



BROOKFIELD RAIL

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



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With rail infrastructure experts on staff, who have a significant amount of experience, Brookfield Rail is brilliantly positioned to deliver expert training in-house.

Owned by a global asset management company, Brookfield Rail manages more than 5100km of open access rail infrastructure throughout the southern half of Western Australia.

As the only network in the region providing access to export markets, vital commodities are transported on those tracks including iron ore, grain, minerals, bulk freight and even people.

Positioning itself to benefit from the opportunities of a growing freight task, Brookfield Rail has taken direct action to address an industry wide skills shortage by bringing aspects of safety critical training in-house, and becoming a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) on the way.

Thanks in part to its expansive operations geographically, Brookfield Rail had been frustrated in accessing the specific and unique training services they needed, when they needed them.

“The primary reason for becoming an RTO was to ensure we could meet the unique training needs of our people and our industry,” says Brookfield Rail training coordinator Judy Reynolds.

Brookfield Rail had such a significant amount of in-house knowledge and experience, it made sense to formalise that expertise under a nationally recognised qualification.

“We have the technical experts in this industry within Brookfield Rail; people who have been on the job 20, 30, even 40 years. These people have a lot to offer the younger generation, and have the potential to provide the rail industry expertise and training our people need in order to do their job safely and effectively.”

“Training is knowledge transfer,” agrees human resources consultant Sam Crawford. “By investing in our people, we’re future-proofing the organisation.”

Partnering with training provider Pivot Institute, Brookfield Rail selected 37 of its 300 employees to undertake a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE).

The Certificate IV was co-funded under the National Workforce Development Fund, administered by the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council.

“We heard about the opportunity to provide trainer-assessor training through TLISC,” Reynolds says.

She talks to TLISC “on a regular basis” and says they’re “just a fabulous support when it comes to applying for funding. “If I have a question, I just ring.”

The Certificate IV shows Brookfield Rail’s trainer-assessors how to manage training’s “process and paperwork”, Reynolds says. “The technical skills on track, they’re already really good at.” The TAE is “more

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about their delivery style, whether they’ve taken into consideration issues such as literacy and numeracy.”

Brookfield Rail’s supervisors and managers identified the 37 trainer-assessors as “people who would be well suited to that role”, although “anyone within the business is free to show an interest and say, ‘This is what I would like to do, can you tell me more about it?’” she says.

Brookfield Rail knows by up-skilling its workforce, it risks professional poaching, “but that does not limit the training it provides its employees. If they are poached, there’s nothing we can do about that. It’s about what’s best for the company, the region, and our people.”

Having in house trainer-assessors in the regional areas also means Brookfield Rail has found a way around the challenge of delivering training to a geographically diverse workforce.

“Getting trainers in regional areas was a challenge in the past,” Reynolds says. “But as a result of up skilling our own people, we have trainers in all areas now. It works really well and they’re keen to do it. It’s been popular: in 2013 we have another class of 10. It’s really motivated people.”

To ensure training is best practice, Reynolds attends three committee meetings a year with TLISC senior

training package specialist in rail, Rae Fossard, to discuss the development of units of competency and rail qualifications.

“When we’re there, we meet with each person of the same position from other organisations. We compare and see what people are doing, how they’re doing it, what’s working for them, and what’s not. Again, it’s knowledge transfer.”

The benefits to the company are very clear, Reynolds says. “We’re not spending a fortune sending people to Perth on courses that may not have met our exact requirements, but was the only relevant course on offer. Now we can pick a unit of competency and develop and contextualise it to deliver exactly what we need.

“The benefit to our employees is huge, because the training is delivered in their own region and on their own section of track that they are familiar with.

“And because we’ve put so many of our people through this course, from each regional area, they’re taking a little bit of ownership of training delivery in their region.

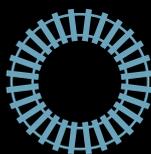
“Over time, the infrastructure doesn’t change, but the people do. It’s important we invest in our people, equipping them with the skills to transfer knowledge that is vital to the success of our business.”

Brookfield Rail controls over 5,100 kilometres of crucial rail infrastructure throughout the southern half of Western Australia. It is one of the few independent rail infrastructure providers in the world.



Valuable cargo

The company's network transports a wide range of commodities including grain, alumina, bauxite, iron ore and interstate freight – as well as passengers on the Perth to Kalgoorlie and Perth to Bunbury lines.



Skills centre

Brookfield Rail have a dedicated training yard and classroom in suburban Perth which is equipped to train new and existing employees in all facets of Brookfield's operations.



NWDF value

Total value of NWDF program to date:
\$36,425.



Where they are

Brookfield Rail directly employs a team of approximately 300 people, from Geraldton in the north, to Leonora and Kalgoorlie in the east, and south to Esperance, Albany and Bunbury.

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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