

Victoria's Social Procurement Case Studies and Highlights

Supporting the implementation of Victoria's Social Procurement Framework

Building a fair, inclusive and sustainable Victoria through procurement

IMPORTANT: On 1 July 2023, the Social Procurement Framework objective 'Opportunities for Victorian priority jobseekers' replaced 'Opportunities for disadvantaged Victorians'. This document pre-dates the change and therefore offers examples under the old objective.

If you need help with the new objective, please contact socialprocurement@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Victoria's social procurement case studies and highlights

Supporting the implementation of Victoria's Social Procurement Framework

Building a fair, inclusive and sustainable Victoria through procurement



Acknowledgements

Victoria's *Social Procurement Framework* has been delivered in collaboration between the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources and the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government
1 Treasury Place, Melbourne 3002

August 2018

© The State of Victoria 2018

Designed by DEDJTR Design Studio

ISBN 978-1-925551-06-8 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-925551-07-5 (pdf/online/MS word)

This report was printed by Nadrasca. Nadrasca is a certified social enterprise that offers employment and training for people with disability. The engagement of Nadrasca is an example of the Government's *Social Procurement Framework* in action, directly contributing to the outcomes sought under the 'Opportunities for Victorians with disability' and 'Sustainable Victorian social enterprise and Aboriginal business sectors' objectives.



This work is licensed under a **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence**. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria as author. The licence does not apply to any images, photographs, or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms and the Victorian Government logo. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>. Copyright queries may be directed to IPpolicy@dtf.vic.gov.au.

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you, but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

Accessibility

If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, please telephone 03 9651 1699 or email SocialProcurement@dtf.vic.gov.au. This document is also available on the internet at www.procurement.vic.gov.au/SPF.

Contents

Message from the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Industry and Employment	1
Introduction	2
Objectives of the <i>Social Procurement Framework</i>	4
Social procurement in Victoria: the story so far	10
<i>Knoxbrooke's Yarra View Nursery</i>	11
<i>Green Collect</i>	12
<i>Outlook Environmental</i>	13
<i>West Gate Women in Construction</i>	14
<i>Barpa</i>	15
<i>RAW Recruitment</i>	16
<i>Kinfolk</i>	17
<i>Social Foundry</i>	18
<i>TRY Australia</i>	19
<i>Public Tenant Employment Program</i>	20
<i>Veterans in Construction</i>	21
<i>Providing support to retrenched workers from declining industries</i>	22
Next steps	24



Message from the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Industry and Employment

The Victorian Government believes that government spending can be a powerful tool to provide all Victorians – no matter their background or ability – the economic opportunities they need to shape their own lives.

The *Social Procurement Framework* is the culmination of the Government's work in this space – first as a policy, then as part of its major infrastructure project agenda, and now as Australia's first whole-of-government framework for social procurement.

The Framework sets the clear expectation that social procurement is part of everyday business for the Victorian Government, ensuring that social and environmental outcomes are considered in every procurement activity as part of assessing value for money.

The examples and stories in this document showcase just some of the work so far, and they demonstrate that we are not starting from scratch – the Victorian Government is already leading the way in social procurement.

But the real work of this initiative is only just beginning. As we commence formal implementation of the Framework from 1 September 2018, we will continue to deliver on our election promises to build a stronger state and create jobs and opportunities for all.

The *Social Procurement Framework* sets the objectives and outcomes we will strive to achieve as we progress implementation. These align with other key strategies and initiatives already underway, such as the Local Jobs First – Major Projects Skills Guarantee and the Local Jobs First – Victorian Industry Participation Policy.

Through the Framework, the Victorian Government is sending a strong message that the social impact of government spending is important – because a fairer economy is a stronger economy.

This work will ensure that all Victorians will be able to share in the Government's legacy of sustainable economic growth.

Introduction

Victorian Government procurement is one of the largest drivers in the Victorian economy.

In 2016-17, the Victorian Government spent \$16 billion on goods and services to support service delivery and operations and an additional \$9.1 billion on public construction and infrastructure. Over the next four years, infrastructure investment is forecast to average \$10.1 billion a year, reaching a record high of \$13.7 billion in 2018-19.

With such an influential role in the economy, the Government has a responsibility to use its purchasing power to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits for all Victorians.

The *Social Procurement Framework*, launched in April 2018 and due for full implementation from 1 September 2018, sets a clear expectation that social procurement is standard practice for the Victorian Government.

