



# VICTORIA 2022 ELECTION

## NECA POLICY POSITION

**National Electrical and Communications Association**

Empowering, connecting and leading Australia's electrotechnology industry

November 2023

# INTRODUCTION

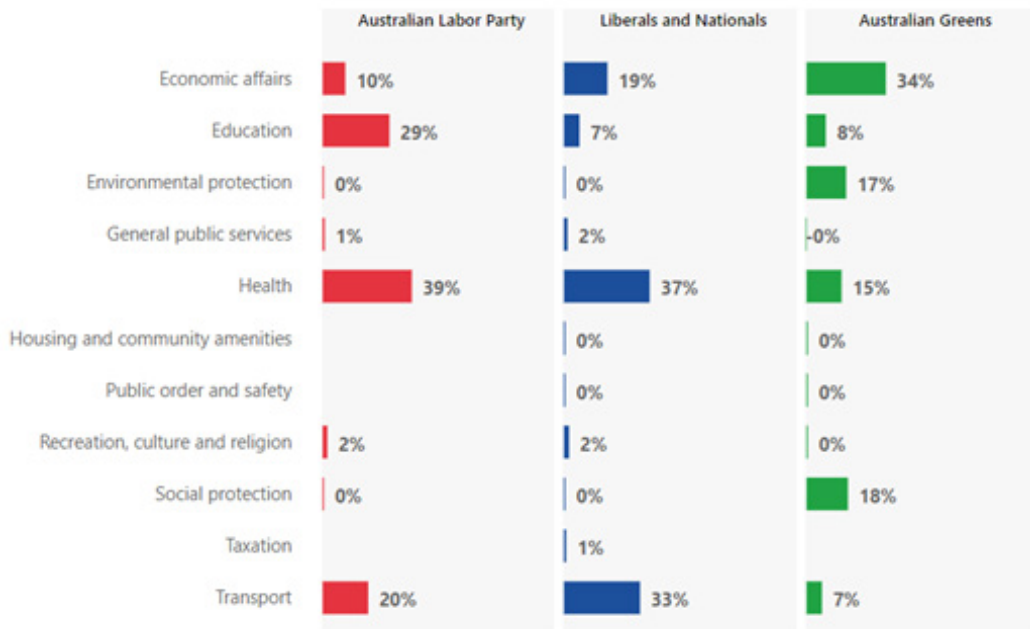
NECA Victoria is closely monitoring the Victorian General Election announcements ahead of the upcoming state election on Saturday 26 November 2022.

In the lead up to the election campaign, NECA reached out to all members of the Victorian Parliament to advocate for key policy changes on behalf of our members, and the wider electrotechnology industry.

NECA's Victorian state election policy position can be [accessed here](#).

Over the last few weeks, the various political parties have made pre-election commitments in the areas of economic affairs, education, environmental protection, public services, health, housing, public safety, transport etc.

Based on public statements by parliamentary leaders, the following table sourced from the [Victorian Parliamentary Budget Office](#) demonstrates a breakdown of pre-election funding commitments by party, and by policy area:



Most notable policy announcements to date, and as they align with NECA's policy position are summarised in this update. They include announcements affecting small businesses, energy and renewables, and apprentices and tradies.

# SMALL BUSINESSES

NECA advocates for the incoming government to adopt, implement and maintain policies relating to business that prioritise removal of red tape, onerous compliance requirements, regulatory barriers and other impediments to the efficient operation of enterprises and to the expanding of their workforces.

NECA welcomes the LNP announcements to support small business and enterprise, including:

- increasing the payroll tax threshold from \$700,000 to \$1.6 million
- freezing Local Government business fees and charges for four years
- *Love Victoria, Made in Victoria, Buy Victorian* campaign to promote local goods and products, and incentivise Victorian businesses to buy local;
- strengthening state laws to local content and procurement obligations on all government-funded infrastructure projects to ensure Victorian content is given priority;
- introducing a whole of Government Buy Victorian Procurement Policy, to ensure government departments, statutory agencies and corporations prioritise and lead by example;
- establishing the Small Business Victoria statutory authority alongside a Small Business Ministerial Advisory Group;
- allocating a \$25 million Small Business Investment Fund for small and medium sized businesses to partner with established businesses to accelerate economic growth.

