



# RESPONSE TO THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND STANDARD CLASSIFICATION OF OCCUPATIONS

MTAA SUBMISSION

SEPTEMBER 2024



## INTRODUCTION

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Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) comprehensive review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

The Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) represents over 15,000 businesses across the automotive sector, including dealers, repairers, tow truck operators, service stations, and various automotive retail businesses. Our members are directly experiencing the impacts and opportunities presented by the electrification of transport.

We advocate for our members through various state-based motor trade organisations: the Motor Traders' Association of New South Wales, the Victorian and Tasmanian Automotive Chamber of Commerce, the Motor Trade Association of South Australia and Northern Territory, the Motor Trade Association of Western Australia, and the Motor Trades Association of Queensland.

Our response to the survey questions highlights the potential impacts of the proposed structural changes in the draft classification on the automotive retail sector.

For further discussion regarding this submission, please contact Matt Hobbs, CEO at [matt.hobbs@mtaa.com.au](mailto:matt.hobbs@mtaa.com.au) or 0419 608 845.

## MTAA RESPONSE

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**1. Please indicate which levels of the classification hierarchy you use and why (i.e. major group, sub-major group, minor group, unit group, occupation level)**

The MTAA primarily relies on unit group and occupation levels for data sourcing. We utilise ABS ANZSCO data to guide our policy development and to track industry trends, which helps us provide valuable insights to our members.

**2. Please describe any constraints to your usage in relation to the specific segment or level of the classification you use (i.e. a particular sub-major group)**

We recommend enhancing the TableBuilder by incorporating additional ABS data, which would provide access to unit group and/or occupation-level data. This improvement would facilitate more detailed and accurate data sourcing.

### WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED METHOD OF CONSUMING THE CLASSIFICATION?

**1. Examples of methods include: Google search, ABS website search, coding tool, API, Excel file, JSON file format, other**

MTAA mostly uses Excel data cubes and ABS TableBuilder to source relevant industry data.

**2. Please indicate the reasons for using your preferred format/s and consumption method/s and the reasons for your preferred or non-preferred formats.**

TableBuilder enables MTAA to drill down to the occupation level, making it a valuable tool for detailed analyses. Its effectiveness however is constrained by the exclusion of certain critical databases, namely regular updates on business counts and employment figures. This gap means that while users can obtain detailed occupational data, they may not have access to the most current and comprehensive industry information needed for precise analysis. Incorporating these regular updates would significantly enhance our ability to access more up-to-date and relevant data for our industry.

**3. Please include positive or negative impacts of your preferred method or format.**

Please see response above.

**WILL THE NEW GROUPINGS IN THE DRAFT STRUCTURE IMPACT THE WAY YOU OR YOUR ORGANISATION USES THE CLASSIFICATION?**

**1. Please indicate if the impact is positive, negative or neutral and why**

The proposed structure of the ANZSCO categorisation will significantly impact the ability to track and utilise classification data effectively, specifically regarding the emerging role of Electric Vehicle (EV) Technicians.

Currently, there is a notable disparity between the rapid growth in the number of EVs and the recognition of the corresponding workforce required to support this shift. To qualify as a 6-digit code under ANZSCO, an occupation must be represented by a minimum of 300 individuals in the Census. Unfortunately, the 2021 Census data indicated that the number of EV Technicians fell below this threshold.

However, in July 2024, the number of EVs on the road has surged to 192,439 from just 6,918 in 2021, when the latest ABS Census was held. This increase underscores the urgent need for a specialised workforce, particularly EV Technicians, who are essential for the maintenance and repair of these vehicles.

Current and forthcoming government policies, along with federal and state incentives, aim to accelerate the adoption of EVs and support the development of a skilled workforce, including EV Technicians, to handle their maintenance and repair. The occupation EV Technician is not merely a temporary trend for the industry; rather it is expected to play a critical role for the foreseeable future.

Given that the next Census will not occur until August 2026, and ANZSCO review may not reflect the inclusion of EV Technicians until 2030 or later, there is a considerable delay in recognising and reporting on this occupation. With the government's goal of having at least 50 per cent of the fleet be electric by 2030, this delay poses a significant challenge not only for the Government to inform their policies and program to support the transition to EVs, but also for organisation such as the MTAA and the VACC, to inform its policy on this area.

We urge ANZSCO to adopt a proactive approach. This would enhance industry transparency and better inform labour market assessments.

