



## MEDIA RELEASE

**DATE:** Friday, 19 May 2023

**HEADLINE:** Innovative Skills Program for Footballers Shortlisted for WA Training Award

A new program to encourage talented footballers into trade training has been shortlisted for a WA Training Award.

Skills Beyond the Boundary, a joint initiative between Master Painters and Decorators Australia (MP&DA) and MPA Skills, has been recognised in the WA Industry Collaboration category.

The program aims to provide emerging male and female junior footballers in WAFL development squads, as well elite senior players, with an avenue into trade careers.

MP&DA Executive Officer, Mark Gale, said it gave talented footballers wider off-field opportunities while addressing skills shortages in construction trades.

“Skills Beyond the Boundary aims to provide pathways to support the football journeys of both male and female players. This means tailoring trade training to suit the needs of emerging players in a way that makes the transition to an off-field career as smooth as possible.

“Footballers have attributes that are well suited to trade training and construction careers. Skills Beyond the Boundary makes it easy for them to build careers on and off field while providing much needed skills to the construction industry,” he said.

Skills Beyond the Boundary was conceived earlier this year as a pilot program in partnership with the East Fremantle Football Club.

It currently offers trade career tasters, pre-apprenticeships and full apprenticeships in painting, plumbing, electrical and bricklaying.

East Fremantle Football Club President, owner of Classic Contractors, and MP&DA member, Mark Stewart, said their involvement made perfect sense.

“Our core values extend well beyond the footy field. We want to provide our players with everything they need to succeed. That means supporting them on field and off to achieve their full potential, while also serving the wider community,” he said.

MPA Skills CEO, Ben Dahlstrom, said MPA Skills were continually looking at ways to create alliances with industry and improve training outcomes.

“MPA Skills is always looking to pioneer new ways to collaborate with industry and foster training innovation.

“The wider collaborative effort incorporates support from the Electrical Communications Association WA and Brick and Blocklaying Careers to create an industry-wide effort to offer off-field career pathways to male and female footy players,” he said.

Mr Dahlstrom said the Skills Beyond the Boundary program is geared to expand in terms of both the trade training opportunities offered and football clubs served, with interest expressed by the Fremantle Dockers and Peel Thunder.

## **Ends**

Contact details: For more information, images or quotes, contact Ben Dahlstrom, CEO, MPA Skills, on [ben.d@mpaskills.com.au](mailto:ben.d@mpaskills.com.au) / 0408 356 370 or Executive Officer, Master Painter and Decorators Australia, on [markg@masterpainters.asn.au](mailto:markg@masterpainters.asn.au).

Note to editors: MPA Skills is WA’s biggest employer of plumbing and painting apprentices. MPA Skills is also renowned in the sector for its industry-leading apprentice and advanced training solutions. Visit [www.mpaskills.com.au](http://www.mpaskills.com.au) to learn more.