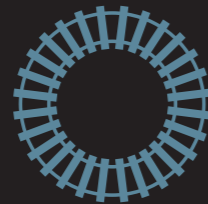


John Holland Rail is a core business of engineering, construction and maintenance company, John Holland. The organisation is responsible for rail maintenance and construction projects across Australian metropolitan centres, regional areas and remote locations.



Locally owned

John Holland Rail is also an enterprise RTO, assisting the organisation to further develop its people and support a workplace culture that supports training.



Experience counts

The program aims to prepare trackworkers for future supervisory roles.



NWDF value

Training focused on digital literacy as well as equipping staff with skills to focus on safety improvements.



JOHN HOLLAND RAIL

Case studies of transport and logistics enterprises and real-life accounts of how they have benefited from upskilling their workforce.

For more information about how TLISC can assist, please contact our Workforce Development team:

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JOHN HOLLAND RAIL

A little over a decade ago John Holland Rail had a virtually non-existent internal training system, but today it has the largest rail infrastructure training team in the country, employing 18 specialists around Australia to upskill its workers.

**PEOPLE ARE SO PASSIONATE ABOUT IT,
AND FRANKLY WOULDN'T LEAVE THE
INDUSTRY FOR QUIDS.**

Tony Landi, who runs the team, says watching people grow in a sector that's also growing has been the most fulfilling aspect to his job. "It is great to see workers have their skills recognised, but also be open to learning new things," he says.

Landi, who is John Holland Rail's national training manager, has led the rail track training that, to date, has seen 124 track workers gain national qualifications developed by the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council (TLISC).

The training included a Certificate IV in Frontline Management and, given John Holland Rail's status as a high-risk workplace, a focus on better communication, documentation and information technology skills for worker health and safety.

Having successfully rolled out this project, the company won the Chairman's Award at the 2013 TLISC Awards for Excellence; and was highly commended in the Innovation and Excellence in Workforce Development Award – Rail.

As an Australian engineering, construction and maintenance company, John Holland supports some of the country's most important infrastructure, transport and development projects. The rail division is a core part of its business.

The company has a particularly strong internal focus to nurture and develop its people, and a renewed workplace culture that supports training is a part of this.

However, training track workers is not a straightforward task. Many are in far flung parts of the country and the traditional classroom is not their natural fit.

"The biggest challenge we have is geographical," Landi says. "It is a bit easier in New South Wales and Victoria, but we have operations in Western Australia."

John Holland is also at the fore of a sector that is quietly transitioning towards a new era of qualified workers. While it is common for workers to have been doing track for decades, rail knowledge and on-the-job expertise is no longer sufficient.

"The requirement now is not just that you've done it on the job for 30 years. The legislation is very clear about where competency exists in an Australian quality training framework. You must be able to demonstrate people hold that.

"But the big thing we focus on, though, is that it is not about the bit of paper. Yes, we need the bit of paper to work on those rail networks, but it is what goes into getting that bit of paper – the underpinning skills and knowledge."

John Holland Rail services the needs of many large Australian rail enterprises and its growing expertise in training people has meant some of its clients are also attending their training, such as in specialised track geometry classes.

The company is a registered training organisation (RTO) and uses the TLISC-developed qualifications to deliver training that includes real-life examples of working in the field.

John Holland's trainers use electronic tablets that incorporate assessments and other material to make training more flexible and reduce paperwork on site.

Landi says his team aims for a balance of theoretical and practical training with a weighting toward the latter, covering all aspects of rail infrastructure, such as track geometry, ballast work, sleepers, anchors and fastening systems.

"A big part of learning is the practical," Landi says. "It is very hard when you have people who are so used to doing eight or 10 hours in the field to come and sit in the classroom. Training is therefore a mixture of both soft skills training around OH&S and environmental quality, but there is a lot of practical."

The training also involves TLISC-developed Skill Sets for track workers, machine operators, plant staff, leading hands, supervisors and superintendents.

Most of these workers have spent years, sometimes decades, doing track work, but have never had the opportunity to formalise and broaden their skills through a national training framework.

Landi is sometimes amazed at the bond people have with rail. "People are so passionate about it, and frankly wouldn't leave the industry for quids," he says.

"The majority of the industry is the same as what it was 80 years ago, but new technology is changing a lot of things and we have to get our people to meet those new challenges," Landi says, such as familiarity with computers and writing emails, investigations and other reports.

Building technical skills is allowing John Holland Rail to build and retain a more qualified and committed workforce, but Landi says that it also has other spin-offs including worker satisfaction and great pride in their work by seeing the big picture. "Our guys will jump on new technology if they see the benefit in it."