

Work Health and Safety is central to Lend Lease operating on large construction sites. By increasing the foundation skills of construction workers at Barangaroo – Sydney’s largest construction project – Lend Lease has achieved significant efficiencies in Work Health and Safety for its employees.



Lend Lease is a publicly listed, international organisation in the building and construction sector, working across development, investment management, project management and construction, and asset and property management on significant sites such as Barangaroo on Sydney Harbour.

At the peak of its operations this large-scale construction project will have over 2,000 construction workers on-site. The location, scale and socially responsible aspirations of the development provide an unprecedented opportunity to build the skills of the construction workforce for the benefit of the whole industry.

Lend Lease established the Barangaroo Skills Exchange (BSX) in 2012, an industry collaboration with support from key government and training partners.

BSX is a multi-award-winning learning hub on the Barangaroo site set up to meet the training needs of the Project’s workforce and help improve the skills of workers across the construction sector. Training organisations involved in the BSX, led by Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, have aimed to respond as “solutions providers”.



To date, the BSX has delivered over 13,250 training outcomes, with over 7,500 being new accredited skills qualifications. There has been a stronger uptake of training at the BSX, than would have otherwise been the case. The provision of accessible, culturally sensitive, solutions-based approaches, contextualised to the job, is particularly beneficial for workers who need foundation skills support to re-engage with learning and is contributing to a safer on-site culture and a more productive workforce.

To support all learning at the BSX, workers are tested for English language and literacy prior to undertaking training so that appropriate support can be provided.

Through the BSX, English language, literacy and numeracy skills assessment and training are provided to ensure workers can effectively operate in their chosen occupation. It also supports all trade skills learning. A specialist language, literacy and numeracy teacher is based on site full time and available to assist any worker.

Training and assessment is arranged in close collaboration with supervising staff and provided in a timely way to meet on the job needs. The method of training includes team-teaching, small groups, or individual one-on-one tutoring to focus on individual needs and goals.

The BSX places considerable importance on preparing workers to better perform their roles and progress into more technical and senior roles.

The BSX partnership also highly values the more intangible outcomes of the foundation skills program such as increased self-confidence for future work aspirations, and improved sense of wellbeing. Lend Lease is proud to support workers with opportunities to improve basic literacy skills giving them more opportunities to participate in the workforce. Several workers who have participated in the programs have also commented on the positive personal impact in their everyday lives, being able to do things most people take for granted, such as helping children with homework, reading a bedtime story to their grandchild, or reading the newspaper, all of which help contribute to a better quality of family life.



Many of the workers undertaking training at the BSX would never ordinarily attend TAFE. However, with literacy and numeracy training available on site, the learning journey is a supportive one, with workers able to access training for nationally recognised qualifications, safety, and preparation for WorkCover licenses.

Ro Coroneos, Manager Community and Social Strategy, Barangaroo South, Lend Lease

For Lend Lease, the prime driver for training is the health and safety of the workers.

Managers, employers, workers, unions and training providers are all working towards the same goal of the Barangaroo Project site being Incident and Injury Free. Lend Lease provides training in response to workplace incidents and to develop the skills and knowledge required to avoid similar incidents in future.

The Barangaroo Project site is a large, complex workplace, so much of the training on site is related to employees undertaking WorkCover licences such as Dogging, Elevated Work Platform and Power Tools. Lend Lease has been able to use WorkCover assessment information to identify the financial benefit of the literacy and numeracy program delivered through BSX.

Since the commencement of the program, Lend Lease has achieved a 90% pass rate for first attempt WorkCover assessments, well above the NSW average of 54%.



Independent WorkCover assessments are rigorous and have a high failure rate. On average in NSW, the first attempt pass rate is 54%, meaning that almost half of the candidates have to be re-tested at significant expense. At Barangaroo, LLN teachers prepare employees for these assessments by helping to build the required writing and numeracy skills.

Re-testing is an expensive undertaking, in dollar terms and

lost time. Lend Lease calculates that LLN preparation for employees has saved the company tens of thousands of dollars in re-testing expenses.

BSX: WorkCover Assessments Calculations

	Item Description	\$ Amount
1	Lend Lease cost of WorkCover assessments 892 x \$200	\$178,400
2	Lend Lease average "lost time" from job for WorkCover training and assessment \$500 x 3 days = \$1,500 per person for 892 employees	\$1,338,000
3	Actual Lend Lease cost for re-testing is \$100 for actual test, plus \$500 for a day of lost time - so \$600 per retest for 89 employees	\$53,400
4	State average of WorkCover re-test statistics of 46% if applied to Lend Lease 410 people @ \$600 per person	\$246,000
5	WorkCover re-test saving for Lend Lease \$246,000 - \$53,400	\$192,600

Seven Workplace Champions have been appointed as public ambassadors for foundation skills

The Foundation Skills Workplace Champions aim to raise employer awareness of the benefits of addressing foundation skills in the workplace by sharing positive outcomes from their own organisations.

Foundation Skills Workplace Champions

- Anthony Kittel, Redarc Electronics Pty Ltd
- Victoria Jacques, Villa Maria Aged Care
- Yvonne Webb, CHARTTES Industry Training Advisory Council, NT
- Vince Ball, ACT Regional Building and Construction Industry Training Council
- Graeme Finlayson, Oak Training and Development, Tasmania
- Ro Coroneos, Lend Lease
- Kim Moore, Unitywater

Further information on individual champions is available on the website of the National Foundation Skills Strategy Project: <http://www.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/nfss>

Support for the Workplace Champions is being provided by Michael Taylor from the Australian Industry Group, and the National Foundation Skills Strategy Project Team.

The National Foundation Skills Strategy Project (NFSS) 2014-2015 is a joint initiative by Australian governments to support priority action areas from the National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults.

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