

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP

Minister for Industry and Innovation
Minister for Manufacturing Sovereignty
Minister for Employment
Minister for Public Transport



Thursday, 13 July 2023

BOOSTING DIGITAL SKILLS IN MANUFACTURING TO CREATE FUTURE JOBS

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting manufacturers across the state to equip their workers with the cutting-edge digital skills needed to boost competitiveness and create more jobs of the future.

Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll today visited Ballarat manufacturer SEM Fire and Rescue, which is one of the businesses benefitting from the Labor Government's \$4.5 million *Digital Jobs for Manufacturing* program.

Since launching in October last year, the program has offered eligible manufacturing businesses grants of up to \$5,000 per employee to enrol in a free 12-week course with Victoria's top universities, TAFEs and training providers.

To date, the *Digital Jobs for Manufacturing* program has awarded nearly \$775,000 in funding to 109 Victorian manufacturers, supporting 226 of their employees to enrol in a nominated training course.

As one of the country's largest manufacturers of emergency service vehicles, SEM Fire and Rescue is participating in the program to upskill staff and strengthen its digital capabilities to maintain a competitive advantage.

The program has allowed SEM Fire and Rescue to enrol mechanical engineer Mukesh Arella into an additive manufacturing course at the University of Melbourne. Through the course, Mukesh is enhancing his skills in new manufacturing technologies including 3D printing, helping to improve the design of vehicle components.

The program builds on the success of the \$64 million Digital Jobs program that is retraining 5,000 mid-career Victorians and supporting them to transition into digital-focused jobs.

Victoria is home to more than 24,000 manufacturing businesses and the state's 257,000-strong workforce is the largest in the country – contributing more than 30 per cent of the national manufacturing output.

The Government is backing the state's advanced manufacturers through initiatives including the new \$15 million *Made in Victoria - Industry R&D Infrastructure Fund* and \$20 million *Manufacturing and Industry Sovereignty Fund*.

For more information about the program, visit: business.vic.gov.au/djfm.

Quote attributable to Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll

"There is a growing need for digital skills among Victorian companies and the Digital Jobs for Manufacturing program is enabling businesses like SEM Fire and Rescue have access to targeted training for their staff."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"By supporting digital innovation at companies like SEM in Wendouree, we are not only upskilling the workforce, but making local manufacturers more competitive by strengthening their digital capabilities."

Quote attributable to SEM Fire and Rescue General Manager Mark Thomas

"At SEM Fire and Rescue, we believe by investing in local talent we can strengthen our manufacturing capabilities and customer solutions, which is why we're proud to have participated in the program."

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