Longstanding issues affecting subcontractors in the sector are exacerbated by lack of payment protection laws. NECA actively advocates for security of payments reforms nationally to ensure small to medium-sized businesses and their supplier remain viable. The Victorian ALP has promised to establish a parliamentary enquiry to crack down on bosses and contractors who refuse to pay their subcontractors for completed works.

# ENERGY AND RENEWABLES

NECA is committed to leading the electrotechnology industry in the training, installation and proliferation of diverse and cutting-edge renewable solutions to meet a net zero future. We will work closely with the incoming Victorian government and industry to be at the forefront of the energy transformation.

In relation to **energy and renewables**, both the ALP and LNP have outlined a range of initiatives to support the growth of the clean energy sector.

The ALP has committed to bringing back public ownership of energy resources by revenging the State Electricity Commission (SEC) to lower prices and supporting job creation for 59,000 Victorians through to 2035.

Additional ALP announcements include an investment of \$42 million to install 100 neighbourhood batteries, \$1 billion to deliver 4.5 gigawatts of renewable power (including offshore wind farms), \$6 million investment to create a purpose-built training centre, another round of the \$250 Power Saving Bonus for all Victorian households and commissioning of a review into regulatory and licensing requirements for renewable energy systems.

The LNP launched its *Power to the People Plan* which includes additional solar panels across public infrastructure, temporary and targeted electricity bill relief for households, \$500,000 towards a business case as part of LNP's energy plan development, the establishment of "Fixing Victoria's Grid" taskforce, pausing Labor's Electric Vehicle Tax until 2027 and installing 600 new charging stations.

# APPRENTICES AND TRADIES

NECA Education & Careers – the only fully industry owned Group Training Organisation (GTO) and Registered Training Organisation (RTO) in Victoria provide training for electricians and contractors. We are committed to quality education, skills and training while growing the industry to meet the demands of new and emerging technologies.

NECA Education and Careers is one of the Victorian leaders in electrotechnology training, with apprentice completion rates orders of magnitude that of the national average.

NECA looks forward to working with the incoming government to ensure the TAFE system is better complemented with specialist industry-based training, and to support the government in the attraction, recruitment and retention of electrical industry apprentices.

In close collaboration with the industry, NECA would welcome the opportunity to apply its expertise and assist the incoming Victorian government in the implementation of efficient and effective strategies to deliver quality training for electrical apprentices across the state.

**Apprentices and tradies** will also benefit from a range of announcements made by both parties.

Under the ALP's plan to end reliance on coal and create 59,000 jobs in clean energy, the commitment was made that at least 6,000 of those jobs are apprentices and trainees.

Further ALP support for apprentices and tradies extends to making vehicle registration fully free for eligible apprentices, worth up to \$865 per year, and establishing an Apprenticeship Taskforce to improve safety and fairness for apprentices. The LNP proposes a range of measures to upskill future workforces including:

- introducing a \$20 million Rapid Skills Program focused on enhancing the skills and capability of the Victorian workforce, with employers eligible for \$3,000 grants
- providing an additional \$30 million for more traineeships, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships to grow skills development opportunities
- cutting increases in individual and company building registration fees and reforming building approvals to cut the cost of purchasing and building.

The LNP also promises to establish and operate a Victorian Productivity Commission to independently advise the Victorian Government and community on productivity enhancing reforms and to increase workforce participation of women.

# CONTACT US

As parties continue their respective campaigns over the coming days, and while many of these announcements are welcomed by the industry, NECA believes that a lot more needs to be done by the incoming Victorian government to ensure the state's electrotechnology is a fair, sustainable, and prosperous sector.

If you would like any more information on pre-election promises captured by this update, or if you are interested in more details on other parties' announcements, please contact us via email at [advocacy.vic@neca.asn.au](mailto:advocacy.vic@neca.asn.au).