

A photograph of a male worker in a high-visibility yellow-green jacket, white hard hat, and safety glasses. He is looking upwards and to the right, focused on his work. He is operating a large, dark metal chain hoist. The background is a textured, grey surface, possibly a concrete wall or ceiling. The lighting is bright, highlighting the worker's gear and the metallic sheen of the hoist.

QUBE PORTS & BULK

Real-life accounts of how the National Workforce Development Fund is benefiting Australian transport and logistics enterprises.



QUBE PORTS & BULK

Stevedores Qube Ports and Bulk (QP&B) do everything in bulk, including up-skilling their workforce.

Over 25 percent of QP&B's 1900 workers are enrolled in training programs, including 290 under the National Workforce Development Fund (NWDF), delivered by Registered Training Organisation, the National Learning Centre.

QP&B national learning and development manager Helen Lord says the company is building a culture where learning is valued as opposed to a "tick a box" training environment.

Lord says the move to reposition learning as a viable mutual investment is "not an easy shift".

"Typically, many an operations manager just looks at compliance requirements as well as the need to be able to run the operation tomorrow," Lord says.

But Lord offers anecdotal evidence that, under the NWDF, managers are beginning to move that mindset and uncover new talent in their workforce.

"I was speaking to the operations manager in Portland and he was saying that he'd taken the opportunity to get some young guys, about six

or eight 20-somethings, onto the Certificate III in Stevedoring under the NWDF.

"To develop some machinery skills, he put them in the cranes, and he was blown away. He said he doesn't know if it's all the video games they've played over the years or what, but he said their mechanical aptitude was just phenomenal.

"He's now got all of them operating complex machinery that he wouldn't have otherwise known they had the skills to operate. And from their point of view, they're developing highly transferable and sought-after industry skills."

Delivering the NWDF across 17 QP&B sites has not been without its challenges, but led to the initiative of assigning dedicated training officers to each region.

Lord says for trainees to learn, they need the support of regular interaction, a program to follow, and the units of competency linked with their daily job.

"Our operations people work really hard as it is, so they don't have the head space or the knowledge to fulfil that role ... so that was a critical change for us,

to implement someone dedicated to look after the program," she says.

Stevedoring is a kinetic industry that attracts active people who benefit from hands-on, practical training combined with classroom theory, she says. It's my challenge to help implement learning materials and approaches that are more effective for the types of learners that work for us. Our regional training officers are key in identifying opportunities to improve and achieve progress in this area."

"In the stevedoring business, we're really quite dependent upon shipping, and shipping is an unpredictable beast. You can have a ship scheduled to come into port tomorrow, and then at the 11th hour you find it's been delayed at the last port, or because of weather.

"Consequently, we have a mix of full-time, part-time and casual employees. You might not work at all one week, and the next you might work five days in a row. Our employees are highly flexible.

"It's very difficult attracting new people into the industry because the newest people are the ones

UNDER THE NWDF, MANAGERS ARE BEGINNING TO MOVE THAT MINDSET AND UNCOVER NEW TALENT IN THEIR WORKFORCE.

who get the most unpredictable work, so the government is providing subsidies and incentives to assist companies like ours, and to provide incentives for companies like ours to train, which is really positive."

The Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council is the intermediary for the government's NWDF and the transport and logistics sector. Lord says she's been working with lots of different people in TLISC "and it's been great". Both TLISC and QP&B's RTO, the National Learning Centre, had told her about the NWDF.

The NWDF has not only up-skilled QP&B's workers with a nationally recognised qualification, but also benefited the company by helping it achieve AS/NZS 4801, the Australian standard for worker health and safety management systems.

"Having this program and funding has facilitated us to implement that standard across our business," Lord says. "To achieve that is a huge benefit commercially in terms of maintaining our competitiveness, reputation and best practice."

Qube Ports & Bulk is the pre-eminent provider of wharf-side port logistics and port management services in the Australian region. It offers logistics services extending from port and facility development, vessel management, warehouse and distribution, stevedoring services and cargo handling.



160 not out

With a presence in Australia since 1852, Qube Ports & Bulk currently handles more than 20 million tonnes per annum of bulk products.



Training in bulk

Of its 1,900 employees, approximately 25% are enrolled in training programs.



NWDF value

Total value of NWDF program to date:
\$726,795.



Where they are

Qube Ports & Bulk operate in 28 multi-purpose ports around Australia including Port Hedland, one of Australia's fastest growing bulk cargo ports.

For more information about how TLISC can assist your enterprise in accessing the National Workforce Development Fund, please contact our Workforce Development team:

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