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## **Sugar manufacturing sector welcomes national licensing and apprenticeship incentives announced in 2025 Federal Budget**

Australian Sugar Manufacturers (ASM) welcomes the Federal Government's Budget announcement for the introduction of a national licensing scheme for electricians and the enhancement of apprenticeship incentives. The extension of these measures is essential to address the critical workforce challenges faced by the sugar manufacturing sector.

“Sugar manufacturers are crying out for tradespeople, particularly electricians, so we absolutely support the Federal Government's announcement of establishing a national licensing scheme for the electrical trades. We call on the Coalition to support the implementation of this measure.”

The scheme will enable electricians to operate across state and territory borders without the need for multiple licenses.

“We have had situations where there have been skills shortages in Queensland and willing workers in NSW, but because of licensing issues, we could not secure the skills we need, and good paying jobs have gone begging.”

“This is a simple but effective policy reform - an electrician doesn't lose all his or her skills because they have crossed the Tweed River.”

ASM has also noted the Budget's provision to double incentive payments for apprentices in the housing construction sector, offering up to \$10,000 over the course of their apprenticeship.

“We face similar challenges to the construction industry in attracting and retaining skilled workers and urge the Government to extend these incentives to apprentices in the manufacturing sector to ensure a robust pipeline of skilled workers essential for our industry's sustainability.”

More broadly, ASM seeks a holistic approach to skills and workforce for the entire sugar supply chain.

“We need to work with governments to develop the skills and career pathways for young Queenslanders to build a career in our great industry, and where we can't get Australian workers, we have sensible visa pathways for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. The future of sugar manufacturing is riding on it.” Mr Salardini said.



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***Australian Sugar Manufacturers (ASM)** is the peak industry body representing the nation's sugar manufacturing sector, contributing \$4.4 billion annually to the Australian economy and supporting more than 20,000 jobs in regional communities. ASM works closely with its members, industry stakeholders, and government to develop and advocate for policies that enhance the sustainability, competitiveness, and long-term economic contribution of the sugar manufacturing sector. From the production of raw sugar, bio-based manufacturing and generation of renewable energy, the sugar manufacturing sector continues to support communities, create jobs, and foster a sustainable future for the industry, and the broader economy.*