



Electricians will power New Zealand's future – but our system needs to catch up

New Zealand is moving rapidly toward an electrified, digital energy system. From EV charging and solar to smart buildings and automation, electricians sit at the centre of the technologies shaping our future. Yet while the profession has evolved into a high-tech, systems-focused discipline, the training and regulatory frameworks that support it remain largely unchanged.

In this article, CEO Alex Vranjac-Wheeler explores why modernising the electrotechnology pathway – from training and credentialing through to industry leadership – is essential if New Zealand is to deliver the workforce capability needed for the energy transition.

[Read the article here](#)



Apprenticeship System Update

Over the past year Master Electricians has been actively engaged in discussions about the future of the electrical apprenticeship system. These discussions are happening because the Government's vocational education reforms have created an opportunity for industries to play a much stronger role in shaping how apprenticeships work in the future. Through the establishment of Industry Skills Boards (ISBs), Government has made it clear that industry leadership is expected in designing the next apprenticeship model.

For the electrical sector, this means ensuring the system:

- Produces high-quality electricians
- Supports employers who take on apprentices

- Improves theory and regulatory exam pass rates
- Strengthens pastoral care and on-job support
- Provides better regional delivery of training

Master Electricians has a vested interest in ensuring the industry has a strong pipeline of skilled electricians to support New Zealand's electrification future and economic growth.

As part of this work, Master Electricians is working constructively with EarnLearn and polytechnic providers to help stabilise the current system while the future model is developed.

It is important to be clear:

Master Electricians and Trade Master are not planning to become the apprenticeship training provider.

Instead, the industry's preferred direction is a national network of polytechnic providers working closely with employers, supported by stronger industry leadership and better pastoral care.

Master Electricians sees its role as:

- advocating for the best apprenticeship system for the electrical industry
- ensuring employers have a stronger voice in how apprenticeships operate
- supporting apprentices and employers during the transition period
- helping improve training quality, pastoral care, and employer engagement.

Trade Master may play a supporting role where appropriate — for example providing supplementary training, refresher courses, or employer support — but it will not be delivering the apprenticeship programme itself.

Our focus remains on ensuring the system produces highly skilled electricians and supports the businesses who train them.

[Further information here](#)



Supporting Women in Electrical

Supporting Women in Electrical – Join NAWIC with Master Electricians

As we approach International Women's Day on 8 March, Master Electricians is proud to reaffirm our genuine commitment to supporting women in our industry — and helping member companies do the same.

The electrical sector is changing. More women are entering the trade, stepping into leadership roles, and shaping the future of our profession.

Our Commitment

To actively support women in the electrical industry, Master Electricians will cover the cost of NAWIC membership for women working within our member companies.

NAWIC (National Association of Women in Construction) provides connection, professional development, mentoring, and advocacy for women across the construction sector — including electrical.

Why NAWIC?

NAWIC is more than a membership — it's a nationwide community focused on lifting capability, confidence, and visibility for women in construction.

Professional Growth & Development

- Access exclusive events, workshops, and site visits
- Learn from experienced women across the sector
- Participate in national webinars, conferences, and panel discussions

Community & Connection

- Join a supportive nationwide network
- Connect with peers, mentors, and sector leaders
- Be part of meaningful industry change

Recognition & Career Advancement

- Gain visibility through awards and industry showcases
- Contribute to conversations shaping the future of construction

How to Join

Simply register via the NAWIC website and, in the "How did you hear about us?" section, select Master Electricians.

We'll take care of the membership cost.

[Join here](#)

This initiative is about backing the future of our industry — supporting talent, strengthening businesses, and ensuring women in electrical feel connected, valued, and supported at every stage of their careers.

Let's build an industry where everyone can thrive.



Employment Relations Act Update

Employment Relations Act changes now in effect

Recent changes to the Employment Relations Act received Royal Assent on 21 February and are effective immediately. Key changes include updates relating to contractor classification, unjustified dismissal protections, remedies, trial periods and onboarding obligations. These are important shifts that may affect how you hire staff and manage employment processes.

[You can read a summary of the changes here](#)

Now is a good time to review your employment agreements and policies to ensure they reflect the current law and remain compliant.

KiwiSaver changes from 1 April

From 1 April, minimum KiwiSaver contribution rates increase from 3 percent to 3.5 percent for both employee and employer contributions. You may wish to start planning for the update required in your payroll system and any relevant processes. Consider changing any existing documentation referencing KiwiSaver to reflect the new minimum rates.

If you would like support in reviewing or implementing any required updates, please get in touch. We are here to make this easy

Holidays Act reform update

Work is continuing on the long awaited Holidays Act reform, aimed at creating a clearer, simpler system for calculating and managing leave. This is a positive step toward reducing complexity and payroll risk for employers.

We are keeping a close eye on developments and will keep you informed as soon as there is anything that requires action on your part.

Minimum Wage

A reminder that minimum wage increases to \$23.95 per hour, as of 1 April 2026.

Change to Health & Safety at Work Act

Health and Safety at Work Act Amendment - Member input

The Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety has introduced a Bill proposing amendments to the Health and Safety at Work Act. This represents a significant potential shift in the regulatory environment for businesses across the construction and electrical sectors.

Members are encouraged to engage with the discussion and share their views through the survey being conducted by Construction Health and Safety NZ (CHASNZ). Your feedback will help ensure the practical realities of electrical contracting are reflected in any legislative changes.

[Take the survey here](#)

Team Update



Welcome Rachel Exeter

Rachel is a Chartered Accountant with strong experience in finance leadership and business partnering, providing the financial clarity organisations need to make informed, strategic decisions. She leads Master Electricians' financial operations, ensuring systems and processes effectively support the organisation and its members. Her connection to the industry, through her partner's Master Electricians member business, gives her practical insight into the challenges and priorities of the electrical industry.



Tradify FREE Business Valuation Tool

Tradify Member Benefit – Free Business Valuation Tool

Most sparkies know their hourly rate — but very few know what their entire business is worth.

Master Electricians member benefit partner Tradify has launched a free Business Valuation Calculator, designed specifically for Kiwi electrical businesses. Developed in partnership with Master Electricians, the tool provides a quick estimate of what your business could be worth based on factors such as revenue, profit, and business structure.

It's designed as a simple starting point to help electrical business owners better understand the value they've built — without the need for spreadsheets or accountants.

[Try the tool here](#)

Tradify also offers an exclusive deal for Master Electricians members: 50% off for the first three months, then 20% off every month ongoing when you sign up using the promo code **MENZ**.

If you're curious about what your business might be worth — or are looking for a smarter way to manage your jobs, quoting and invoicing — this is a great opportunity to check it out.



PDL are adding more to their Iconic range – introducing PDL Iconic Fully Assembled for Styl and Essence.

Designed for sparkies that prioritise efficient installations and easier ordering, the NEW Fully Assembled options for Styl and Essence provides sparkies with the option to purchase the Iconic grid plate and Styl or Essence skin together in one convenient pack.

Make the most of each job by recommending a stylish and modern look with PDL's Iconic Styl and Essence ranges suitable for key visible areas such as kitchens, living rooms and bathrooms.

[Available now. Discover the new part codes here](#)

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