

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 27 November 2025

Abbot Point Operations and Bowen Industrial Hire create career qualifications for local workers

A unique on-site apprenticeship program at the North Queensland Export Terminal is helping workers convert their experience into formal qualifications and keep jobs and skills in the Bowen region.

Five workers from Bowen Industrial Hire (BIH) have gained their Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication (Surface Finishing) through the program, which Abbot Point Operations developed with BIH after the local company won the protective coating contract for the Terminal’s offshore infrastructure in 2023.

Abbot Point Operations General Manager Damien Dederer said the program allowed BIH’s workforce to earn, learn, and achieve a nationally accredited qualification at the same time.

“When we first contracted BIH to do this work many of their workers had years of experience but no formal trade qualifications,” Mr Dederer said.

“BIH wanted to keep those local jobs secure and that’s what sparked the idea for the apprenticeship program, and we’ve seen the program pay dividends already.

“Experienced workers now have trade certificates that recognise their skills, and young people are stepping into careers they never thought possible.

“Part of our DNA is to ‘Grow Local’ and create opportunities for our region, our home, through local jobs and procurement, and this is a terrific example of that commitment in action.”

Blast Painter apprentice Jesse Brown said a school visit from BIH inspired him to join the trade.

“When BIH came to our school and talked about the Blast Painter apprentice program, I knew it was for me. I called them the next day and signed up,” Mr Brown said.

“Now as I head into my third year, I’m still loving it and proud of how far I’ve come.”

Bowen Industrial Hire Business Development and Resource Manager Liz Little said the program had delivered opportunities for both the business’ old hand and new starters.

“Some of our Abrasive Blasting and Protective Coatings team have spent decades in the industry without formal qualifications,” Ms Little said.

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“Through this program, our Senior Supervisor for Quality Assurance, with years of experience, gained the certification that formally recognised and validated his skills.

“At the same time, our youngest apprentice, who is 18, has started his career in Bowen. This means he can stay close to home and build a future in our community.

“We wouldn’t have been able to achieve this success without Abbot Point Operations’ support.

“Both organisations share the commitment to live local and support local, and that’s what makes this partnership so successful.”

ENDS

Editor’s notes:

Photo caption:

1. Apprentices from Bowen Industrial Hire working at the North Queensland Export Terminal.

About Abbot Point Operations

- Bravus’ Abbot Point Operations (APO) helps deliver high quality Queensland coal to the world through its safe, efficient, and responsible management of the North Queensland Export Terminal’s (NQXT) operations.
- In meeting the needs of Queensland coal producers, APO prioritises the safety of everyone on its site and protection of the local environment, while creating jobs and supporting local community programs.
- APO has the systems, people, and infrastructure in place to ensure the safe, efficient and responsible operations of NQXT. With 190 local employees and a supporting workforce of contractors, APO balances the social, economic, and environmental aspects of the terminal operations.
- APO is dedicated to innovation and continuous improvement of its systems and practices to help its people work safer, smarter and with great care for the local community and environment.
- APO embodies Bravus’ mission to support the communities in which it operates with its Grow Local Community Support Program providing significant funding to community groups, organisations, and initiatives in the local area.
- About \$2 million has been awarded under the program since 2017, focusing on education, health, community wellbeing and youth opportunities. Each year, APO consults with community stakeholders to determine issues, challenges, and priorities for support.

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