



QUBE PORTS & BULK TRAINEE PROFILE

Michael Barry

Stevedore

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

T&L Transport
& Logistics
Industry Skills Council Ltd

If it wasn't for twist of fate on the football field, Michael Barry may never have found his vocation as a stevedore in his coastal hometown of Portland, Victoria.

The town's bay is the only deep-sea port between Adelaide and Melbourne, and its maritime industries handle 5,387,411 tons of imports and exports annually.

Barry, who works for Qube Ports & Bulk, drives cranes, forklifts and the transfer hopper to load and unload commodities such as logs and fertilizer. He also loads and unloads trucks as a wharf hand when shipments of ingots or livestock arrive and lays dunnage to help ensure cargo isn't damaged during transportation.

He can turn his hand to any of these tasks because he's one of 290 stevedores Qube has up-skilled with a Certificate III in Transport and Logistics (Stevedoring), a qualification developed by the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council and afforded under the National Workforce Development Fund.

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"I wasn't really expecting to get a certificate that would be Australia-wide, for all the ports," Barry says. "It sort of surprised me when I found out that I have a qualification and that I could go to all the ports in Australia."

Barry's enthusiasm coupled with Qube's focus on training and development will eventually see him upskilled to operate a gantry crane which, in-turn, will broaden the scope of his employment.

Now 24, Barry had originally chosen a "normal job" on leaving high school, as a sheet metal apprentice, with little awareness of transport and logistics careers.

But after an injury in an AFL match, his apprenticeship was sidelined for almost a year. Rather than start over, a mate suggested he apply for work at the local port.

Just two years on, he loves it. "You're always doing something different," he says. "They train you up with all your skills, what you need to do. It's a great job."

For would-be stevedores, Barry says having good hand-eye coordination helps with the crane operation. Enjoying variety in the job is important as well: from day-to-day tasks to working on a changing roster of day, evening and night shifts.

He once considered leaving the wharf to work in the mines of Kalgoorlie, but the benefits of training means the soon-to-be dad is happy with his portside career.

"There's not many jobs like this in a small town," he says. "I'm sure if I stay there and I just keep working hard, I think there's definitely a chance to move up."

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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