



Strong foundations for our children, strong futures for our communities



EVERY child should have the best start in life, and that begins with culturally safe, play-based early learning. The Centre of Excellence in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is a national leader in vocational education and training (VET), working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to build a stronger, more inclusive early childhood workforce.

Established through a joint initiative between the Australian and South Australian governments, and based at TAFE

SA, the Centre works nationally to respond to urgent workforce needs by delivering job-ready training that reflects the realities of early learning environments.

The Centre collaborates with stakeholders to co-design training that is culturally responsive, community-informed and aligned with sector priorities.

Current projects include:

- Translating early-childhood education concepts into Pitjantjatjara and embedding Anangu ways of learning for delivery across the APY Lands.
- Creating Autism-specific training to build educator capability in supporting autistic children and families. A pilot program is launching soon.

- Developing mentoring and leadership pathways to grow and retain educators.

To help people explore a career in early childhood, the Centre also offers a free online taster course, providing a practical introduction to working with young children and supporting communities.

Whether you are considering a career in early childhood or are an experienced educator already in the sector, the Centre of Excellence is committed to supporting your growth and strengthening outcomes for children, families and communities across Australia.

To learn more or to subscribe to their newsletter visit www.tafesa.edu.au/coe-ecec



ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Try our free, self-paced online 'taster' course to explore a rewarding career in early childhood education and care. Open to anyone, anywhere.

KICKSTART YOUR FUTURE: AN INTRODUCTION TO CAREERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN AUSTRALIA.

- > Explore different job roles in early childhood education.
- > See how you can support children, families and your community.
- > Discover what a typical day looks like.
- > Learn about different course options.
- > Developed by TAFE SA's Centre of Excellence in Early Childhood Education and Care.

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE Early Childhood Education and Care



Go to bit.ly/ececintro to start. Please share this with your networks.

tafeSA Government of South Australia



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TAFE NSW celebrates trainee Aboriginal firefighters blazing their way through



NINETEEN Aboriginal future firefighters gathered today at TAFE NSW Meadowbank to celebrate completing the Indigenous Fire and Rescue Employment Strategy (IFARES) program. The fee-free initiative is delivered by TAFE NSW and Fire and Rescue NSW to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people pursuing careers in firefighting.

Since launching in 2014, IFARES has provided a pathway into employment for more than 80 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates, all of whom have gone on to serve as firefighters with Fire and Rescue NSW or ACT Fire and Rescue.

This year's cohort includes students from across New South Wales including Western Sydney, the South Coast, Central Coast, Hunter, Far West/Orana, and the North Coast.

Over a seven-month period, the IFARES participants completed a nationally recognised Certificate III in Fitness at TAFE NSW Meadowbank, delivered in a culturally safe and supportive learning environment. The program blends face-to-face teaching blocks with weekly online learning.

Alongside this formal training, participants take part in simulated emergency response scenarios,

career readiness workshops, and immersive activities that reflect the responsibilities and routines of professional firefighters. Each student is paired with a Fire and Rescue NSW Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander mentor, who provides guidance and support throughout the program.

Cultural safety is central to the success of IFARES, which is designed by Aboriginal staff from Fire and Rescue NSW and delivered in partnership with Aboriginal educators and mentors. It recognises the importance of connection to culture, community, and identity in creating strong learning outcomes and supporting long-term employment.

TAFE NSW Managing Director, Chloe Read said, "TAFE NSW is proud to continue our meaningful contribution to the highly successful Indigenous Fire and Rescue Employment Strategy initiative. So far we've supported 80 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people from across NSW to complete their qualification and begin rewarding careers as firefighters."

"The program provides career-focused, practical training for the students, as well as additional support and mentoring from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander emergency services officers already on the job."

"It's a terrific example of what can be achieved through genuine

partnership between agencies that are working towards Closing the Gap outcomes for further education and employment."

Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner, Jeremy Fewtrell, said the IFARES program is helping to build a stronger and more inclusive fire service.

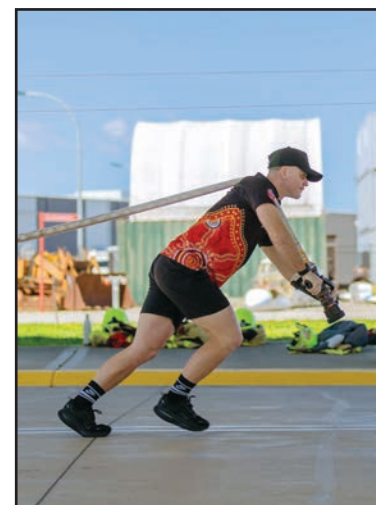
"Fire and Rescue NSW is committed to building a workforce that reflects the diverse communities we serve, and IFARES is an important part of that commitment," Commissioner Fewtrell said.

"This program provides participants with the skills, confidence and cultural support

they need to thrive as firefighters. We are proud to stand alongside this cohort as they take the next step towards a rewarding career protecting their communities."

The IFARES program is delivered fee-free and is supported through funding from Fire and Rescue NSW, TAFE NSW, the NSW Department of Education's Smart and Skilled program, and Services Australia's Away from Base initiative.

Applications for the next IFARES program will open on 26 September 2025. For more information visit careers.fire.nsw.gov.au and go to Indigenous Pathways.



Indigenous Fire and Rescue Employment Strategy Program (IFARES) recruits.