It embeds social procurement across all departments and agencies, with the aim of creating economic opportunities for all Victorians.

Social procurement is not a new concept for the Victorian Government – but for the first time, the Framework establishes a consistent and streamlined approach that makes social procurement part of everyday government buying activity.

The Government will report annually on the social impact outcomes from the Framework.

This is in addition to departmental annual reporting requirements.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report illustrates some of the Government's social procurement activities to date, including initiatives that are underway or have been committed to.

It demonstrates how the Victorian Government is already using its buying power to effect social, economic and environmental change in Victorian communities.

These benefits will be amplified by the Framework's policy and guidance, which supports a systematic approach to achieving greater benefit from Victorian government spending.

This report is intended as a snapshot – it is not a comprehensive review of all the work that is being undertaken. Instead, it focuses on some achievements and the stories of the people and social enterprises who have benefited from this work.





01

Objectives of the Social Procurement Framework



The *Social Procurement Framework* has 10 objectives:

1. Opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to increasing:

- supply chain opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal businesses; and
- employment opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people within suppliers to the Victorian Government.

This work aligns with the implementation of the *Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013–2020* and the *Tharamba Bugheen: Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy 2017–2021* and will drive progress towards the Victorian Government's one per cent Aboriginal procurement target.

Outcomes:

- Purchasing from Victorian Aboriginal businesses
- Suppliers to the Victorian Government employ Aboriginal people

2. Opportunities for Victorians with disability

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to increasing:

- supply chain opportunities for Victorian social enterprises and Australian Disability Enterprises that support Victorians with disability; and
- employment opportunities for Victorians with disability within suppliers to the Victorian Government.

This work aligns with *Absolutely everyone: State disability plan 2017–2020*, *Every opportunity: Victorian economic participation plan for people with disability 2018–2020*, and the *Victorian Social Enterprise Strategy*.

Outcomes:

- Purchasing from Victorian social enterprises and Australian Disability Enterprises
- Suppliers to the Victorian Government employ people with disability

3. Women's equality and safety

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to promoting women's equality and safety, focusing in particular on family violence leave and initiatives that promote and improve gender equality within the Victorian Government's supply chain.

This work aligns with *Safe and strong: a Victorian gender equality strategy*.

Outcomes:

- Adoption of family violence leave by Victorian Government suppliers
- Gender equality within Victorian Government suppliers

4. Opportunities for disadvantaged Victorians

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to creating employment opportunities and skills-based training for people or groups that are underrepresented in the workforce or at risk of being left behind. It will increase:

- supply chain opportunities for Victorian social enterprises that support disadvantaged Victorians; and
- employment opportunities for disadvantaged Victorians and services that help them prepare for employment (for example, through mentoring, training and development).

This work aligns with the *Victorian Social Enterprise Strategy*. It also builds on the range of targeted support services provided by Jobs Victoria and requirements under the Local Jobs First – Victorian Industry Participation Plan and the Local Jobs First – Major Projects Skills Guarantee.

Outcomes:

- Purchasing from Victorian social enterprises
- Job readiness and employment for:
 - long-term unemployed people
 - disengaged youth
 - single parents
 - migrants and refugees
 - workers in transition

5. Supporting safe and fair workplaces

This objective aligns with and supports the Victorian Government's Supplier Code of Conduct, which incorporates minimum expectations for labour and human rights. It seeks to increase supply chain opportunities for suppliers who provide safe and fair workplaces for all workers, focusing in particular on:

- ensuring compliance with industrial relations laws throughout supply chains; and
- promoting job security and addressing underpayment and exploitation of workers.

Outcomes:

- Purchasing from suppliers that comply with industrial relations laws and promote secure employment

6. Sustainable Victorian social enterprise and Aboriginal business sectors

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to improving market access and increasing the visibility and networks of the Victorian social enterprise and Aboriginal business sectors.

This work aligns with the *Victorian Social Enterprise Strategy*, the *Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013–2020* and *Tharamba Bugheen: Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy 2017–2021*. It will drive progress towards the Victorian Government's one per cent Aboriginal procurement target.

Outcomes:

- Purchasing from Victorian social enterprises and Aboriginal businesses

7. Sustainable Victorian regions

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to creating employment opportunities and skills-based training for people in Victorian regions that are experiencing entrenched disadvantage.