**2. Please describe which specific groupings in the proposed structure may impact the way you or your organisation use the classification**

MTAA advises that 'Electric Vehicle Technician' is an occupation that should be separately identified in ANZSCO with its own unique six-digit code. This is an occupation that is completely separate to that of a traditional motor mechanic or automotive electrician, with its own unique national training qualification that has been developed due to industry demand for workers that are qualified to repair electric vehicles.

As the Australian vehicle fleet transitions from petrol/diesel to EVs, it is expected that EV Technicians will eventually displace traditional motor mechanics.

**DO YOU HAVE ANY FEEDBACK ON THE PROPOSED WEB PAGE LAYOUT OF THE CLASSIFICATION?**

**1. Please provide any positive or negative impacts the web page layout of the classification might have on your usage**

NA

**2. Please include any positive or negative impacts the web page layout might have on how you navigate through the classification**

NA

**3. Please consider any positive or negative impacts regarding the order in which the information is displayed**

NA

**DO YOU OR YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE ANY KEY IMPLEMENTATION CONCERNS ABOUT THE PROPOSED STRUCTURE?**

**1. Please describe any positive or negative impacts regarding the implementation of the proposed structure**

MTAA acknowledges and appreciates the inclusion of the recommended change from "Mechanic" to "Technician" in the 32 and 89 sub-major groups as proposed in its previous submission. However, we urge the ANZSCO team to also review and consider updating the terminology used for other occupations within the automotive industry to ensure comprehensive and accurate representation.

Namely, the unit groups 3241 Panelbeaters and its assigned occupation 324111 Panelbeater, as well as unit group 3243 Vehicle Painters and its assigned occupation 324311 Vehicle Painter, should undergo a review and update to accurately align with the evolving technical and technological advancements in the skills required for these roles

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & MTA PROPOSALS

### EV Technician – Definition

An Electric Vehicle Technician, or EV Technician, is responsible for the repair, maintenance, and diagnostics of battery electric, plug-in and hybrid vehicles. They possess training and knowledge about electric drivetrains, voltage storage systems, battery technology, electric motors, and power electronics. Their expertise lies in dealing with the unique challenges and safety considerations associated with electric vehicles.

The specific job tasks include:

Maintain, Diagnose and Repair:

- > Energy storage systems (Including electronic battery management)
- > Traction motors
- > Speed control systems
- > Auxiliary motors and associated components
- > System instrumentation and safety interlocks
- > Heating and cooling systems for occupants and energy storage
- > DC to DC converters
- > Advanced Driver Assistance Systems
- > Electronically controlled suspension
- > Network electronic control
- > Instruments and warnings and program electrical and electronic units and assemblies
- > Vehicle dynamic control systems
- > Electronic body management
- > Regenerative Braking systems
- > Electronically controlled steering systems
- > Electronically controlled suspension systems
- > Telematics (WIFI and Bluetooth communication)
- > Wiring harnesses and looms (CAN-bus)
- > Vehicle software and firmware
- > Ancillary electrical systems and components
- > Separated low voltage battery
- > Advanced Driver Assistance & safety systems
- > Autonomous driving systems

An EV Technician equates to a Skill Level 3 in ANZSCO and while it belongs in the same unit group as **321211** (currently on the ANZSCO draft structure under 351131) Motor Mechanic (General) or "Automotive Technician (General)" it is an independent occupation to these.

### EV Technician – Training pathways

EV Technicians are trained and qualified to work on electric and hybrid vehicles, while motor mechanics are trained to work on petrol/diesel vehicles. There are currently no registration or licensing requirements for an EV Technician, however, this may change in the future.

A new nationally endorsed training qualification for EV Technicians has been created for delivery by registered training organisations. The qualification is AUR32721 Certificate III in Automotive Electric Vehicle Technology.

This is the new mandatory qualification and pathway for all automotive apprentices seeking to maintain, diagnose and repair electric vehicles.

There are two specialisations within the AUR32721 Certificate III in Automotive Electric Vehicle Technology qualification. These are:

- > AUR32721 Certificate III in Automotive Electric Vehicle Technology (Light Vehicle)
- > AUR32721 Certificate III in Automotive Electric Vehicle Technology (Heavy Vehicle)

The core units of competency and educational requirements for AUR32721 Certificate III in Automotive Electric Vehicle Technology, for both light and heavy vehicle specialisations, are listed on training.gov.au, which is the national register on vocational education and training in Australia (see <https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/AUR32721>).

### **EV Technician – Labour force data**

MTAA modelling indicates that as of June 2023, it is estimated that there are approximately 2,000 EV Technicians in the labour force nationally, however, this is expected to increase to around 3,000 in 2024 as more apprentices enrol within the AUR32721 qualification.

