

## CCSA Briefing Note – Workforce planning to deliver clean, secure energy - ESNZ Committee Inquiry Response

Friday, 29 November 2025

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### Summary

On December 5, the Energy Security and Net Zero Committee [published a response](#) to the Workforce planning to deliver clean, secure energy inquiry, which was launched in December 2024. The CCSA provided a response to this inquiry which you can view [here](#).

The Energy Security and Net Zero Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and its associated public bodies.

This inquiry scrutinised the Government’s workforce planning to support the delivery of its objectives for clean energy by 2030 and more buildings retrofitted with insulation and greener heating/cooling by 2050 and heard evidence from a wide variety of stakeholders and businesses. The committee response proposes several conclusions and recommendations in light of the view of responders that the UK will not achieve either target without further government intervention in workforce planning. The committee proposes the following actions:

### Demand for skilled labour

The committee concluded that:

- **The supply of skilled labour does not currently match the levels of demand expected** needed to deliver clean power by 2030.
- There remains time for productive changes, and **many of the skills of the existing energy, engineering and construction workforces are highly transferable**.
- **There may be a need for the import of some specific skills from overseas**, at least in the short term, to deliver on targets for clean energy and the decarbonisation of buildings.

In response, the committee recommended:

- **The Government must continue to tackle barriers preventing existing energy sector workers transitioning successfully. Skills Passports and associated funding should be expanded.**
- The Government should propose how the transferability of skills across traditional boundaries and between devolved administrations could be accommodated better by accreditation regimes.
- **The Government should put in place commitments to transition the existing local skilled labour supply within Contracts for Difference and similar clean energy support mechanisms.**
- The Government should continue to develop and launch further initiatives to promote clean energy and retrofit careers among under-represented groups and those outside the existing workforce; the actions set out in the Post-16 Education and Skills [White Paper](#) should be accelerated.

- The Government should, by the end of 2026, set out a range of further options for conditionality to leverage the short-term need for skilled immigration to boost the longer-term need for home-grown talent.

### **The role of the Department and its Office for Clean Energy Jobs (OCEJ)**

The committee concluded that:

- It is important that there is some shared definition of the jobs under discussion for support, encouragement and incentivisation – and the Government’s clarifications around definitions has been helpful.
- The Government taking an expansive approach to the scope of roles included in plans and the focus on ensuring high quality, well-paid careers is also welcome.
- **DESNZ should however have demonstrated its firm grasp of the skills landscape by having published a workforce strategy much sooner.**

In response, the committee recommended:

- The OCEJ should be effectively resourced so that its remit and activity can encompass both the clean energy and the retrofit workforces.

### **Collaborating with and supporting stakeholders**

The committee concluded that:

- National plans need to recognise that delivery of the workforce may diverge according to local circumstance and needs, while providing both a consistent quality in career pathways, standards and training and a portability of skills across the UK’s nations.
- **Training needs to meet the needs of employers, current and future workers. There also needs to be more certainty around the longevity of government policies.**

In response, the committee recommended:

- **That the various levels of devolved Government should be empowered to lead on approaches tailored to local or regional strengths and weaknesses.** Furthermore, the Government must provide the OCEJ and Skills England with the authority and resources to meaningfully co-ordinate policies with counterparts in the UK’s nations to ensure consistency in training and therefore the portability of skills.
- The Government needs to accelerate its adoption of policies relevant to clean energy and retrofit skills, following the budget. **These policies need long timescales to be most effective.** The Government should have a ten-year horizon for initiatives and funding which should be revised, and extended, every five years to give confidence to both trainers and the industry.

- **The Government must demonstrate how it is working with employers and the education sector to deliver clear career pathways, particularly for those workers who will not go through the technical excellence colleges.**
- The Government should report on the success of the Regional Skills Pilots by summer 2026 with a view to expanding them. **Future funding should be allocated to employers to ensure those being trained receive real-world experience.**
- **The Government should expand and formalise ‘try-before-you-buy’ training opportunities** to improve conversion rates from training into employment. Evidence received indicates that up to 70% of individuals starting construction-related FE qualifications do not complete or do not enter the sector, with FE students often lacking structured opportunities to translate classroom learning into on-site experience.
- The Government should expand practical entry pathways across clean heat, low-carbon construction, and retrofit, ensuring funded, flexible, short-duration placements are available nationwide.

#### **Measures aimed at demand and at boosting skills supply directly**

The committee concluded that:

- There is scope for using procurement, and similar policy levers, to create the demand for skilled roles, in addition to public spending.

In response, the committee recommended:

- **The Government’s workforce planning should explicitly consider how digital skills, new technologies and modern methods of construction can help increase productivity**, improve quality and reduce bottlenecks, particularly in off-site manufacture, design, surveying, grid connection and project management. Skills England and the OCEJ should work with industry to ensure that occupational standards and training provision reflect these evolving practices.
- The Government should, as a matter of urgency, clarify its stance on the balance of levies between electricity and gas, revisions to the EPC regime and the role of hydrogen in heating.

*CCSA Analysis: The CCSA welcome the findings of this committee inquiry, and other noteworthy committee inquiries such as the House of Lords Industry and Regulators Committee inquiry on [skills for the Future](#). We also support a majority of the recommendations.*

*In particular we support a focus on training which meets the needs of employers and current and future workers, the need for more certainty around the longevity of government policies, and the expansion of Skills Passports and associated funding.*

*The CCSA will continue to engage with the ESNZ Committee and Government on the implementation of skills strategies and supportive policies to ensure the UK has a capable skilled workforce able to deliver on CCUS ambitions.*