Outcomes:

- Job readiness and employment for people in regions with entrenched disadvantage

8. Environmentally sustainable outputs

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to environmental outcomes through sustainable procurement practices that focus in particular on producing environmentally sustainable outputs at a project level by:

- incorporating requirements to use sustainable resources (including the use of recycled content in construction works); and
- managing waste and pollution.

Outcomes:

- Project-specific requirements to use sustainable resources and to manage waste and pollution
- Use of recycled content in construction works

9. Environmentally sustainable business practices

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to achieving positive environmental outcomes through sustainable procurement practices by:

- maximising the use of recyclable and recycled content;
- minimising waste and pollution;
- conserving energy and water;
- minimising habitat destruction and environmental degradation;
- providing non-toxic solutions; and
- ensuring that sustainable business practices are adopted throughout supply chains.

Outcomes:

- Adoption of sustainable business practices by suppliers to the Victorian Government

10. Implementation of the Climate Change Policy objectives

This objective reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to the policy objectives of the *Climate Change Act 2017* by:

- incorporating project-specific requirements to minimise greenhouse gas emissions; and
- procuring outputs that increase the resilience of Victoria's infrastructure, built environment and communities to the impacts of climate change.

Outcomes:

- Project-specific requirements to minimise greenhouse gas emissions
- Procurement of goods and services that are resilient against the impacts of climate change

Victoria's Social Procurement Framework individual procurement activity requirements

	Below threshold	Lower band	Middle band	Upper band
	Regional under \$1 million Metro or statewide under \$3 million	Regional \$1 to \$20 million Metro or statewide \$3 to \$20 million	\$20 to \$50 million	Over \$50 million
Planning requirement for government buyers	Incorporate social objectives into regular procurement planning		Complete a Social Procurement Plan during procurement planning	
Described approach	Encouraged Seek opportunities where available to directly or indirectly procure from social enterprises, Australian Disability Enterprises or Aboriginal businesses	Proportionate Use evaluation criteria (5 to 10 per cent weighting) to favour businesses whose practices support social and sustainable objectives	Targeted Include performance standards and contract requirements that pursue social and sustainable objectives	Strategic Include targets and contract requirements that pursue social and sustainable objectives

IMPLEMENTATION

The Framework applies to all Victorian Government departments and agencies, and to the procurement of all goods, services and construction.

As buyers, departments and agencies will develop and implement their own social procurement strategies, and their annual reports will include progress towards achieving social procurement goals.

Departments and agencies will implement the Framework through their individual procurement activities. They will use a scalable approach based on expenditure and whether the location of the procurement is regional, metropolitan or statewide.

Procurement expenditure thresholds are aligned with the Local Jobs First – Victorian Industry Participation Policy and the Local Jobs First – Major Projects Skills Guarantee.

For suppliers, the Framework sets out the new requirements that Government departments and agencies will adopt in their procurement activities.

Progress so far includes:

- a Melbourne-based launch with more than 100 attendees;
- three regional launches in Ballarat, Kyneton and Shepparton;
- establishing a measurement and reporting unit within the Department of Treasury and Finance;
- continuing to develop a measurement and reporting framework; and
- incorporating the *Social Procurement Framework* into recent go-to-market activities, including state purchase contracts.

Activities that will support the implementation of the Framework include:

- a regional launch event in Geelong;
- guidance materials for government buyers and suppliers;
- development of departmental and agency social procurement strategies; and
- building awareness of the Framework, including holding an industry forum with partner organisations.





02

Social procurement in Victoria: the story so far

These case studies represent some of the stories of social procurement so far, as we work towards full implementation of the Framework.

They cover multiple objectives, demonstrating the diversity of the social enterprise sector and the strong potential for even small amounts of government spending to make a big difference to people's lives.

Knoxbrooke's Yarra View Nursery

Yarra View Nursery is a social enterprise that provides employment for people with disability. The business is a division of Knoxbrooke, a disability services organisation.

The goal of the enterprise is to help people with disability realise their full potential, giving them skills, confidence and opportunity in a supported environment.

Yarra View Nursery has won a number of big projects, in particular with the Level Crossing Removal Authority.

CEO Kristian Dauncey says that doors are opening for them with tier one construction companies.

