address skills and jobs shortages and support Australia's great transition to clean energy," Transgrid Executive General Manager of Major Projects Gordon Taylor said.

"Legacy 100 is helping to grow Australia's own riggers and doggers and reduce reliance on overseas trained workers. Program participants will form the backbone of the future workforce in the transmission tower construction industry as thousands of kilometres of new lines are built to support our renewable energy future.

"I congratulate the first 16 participants to graduate from the Australian-first initiative after completing more than six months of classroom and practical training. They will now continue to build the critical EnergyConnect interconnector which will bring cleaner and cheaper renewable energy to millions of customers."

The Legacy 100 graduates have diverse backgrounds ranging from the fitness industry, classical music, retail, sheep shearing, mining, carpentry, and logistics. They hail from locations including Albury, Adelaide, Melbourne, Mildura, Sydney and Wagga Wagga.

Graduate Ally Tahau, from Adelaide, left sheep shearing to join Legacy 100 and isn't daunted by climbing towers averaging 55m in height.

"We climb towers pretty much every day," Ms Tahau said.

"I don't think a lot of us have a problem with the height to be honest. It's actually nicer up the tower most days, it's way too hot on the ground. There's no flies, it's great. The view is fantastic. It's hard getting up there but once you're up there you feel accomplishment.

“We have learnt so much with this program. It’s been absolutely fantastic. We’ve got four tickets, we’ve had heaps of on-site experience.

“This has been probably one of the best opportunities I’ve had in my life. I think it’s great for females to be getting out on the job and doing such high-risk work.”

Graduate Chris Spooner, from Sydney, was a classical musician and sound engineer in Adelaide when he joined the Legacy 100 program for a career change after COVID-19 impacted the entertainment industry.

“Every time everyone hears what my past was, they can’t believe that a French horn player’s out here rigging and doing all sorts of things but I wanted a bit of a change in life and there wasn’t too much work happening during COVID and then this popped up and you’ve got to grab the bull by the horns sometimes and run with it,” Mr Spooner said.

“I always have a tune in my head when I’m climbing [towers]. It gets you in a rhythm. You sing yourself a song, next thing you know you’re up the top.

“I feel really proud to be part of the first cohort [to graduate]. I really want to keep working on this project, I want to see this through.”

Graduate Angus Allen, from Leeton, was working in building construction management in Sydney before joining Legacy 100.

“It’s an absolute golden opportunity. I see it as an incredible opportunity to set my future family up,” Mr Allen said of the program.

“The confidence and the trust that has been put in us has been second to none and the support we have received has really helped us grow.”

Elecnor Australia Project Director Felipe Delgado Davara said: “As an organisation, we have made a significant investment into designing and delivering a unique training scheme that combines classroom learning and on-the-job placement with our overhead transmission lines teams under the guidance of a registered training organisation partner.

“The program is having a real impact on the lives of people from the regional communities along the EnergyConnect alignment, and it exceeds industry standards by a long way.

“The innovation at many levels has been well supported by our client Transgrid and our industry partners, and we can all celebrate the step forward we have made in helping create Australia’s next generation of transmission line construction workers.”

VIDEO: <https://youtu.be/f1ep63RtjSw>

CLEAN VISION: <https://youtu.be/9VJ1cuVJrqY>

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