By 2028, MTAA forecasts there will be approximately 8,400 qualified EV Technicians in the labour force. By 2030 it is projected there will be approximately 13,000 EV Technicians nationally.

These figures are based on strong trend growth in EV sales and industry demand for EV Technicians, as well as Federal Government projections showing that 50 per cent of all new vehicles sold will be electric by 2030, as per the government's National Electric Vehicle Strategy Paper.

This equates to approximately 1.7 million EVs being on Australian roads by 2030, with an expected EV Technician workforce of 13,000 workers, that will grow even larger as consumer uptake of electric vehicles increases beyond the end of the decade.

MTAA advises that the EV Technician occupation logically sits within the ANZSCO 3212 (currently on the ANZSCO draft structure under 3511) Unit Group, with its own separate six-digit occupation code.

As such, the MTAA suggests the following proposals for the ANZSCO review team to consider. Both proposals contain similar content, with the only difference being the positioning of the occupation at the 4-digit code level. This code could be assigned in the new ANZSCO structure as follows.

## PROPOSAL 1 (MTAA'S PREFERRED OPTION)

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### **351132 Electric Vehicle (EV) Technician (General)**

**Alternative Titles:** Hybrid Vehicle Technician

Maintains, tests and repairs electric vehicles systems and components, including the energy storage systems, traction motors, and safety interlocks.

Registration or licensing may be required.

**Skill Level:** 3

**Main Tasks:**

- > Diagnoses and repairs faults in electric vehicle energy storage units and their electronic battery management systems (BMS)
- > Performs service and maintenance of traction motors
- > Tests and replaces speed control systems
- > Undertakes calibration of auxiliary motors and their associated components
- > Inspects and repairs system instrumentation and safety interlocks
- > Maintain, tests, and repairs heating and cooling systems for energy storage units

**Specialisations:**

- > Electric Light Vehicle Technician
- > Electric Heavy Vehicle Technician

## PROPOSAL 2 (ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL OPTION)

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### **351437 Electric Vehicle (EV) Technician (General)**

**Alternative Titles:** Hybrid Vehicle Technician

Maintains, tests and repairs electric vehicles systems and components, including the energy storage systems, traction motors, and safety interlocks.

Registration or licensing may be required.

**Skill Level:** 3

**Main Tasks:**

- > Diagnoses and repairs faults in electric vehicle energy storage units and their electronic battery management systems (BMS).
- > Performs service and maintenance of traction motors.
- > Tests and replaces speed control systems
- > Undertakes calibration of auxiliary motors and their associated components
- > Inspects and repairs system instrumentation and safety interlocks
- > Maintain, tests, and repairs heating and cooling systems for energy storage units

### **Specialisations:**

- > Electric Light Vehicle Technician
- > Electric Heavy Vehicle Technician

This placement allows for updated job titles and tasks in-line with current industry standards and practice. It also means that there is a logical and consistent flow of automotive technician occupations emanating from the similarly titled unit group. This would effectively modernise ANZSCO moving forward, for the benefit of industry, government agencies and other users of the classification.

MTAA advises that adding an EV Technician as a specialisation to an existing ANZSCO occupation does not serve the needs of the automotive industry, as an EV Technician is a separate occupation with a separate qualification and job tasks to all other automotive occupations within the repair and maintenance category.

Furthermore, as detailed above, an EV Technician occupation already contains two specialisations of its own (light vehicle and heavy vehicle) that exist within the AUR32721 Certificate III in Automotive Electric Vehicle Technology qualification. Therefore, it would be illogical and confusing to industry, if an EV Technician was placed as a specialisation of another automotive occupation.

Additionally, if an EV Technician was placed as a specialisation of another automotive occupation, it would not allow the identification and capture of critical and timely labour force data for EV Technicians.

This is against the needs of industry and government, given that EV Technicians are a fast-growing occupational shortage, and there must be labour force data available for businesses and for government agencies such as Job and Skills Australia, to be able to monitor and evaluate this shortage as the Australian vehicle fleet transitions from petrol/diesel vehicle over to EVs. This would not be possible unless it had its own six-digit occupation code within ANZSCO.

Additional MTAA proposals are outlined below.



# PROPOSAL FOR RENAMING THE OCCUPATION "PANELBEATERS" TO "AUTOMOTIVE BODY TECHNICIAN"

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The occupation currently labelled as "Panelbeater" no longer accurately reflects the modern scope and complexities of this role in today's automotive industry. We propose renaming this occupation to "Automotive Body Technician" to better align with the current job responsibilities and technological advancements in vehicle repair.