'At first, I think they assumed we were a soft and fluffy business, but they quickly got over that when they saw our capability, quality and pricing. The reality is we're already supplying to Aldi, Bunnings and Mitre 10 – and that's at arm's length in a competitive space,' he says.

'We don't expect any favours and they've been pleasantly surprised when they see that we have over 100 people working on site, with a 2.5-million-litre dam and desalination plant and trained horticulturalists who just happen to have a disability.'

For Kristian the challenge is now ensuring that growth is sustainable.

'We need to be brave enough to try new things to keep growing. There are still large numbers of people with disability who want the sorts of jobs we can provide.'

To this end, Yarra View Nursery is piloting an indoor plant supply and maintenance service to create further opportunities for horticulturalists with disability.

Nathaniel with some of the 1.3 million plants Yarra View Nursery produces each year



Green Collect

Green Collect is a social enterprise that delivers a range of resource recovery services that assist organisations to achieve the highest environmental outcomes for their office waste.

The company is contracted by several Victorian Government departments and agencies, including Sustainability Victoria, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources and others.

Green Collect delivers boxes or cages to workplace offices and then collects and processes waste such as electronics, stationery and ink cartridges.

They also assist organisations with big office moves, which can generate large volumes of surplus materials such as ring-binders and stationery items that are difficult to recycle in regular waste streams. These items are tested for re-use or undergo careful teardown processes to ensure as much as possible is diverted from landfill.

As well as delivering sustainable solutions by collecting hard-to-recycle items, Green Collect also provides work for people who face barriers to getting a job in the mainstream employment market.

'Our work is really hands-on and done in teams, so people feel supported to gain confidence and skills,' says CEO Sally Quinn.

Green Collect's approach is to break down items to transform waste into value – always with the goal of sending zero waste to landfill.

The push towards social procurement and triple-bottom line reporting has opened up new markets for Green Collect.

'We're increasingly measuring and reporting back to our customers, so we can help them document the environmental and social outcomes relevant to their reporting requirements,' says Sally.

'Being able to provide that data, as well as our specialised service, differentiates us from competitors and allows us to demonstrate the additional value we deliver.'

Green Collect deepened engagement around the value of the work they do.

'Because it's part of a whole suite of activities that create value beyond the delivery of the service, such as diverting waste from landfill and providing employment hours, we're also dedicated to undertaking high-labour activities like manual teardown of folders,' says Sally.

One of Green Collect's workers, Edin, says that working for the company has been something really special.

'It was a lucky opportunity to learn English, to meet people and experience Australian working culture. It's been a great discovery for me. I call it my "bingo moment",' Edin says.

'We're all together here in the same boat – a small team who work hard. I feel good here.'



Green Collect's Edin at work

Outlook Environmental

Outlook Environmental is a social enterprise that works with many lead contractors to manage construction waste from Victorian Government infrastructure projects, including as part of the Western Program Alliance, the Southern Program Alliance, the North West Program Alliance, as well as works for the Mernda Railway Extension and the Metro Tunnel.

Outlook removes and recycles materials such as timber sleepers, concrete, plastic, cardboard, formwork and metals from general waste. Approximately 90 per cent of the material is recycled and therefore diverted from landfill.

The thing that sets Outlook apart, however, is their workforce: they employ people with disability, as well as people from other disadvantaged backgrounds such as refugees and the long-term unemployed.

'We have a full mix of employees from all walks of life, and we blend them together into a cohesive and supportive workforce,' says Ross Cheeswright, General Manager of Commercial.

Staff are recruited through Outlook's Disability Employment Service and other programs, such as the Brotherhood of St Laurence's Given a Chance Program that focuses on the resettlement of refugees.

'It's great to see how employment can change people's lives. It gives dignity, empowerment and choice to workers,' Ross says.

Social procurement has allowed Outlook to open a dialogue with large construction firms, and demonstrate that they can provide a commercially viable solution as well as meeting social objectives.

'They come to our site, see our work, see our people, see we have the capability, and that we can deliver an outcome for their work.'

The workforce has grown from 82 to 104 since September last year, and the flow-on benefits for individuals in Outlook's workforce are immense.

'We provide a supportive workforce, and a lot of the time it's just about confidence. We've had people who come to us as unskilled labourers and lacking self-esteem, and now they've got a fork-lift license or they're driving excavators,' Ross says.

'Everyone's good at something. They've just got to find out what they're good at.'



