

2025 Core Skills Occupation List

A Submission to Jobs and Skills Australia

Friday, 26th September 2025

1. Introduction

The Australian Logistics Council (ALC) represents the nation's largest end-to-end supply chain and logistics companies, spanning freight transport, warehousing, distribution, retail supply chains, and associated services. The sector is fundamental to the functioning of households, businesses, and communities.

Australia faces a critical shortage of logistics workers. Declining training pathways, restrictive migration settings, and persistent gaps in operational, infrastructure, and specialist roles are constraining national productivity, undermining supply chain resilience, and slowing the transition to a low-emission economy. These challenges are compounded by seasonal demand, regional labour constraints, and competition from international markets. Despite its centrality to all industries, the logistics workforce remains under-recognised in national workforce planning.

ALC recommends that Jobs and Skills Australia ensure the 2025 Core Skills Occupations List (CSOL) reflects the sector's requirements by including core operational, infrastructure, and emerging specialist roles. This submission identifies priority occupations, provides evidence of labour shortages, and presents recommendations to build a skilled workforce capable of meeting Australia's future supply chain needs.

2. Priority Occupations for Inclusion on the CSOL

ALC recommends inclusion of roles across operational, infrastructure, property/technical, and future-facing domains:

Occupation	ANZSCO Code	Critical Impact / Rationale
Heavy Vehicle Drivers (Truck & Bus Drivers Across Multiple Licence Types)	733111	Chronic shortages; limited domestic training pipeline; migrants historically provide stable workforce; essential for national freight continuity.
Motorcycle Delivery Drivers (licensed)	732111	Last-mile urban logistics; shortages reduce service reliability.
Forklift Operators (licensed)	733211	Shortages constrain warehouse throughput and seasonal responsiveness.
Train Drivers & Rail Operators	731112	Highly specialised; long training lead times; demand from freight and passenger sectors; migration can bridge immediate gaps.
Warehouse Technicians & Supply Chain Coordinators	133611, 133612	Demand rising with automation and e-commerce; VET pathways slow; migration supports short-term capability.
Heavy Vehicle & Diesel Mechanics	321211, 321212	Ageing workforce, declining apprenticeships; migrants play critical role; shortages threaten fleet safety and EV adoption.
Rail Engineers & Signalling Technicians	233211, 312213	Highly specialised; limited domestic pipeline; overseas recruitment common; shortages slow rail infrastructure upgrades.
Civil Plant Operators, Surveyors, Project Engineers	Multiple	Critical for freight precinct construction; vacancies outstrip completions; migration supports immediate infrastructure delivery.
Warehouse / Terminal Electricians, HVAC & Mechanical Technicians	341411, 312211	Maintain facilities, automation systems, and rolling stock; shortages affect operational continuity.

IT/OT Specialists	262112, 262113	Support logistics technology, automated storage and retrieval systems, cyber and physical security; regional shortages acute.
Robotics Engineers / Mechatronics Technicians	233999	Support automation deployment and EV/mechanical maintenance; critical for precincts integrating automated materials handling.
Automation & Digital Specialists	262114	Design, implement, and manage logistics automation and AI systems.
AI Architects, Governance & Enablement Specialists	262111 / 262114	Enterprise AI solutions for predictive logistics, governance, and optimisation.
Data Engineers, Modelling & Governance Specialists	261111 / 261112	Structure, manage, and govern logistics data; underpin AI, visibility, and predictive analytics.
Operational Network Design & Automation Specialists	133611, 133612	Optimise network design, throughput, and automation for operational efficiency and resilience.

Additional Considerations:

- **Regional Workforce Needs:** Acute shortages outside metro areas require targeted programs, especially in outer hubs and intermodal precincts.
- **Migration Integration & Retention:** SMEs, Indigenous businesses, and social enterprises support settlement, training, and retention. Policy should enable these pathways alongside large corporates.
- **24-Hour Operations & Seasonal Peaks:** Roles must support continuous operations and fluctuating demand.
- **Emerging Technology & Decarbonisation Skills:** EV maintenance, robotics, AI, data, and automation are essential for long-term productivity and sustainability.