## Outdated Terminology

The term "Panelbeater" originates from traditional repair techniques focused primarily on shaping and smoothing metal panels by reheating it then 'beating' it. This description is increasingly inadequate given the significant technological evolution in vehicle construction and repair processes.

### 1. Advances in Vehicle Materials

Modern vehicles utilise a variety of materials, including advanced metals, plastic composites, and specialised alloys. Repairing these materials requires a diverse skill set that extends far beyond the traditional metalworking associated with 'beating' panels. In fact, a number of these materials do not require 'beating' to be repaired. Rather, new technology and technics have revolutionised the methods used in this process.

### 2. Technological Integration

Today's panelbeaters require proficiency with advanced technology and diagnostic tools on top of their metal and plastic repair work. Modern vehicles require technological assessment of the vehicle as a pre-requisite before being able to repair its panel. Key responsibilities of panelbeaters now include:

- > **Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS):** Panelbeaters must be able to accurately reprogram and calibrate ADAS features
- > **Safety Systems Management:** Handling and diagnosing sophisticated safety systems, such as airbags, is crucial
- > **Diagnostic Tools Usage:** Proficiency in scan tools and computer-based diagnostics is necessary to troubleshoot the vehicle's electrical health and ensure comprehensive repairs

### 3. Evolving Techniques and Equipment

Modern welding machines and repair techniques have evolved, reducing reliance on traditional heat-based methods. Technicians now employ advanced technologies and methods that require a broader technical skill set.

MTAA is calling for the ANZSCO review to consider a change for the panelbeater title, reflecting current professional standards. The term "Automotive Body Technician" more accurately reflects the expanded scope of responsibilities and the advanced technical skills required. It acknowledges the integration of

mechanical, electronic, and diagnostic expertise that characterises contemporary automotive body repair work.

Updating the unit group and occupation's name to "Automotive Body Technician" will provide a more accurate representation of the role and its significance in the modern automotive industry. This change will enhance the profession's image, better reflect the current job functions, and align with industry standards.

MTAA recommends this change to ensure that the occupation is appropriately recognised and valued in line with its current scope and technological advancements.

### **Current ANZSCO structure**

3 Technicians and Trades Workers > 32 Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers > 324 Panelbeaters, and Vehicle Body Builders, Trimmers and Painters > 3243 Vehicle Painters > 324311 Vehicle Painter

### **Suggested ANZSCO structure**

3 Technicians and Trades Workers > 35 Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers > **351 Automotive Body Technician**, and Vehicle Body Builders, Trimmers and Paint Technicians > **3515 Automotive Body Technician** > **351331 Automotive Body Technician**.

## **PROPOSAL FOR RENAMING THE OCCUPATION "VEHICLE PAINTERS" TO "AUTOMOTIVE PAINT TECHNICIAN"**

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The title "Vehicle Painter" no longer reflects the modern complexity and advanced skills required in this occupation. We propose renaming this role to "Automotive Paint Technician" to better align with current technological advancements and occupation responsibilities.

The term "Vehicle Painter" is based on traditional methods of simply applying paint. This description is inadequate given the sophisticated techniques and technologies now used in automotive painting. As such, the industry today uses advanced and diverse vehicle materials with modern vehicles constructed with different plastics and advanced metals, which require specialised knowledge for painting.

The traditional title does not cover the expertise needed for these varied materials and their unique painting requirements. Moreover, modern painting techniques have evolved, requiring more precision and technological proficiency. The role now involves intricate processes beyond traditional painting methods. As such, contemporary paint professionals must operate advanced equipment and understand complex paint formulations and technological integration.

Responsibilities now include:

- > **High-Performance Coatings:** Applying advanced and eco-friendly paint formulas
- > **Precision Equipment:** Using sophisticated spray guns and computerised systems

- > **Surface Preparation:** Employing detailed techniques for different materials
- > **Environmental Compliance:** Following stringent safety and environmental regulations

MTAA is calling for ANZSCO to rename the occupation to "Automotive Paint Technician" as it will more accurately represent the advanced skill set and current industry standards. This change will enhance the profession's image and ensure it reflects the sophisticated nature of today's automotive paint work.

#### **Current ANZSCO structure**

3 Technicians and Trades Workers > 32 Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers > 324 Panelbeaters, and Vehicle Body Builders, Trimmers and Painters > 3241 Panelbeaters > 324111 Panelbeater.

#### **Suggested ANZSCO structure**

3 Technicians and Trades Workers > 35 Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers > **351 Automotive Body Technicians**, and Vehicle Body Builders, Trimmers and **Paint Technicians** > **3516 Automotive Paint Technicians** > **351631 Automotive Paint Technician**.



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