An Outlook Environmental employee hand-picks recyclable materials from construction waste

Alexandra McKenna (left) and Taibel Rosas Rodriguez (right) are two of the women working on the West Gate Tunnel Project.



West Gate Women in Construction

West Gate Women in Construction is an initiative of CPB Contractors and John Holland Joint Venture to set a target of 400 women engaged in the delivery of the West Gate Tunnel Project, with a stretch target of 600.

One strategy to assist in achieving this target involved forming a leadership committee to identify and implement strategies and activities to attract women to roles on the project, including in non-traditional roles, as well as providing a culture of support.

In addition, the committee has supported the career progression of the existing workforces, and it actively promotes women's achievements and educates the project team on gender equity issues.

After only six months, the joint venture has already exceeded its first target, with more than 440 women working on the project.

Leigh Hardingham, Social Procurement and Inclusion Manager for the joint venture, says, 'We wanted to make sure that we had pay equity for like-for-like roles and that as we brought people onto the project, there wasn't any unconscious bias affecting decisions.'

Things like flexible working hours, especially in construction roles, and allowances for people returning to the workforce after having kids, were important considerations.

'We've also hosted two forums for women to come together to talk about successes and challenges. It's all part of a change management process to effect cultural change.'

Leigh emphasises the joint venture wasn't starting from scratch, but rather was able to build on work they had already been doing.

'As part of that, it was a self-imposed KPI that drove our behaviour from the very start of the project.

'By starting early and proactively thinking about these issues when people were being mobilised for the project, we were really able to achieve results,' she says.

'It's not an add on. It's the foundation of the way we've built the workforce for the project.'

Barpa

Barpa is a construction company that is majority-owned by the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations, representing the majority of Victoria's native title holders.

The other 49 per cent stake is owned by Cockram Construction, which helps to provide technical expertise and mentoring.

Barpa works across Australia and returns dividends to its owner communities. It provides employment opportunities to Aboriginal people and ensures engagement with Traditional Owners before and during construction projects.

Alongside large projects for Commonwealth departments such as the Department of Defence, Barpa was recently subcontracted to deliver a community hub as part of the Mernda Rail Extension Project.

Operations Manager Simon Walter says that they undertook the project as proof of capability to validate their expertise with the prime contractor.

'Two Aboriginal staff worked on the project, which consisted of portable site accommodation that we fitted out for meetings and community consultation.

'It gives the community somewhere to access project information and provides a front office for the project,' Simon says.

The office also features Aboriginal art to make Aboriginal jobseekers feel welcomed when they visit to enquire about employment.

Simon supports the social procurement initiatives by the Victorian Government, and says there is still work to do in ensuring Aboriginal-owned businesses are able to compete.

'For example, we want to do full construction projects of larger scale, as they provide more opportunities for training and employment of Indigenous staff.'



Barpa employees on site at the Mernda Rail Extension Project

RAW Recruitment

RAW Recruitment is an Aboriginal-owned and managed company that provides group training and employment services for Aboriginal people in the construction industry.

The company specialises in working with lead contractors on major projects like the Level Crossing Removal Program, to ensure they can support employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.

They also provide pathways to apprenticeships and traineeships and partner with other organisations to help them access funding.

Program Manager Jan McCalman says the benefits for the individuals they assist into employment are profound.

'It changes the economy of the house. When we link people into jobs that pay real money, the conversations around the kitchen table are different,' she says.

'Instead of stress about rent and finances leading to poor choices, suddenly people can afford to buy a ute that's not going to break down on the way to work. They can pay for their kids' things. They can plan for the future and get a home loan because they've got viability. It gives people freedom.'

Jan expects that government departments will shift their thinking around procurement and give opportunities to marginalised communities.

'You don't do anything without a framework and this is a really good start. You need to have leadership from the top to make things happen,' she says.

She's cautiously optimistic about the future, adding that there are still many barriers to overcome in creating greater equity.

'Government departments are traditionally very risk averse when it comes to thinking differently about employment. There are still lots of seatbelts on social procurement,' she says.

'For example, people often come to us for help when they're bidding for work because some procurement policies require three years of financials. We partner with them so they can meet that requirement, but this sort of thing can be a real barrier for Aboriginal startups.'



**Social procurement in action:
RAW Recruitment community
stakeholders attend a workshop**

Kinfolk

Kinfolk is a café and catering business in Melbourne's CBD that was established on a volunteer basis to see if business could be part of the solution towards creating more inclusive communities.