3. Evidence of Skill Shortages

Unless otherwise indicated, quantitative data in this submission is sourced from Jobs and Skills Australia datasets, Australian Bureau of Statistics labour market data, and ALC consultation feedback. Qualitative insights are drawn from structured discussions with member companies, including operators in regional and remote areas.

- Heavy Vehicle Drivers/Truck drivers: Shortfall of 26,000; 47% of workforce aged over 55; road freight task expected to grow 77% by 2050¹.
- Forklift operators and Motorcycle Delivery: JSA-identified critical occupation with shortages especially in regional centres².
- Heavy Vehicle Mechanics: ~2,995 vacancies; low apprenticeship uptake threatens safety and EV transition³.
- Warehouse Technicians & Distribution Workers: Nearly 389,000 vacancies (August 2024); constraining seasonal responsiveness and throughput.
- Digital/AI Specialists: Shortages delaying supply chain optimisation and decarbonisation; 200,000 AI-related jobs forecast by 2030⁴.
- EV Mechanics: Fewer than 10% currently certified; creating bottlenecks and increased write-offs after minor accidents⁵.

These shortages limit capacity, increase costs, and slow the sector's ability to adopt automation and decarbonisation technologies. Regional and remote areas are disproportionately affected due to limited local labour supply.

¹ <https://www.natroad.com.au/national-leadership-to-address-the-truck-driver-shortage>

² <https://www.seek.com.au/heavy-vehicle-mechanic-jobs>

³ <https://www.seek.com.au/jobs-in-manufacturing-transport-logistics/warehousing-storage-distribution>

⁴ <https://www.smartcompany.com.au/artificial-intelligence/tech-council-australia-ai-job-report-skill-shortage>

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/apr/26/australias-skilled-mechanics-shortage-forcing-insurers-to-write-off-electric-vehicles-after-minor-accidents>

4. Migration Context: 2025–26⁶

On 2 September 2025, the Australian Government announced the Migration Program for 2025–26 will remain at 185,000 places, comprising:

- Skill Stream: 132,200 places (~71%)
- Family Stream: 52,500 places
- Special Eligibility: 300 places

The Skill Stream is designed to address labour shortages, particularly in regional areas. Aligning the Core Skills Occupations List with sector needs will enable skilled migration to support logistics workforce shortages and the transition to a low-emission economy.

5. Recommendations for CSOL Consideration

ALC recommends that Jobs and Skills Australia:

1. **Include Core, Infrastructure, and Emerging Roles:** CSOL must capture operational, infrastructure, and technology roles essential for productivity, automation, and decarbonisation.
2. **Support Regional Workforce Needs:** Target migration and training pathways for outer-metro and regional shortages.
3. **Align Migration with Immediate Demand:** Update visa lists, consider dedicated freight workforce streams; support SMEs, Indigenous, and social enterprise employers for retention.
4. **Facilitate Technology & Decarbonisation Transition:** Recognise AI, robotics, automation, and EV maintenance roles.
5. **Strengthen Domestic Pipelines:** Expand VET pathways, apprenticeships, and professional development with measurable targets.
6. **Enable 24-Hour Operations & Seasonal Peaks:** Include roles critical to continuous operations.
7. **Enhance Workforce Visibility:** Incorporate logistics into national workforce planning for coherent policy, investment, and migration decisions.

5. Conclusion

Australia's logistics workforce is at a critical inflection point. Persistent shortages threaten national productivity, supply chain resilience, and the low-emission transition. Inclusion of core operational, infrastructure, and emerging specialist occupations on the 2025 CSOL is essential.

ALC looks forward to working with Jobs and Skills Australia to co-design targeted workforce and migration strategies that secure the skilled workforce underpinning Australia's freight and logistics future.

⁶ [Migration Program planning levels](#)