

New Brooking Channel Bridge



Boosting local opportunity in the Fitzroy Valley

The New Brooking Channel Bridge project has strongly supported local employment, training, and business investment.

The project involves replacing the existing single-lane bridge with a new 127-metre dual-lane bridge and reconstruction of the bridge approaches.

Maximising local participation has been a key priority in every aspect of the project. Since site work began in April 2024, the project has welcomed more than 170 local workers from the Fitzroy Valley in a variety of roles, with local Aboriginal workers accounting for over 70,000 hours — more than 25% of total project hours.



Above: Construction trainee Wade during night shift.

Local businesses paving the way

Local businesses played a key role in the project's success. Fitzroy Valley-based companies like K&J Civil and Drainage, Binboonoo, FX Civil, Giles Contracting, and Kimberley-based Daniel Thorne Contracting undertook significant earthworks and concrete works, creating employment opportunities for dozens of local operators and labourers.

In total, more than \$14 million has been spent across 43 Kimberley businesses, 25 of which are Aboriginal owned.



Above: Local roller operator working on Great Northern Highway.

Comprehensive on-the-job training

The overall project delivery strategy was restructured to maximise the opportunity for training and skills development, designed to equip local workers with valuable industry skills.



Above: Construction trainee Zach tying steel on the bridge deck.

A total of 42 workers successfully completed structured programs, achieving nationally recognised certifications and placing them in good stead for future job prospects. The project also provided additional training to align with future job prospects including rigging training, first aid training and nationally recognised plant certifications.

Certificate II in Construction

A total of 23 workers successfully earned their Certificate II in Construction, gaining theoretical knowledge and practical experience in steel fixing, concrete work, and formwork.

Tasks such as pre-casting pier shells and prefabricating steel reinforcement, which would typically be undertaken in Perth, were completed on-site in Fitzroy Crossing, giving trainees broader experience across different construction activities.

The trainees received hands-on training from skilled foremen and leading hands, demonstrating the necessary skills for their future careers.

Making a difference in the local community

The construction trainees were given the opportunity to put their skills to the test, leading the construction of a basketball halfcourt in Gillarong Community, 15km east of Fitzroy Crossing.

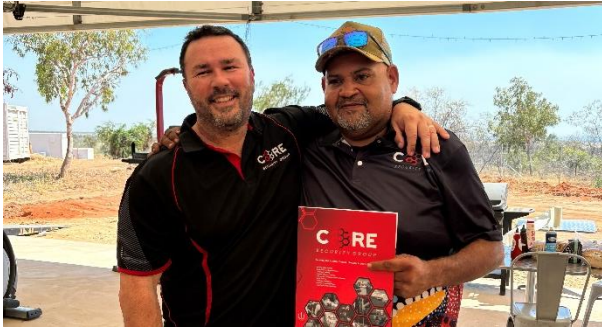
Under supervision, the trainees managed the pre-planning and all project works including formwork, concreting and installation of equipment, creating a much-loved community asset.



Above: Trainee team conducting works in the community.

Certificate II in Security Operations

Eight trainees undertook security training, learning valuable skills and undergoing practical training in overseeing the security of the worksite and the camp. The program was designed to empower and support participants in maintaining safety and fostering leadership within their community.



Above: Security graduation ceremony.

Three workers earned their Certificate II in Security, qualifying them for security officer licenses, while five others participated in the Community Warden Program.

Certificate III in Hospitality

Throughout the project, 12 participants successfully completed a Certificate III in Hospitality. On site, the workers looked after site facilities and operated a site canteen to provide lunch for local workers. The hospitality training included obtaining Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) and barista certifications, providing the skills and certifications to gain employment in various roles, including waitstaff, baristas, bar attendants, and housekeepers upon project completion. Several hospitality graduates have already taken up employment at the local school canteen and at the Fitzroy River Lodge.

On-site support

The project prioritises comprehensive on-site support for local workers, especially those new to the workforce. Fitzroy Valley-based organisation Gurama Yani U, together with the Fitzroy Bridge Alliance, supports workers to remove barriers that could hinder participation in the workforce. This support includes providing access to accommodation, reliable transport, meals, PPE and on-site pastoral care and mentoring.



Above: Hospitality trainees working in the site canteen.

Building a future in the Kimberley and beyond

The training and skills development initiatives have aimed to prepare Fitzroy Valley and Kimberley individuals for long-term employment. Many participants have successfully transitioned into jobs with local businesses in Fitzroy Crossing, while others have relocated to Perth and other areas to pursue exciting new opportunities in mining and construction.

Spotlight on Skyla, Moxy Operator

Skyla began on the project as a hospitality trainee. After she had completed her course, she explored new avenues seeking to undertake additional training as an operator. Learning under experienced operator Lisa, Skyla earned her articulated dump truck competency, Skyla is now planning to take up a role as an operator role in the Pilbara.



Further information

For further information, please call 138 138, email enquiries@mainroads.wa.gov.au or visit www.mainroads.wa.gov.au/brooking-c-bridge