The social enterprise provides training and skills to people who face barriers to traditional employment, while passing on all profits from the business to charity partners.

They work with people from different demographics, including people with disability and other disadvantaged members of the community, such as people exiting the criminal justice system.

CEO Jarrod Briffa seeks to create a more inclusive community by tailoring each volunteer's training to their own needs and desires.

'Our program doesn't have a start or end date, as the goals and needs of individuals are vastly different,' Jarrod says.

'All the training we do is very hands on and we work alongside our volunteers so they can realise their goals – which in a lot of cases is moving on to employment.'

And for many of their workers, this is exactly the outcome they achieve, with 76 per cent of volunteers who were seeking employment being successful in getting jobs during the past 12 months.

For Jarrod, social procurement initiatives will help to provide the foundation for a sustainable business and allow the enterprise to grow and create more volunteer placements.

Kinfolk is currently crowdfunding to expand into a second café in Carlton North, Sibling by Kinfolk, to create more volunteer positions. They are also seeking to add greater structure around their training through partnerships with a Registered Training Organisation, to offer accredited training.

'For social enterprises like us, it's about encouraging organisations to think about what they do with their incidental spending,' Jarrod says.

'A small, incidental spend by a government department can be game changing in terms of social outcomes.'



Kinfolk's café business supports volunteers to gain skills and confidence



Social Foundry's front-of-house manager Sue-Lee Seng serves a Kyneton local while mentoring and training young people

Social Foundry

The Social Foundry is a regionally-based social enterprise that exists to empower young people.

The business mentors and nurtures life skills in young people by working in three areas: a café, woodworking and land management.

Their primary project is a hospitality business in Kyneton that is open to the public. Trainees come from all backgrounds and walks of life and the model is geared around imparting knowledge and skills to young people.

Recently a government department engaged the Social Foundry to cater for an event. This example demonstrates how government may access similar social enterprises. Co-founder Simon Burnett says, 'Everything is done simply, but it's great food.'

'We want to keep building on our strengths so we can expand and invest in other parts of the community. Fundamentally, we believe we're all better together.'

As part of that expansion, the Social Foundry has plans to launch a wholesale spring water business.

Social procurement practices mean that the Social Foundry is able to fund its projects and empower its community.

'The process of giving good back through social spending is not hard and it can be done really simply. And it's a great feeling,' Simon says.

TRY Australia

TRY Australia provides training and employment for young people facing barriers to education and employment.

TRY has won commercial contracts through the Level Crossing Removal Authority.

One of their success stories has been to repurpose shipping containers into amenities buildings, offices and community consultation spaces on level crossing removal sites.

Lucretia DeJong, Business Development Manager, says, 'They're a quick build and environmentally friendly.'

'And for our cohort of disengaged young people, it means they can get the satisfaction of seeing a project through from start to finish.'

TRY operates both a training factory and an on-site build factory and the trainees work between the two.

'We've had a 95 per cent success rate in placing trainees into employment or further training. Trainees get a Certificate II in Construction and their work on-site allows them to be job-ready.'

The big bonus of social procurement for TRY Australia is getting the chance to showcase their trainees to contracting companies.

'We're getting complimented by contractors for the quality of our trainees' work and when they see what our young people can do, they often pick them up for traineeships.'

Social procurement has created big changes in the sector for TRY Australia.

'The mindset of the commercial contractors has changed. They used to try to get us down to the lowest price, but they're starting to understand the value attached to our work that's outside monetary value,' Lucretia says.

'They've gone from being very hardnosed about it, to now setting up their own programs.'

'The stability that these projects have provided for our business makes our social enterprise viable and enables us to employ these kids in long-term jobs.'

TRY Australia trainees gain experience in construction



Public Tenant Employment Program

The Public Tenant Employment Program was developed in 2005 by the Department of Health and Human Services to create pathways for public housing tenants who want to gain secure and sustainable employment.

The program uses two main mechanisms to deliver employment and training outcomes for public housing tenants: public tenant employment clauses in departmental housing contracts; and providing training in skills-shortage areas through partnerships with TAFEs and Registered Training Organisations.

Mohamed Ballo from Sudan says he had trouble finding work as a recent arrival, but through opportunities created by the Public Tenant Employment Program and, with the support of the Victorian Government's Jobs Victoria initiative, he's been able to secure work in the construction industry, helping to build public housing units in Preston.

'I feel safe. This is like my second home,' he says.

Aydarus Mohamed from Ethiopia was in a similar situation and he is now gaining confidence on the work site.

'I enjoy everything I do, because every day is different. Every hour is different.'

The pair started in traffic management, but quickly showed their eagerness to gain other tickets to expand the type of work they can do on-site.

'They're coming out of their shell now, with the odd joke on the two-way. They've really fitted in well on-site,' says site manager Dave Millmow.

'It's all about giving them the skill set they need to move forward and be in the construction industry.'



Aydarus (left) and Mohamed (right) were able to get their start in the construction industry through the Public Tenant Employment Program



From left: Neil Trigwell (Veterans in Construction), Dan Cairnes (Veterans in Construction) and Simon Barnes (Level Crossing Removal Project Caulfield to Dandenong)

Veterans in Construction

Veterans in Construction is a social enterprise that provides the platform to enable veterans to gain employment on major infrastructure projects. Through this work, they assist veterans of Australia's armed forces to get back into civilian life through the creation of employment opportunities in construction and infrastructure.

Dan Cairnes set up the company in 2015 to provide advice, mentoring, support and connections for veterans looking to get into the construction industry.

Since May 2017, Veterans in Construction has partnered with the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) to provide employment for 15 veterans on the major level crossing removal project between Caulfield and Dandenong.

'Veterans have many non-tangible skills to offer the construction industry, like teamwork, integrity, loyalty, initiative and adaptability,' Dan says.

'LXRA has been a champion of our work to give veterans employment opportunities, and the partnership has been a great opportunity for us to demonstrate what veterans can do.

'Worksite supervisors constantly tell us just how good veterans are at completing tasks with minimal fuss.'

One of Veterans in Construction's workers is James Thorpe, who served in the Australian Air Force, and has now gained employment with the Level Crossing Removal Authority.

'I struggled to transition back to civilian life when I returned, and that's where Veterans in Construction has really assisted me to enter into the construction industry,' James says.

'I feel confident with the skills and experience I've learned from this project that I can continue to work for a long time in the construction industry.'

Providing support to retrenched workers from declining industries

With the announcement from the automotive manufacturing industry that vehicle production would cease in Australia, the Level Crossing Removal Authority and its industry partners, through the Training for the Future program, has been working with appointed outplacement services to showcase opportunities for retrenched workers in the rail sector.

Commencing in 2017, the Level Crossing Removal Authority designed an automotive worker transition program, TRANSIT, to help retrenched automotive workers to find new opportunities in the rail and public transport sector, including rolling stock manufacturing, plant and maintenance and operations.

During the program, participants receive practical, job-ready training that are pre-requisites to being able to work within a construction and railway environment.

The training is delivered by the Metro Trains Melbourne Academy to ensure best practice standards are achieved in line with current rail operational requirements. This will ensure participants are accredited with two units of competency.

To date, 37 retrenched automotive workers have completed the program, with several securing employment in the rail and construction sectors or other related industries.

'It's a very exciting time to be in transport and infrastructure, between the level crossing projects, tunnels and new roads,' says Bradley Giddens, Director of Industry Capability and Inclusion at the Level Crossing Removal Authority.

'TRANSIT allows workers from different industries, including the automotive sector, to really get a feel for what it means to work in transport.'

Auto workers visiting Yarra Trams as part of the TRANSIT program in 2017







03

Next steps



MOVING FORWARD

Victoria's *Social Procurement Framework* will be rolled out and implemented across all Victorian government departments and agencies from 1 September 2018.

As part of this process, further consultation and development will determine specific activities, roles and responsibilities.

The Department of Treasury and Finance is currently working to provide government with access to Aboriginal business and social enterprise supplier directories. This will assist in matching suppliers from these sectors with government buyers.

Government departments and agencies are required to report on their social procurement activities in their annual reports from 2019. Reporting will be at the level of both individual contracts and for the department or agency as a whole.

As part of this reporting, the Department of Treasury and Finance will measure the costs and benefits of social procurement to ensure value for money is achieved and substantiated.

Sound measurement and reporting will allow us to evaluate the Framework over time and to assess the Framework's objectives and the best ways to meet them.

The first annual report on the *Social Procurement Framework* will be produced at the completion of the 2018-19 financial year.







