

2025 Core Skills Occupations List

Submission from Live Performance Australia

1. About Live Performance Australia

Live Performance Australia (LPA) is the peak body for Australia's live arts and entertainment industry. Established over 100 years ago in 1917 and registered under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*, LPA has approximately 400 Members nationally. We represent commercial and independent producers, music promoters, performing arts companies, venues (performing arts centres, commercial theatres, stadiums and arenas), arts festivals, music festivals and service providers (such as ticketing companies and technical suppliers). Our membership spans from small-medium and not-for-profit organisations to large commercial entities.

2. Industry Context

The live arts and entertainment industry is a vast ecosystem reflecting a diverse range of art forms and comprises small, medium and large businesses, sole operators and tens of thousands of performers, artists, creatives and technical crew.

Our industry supports performing arts companies and a wide range of workers across commercial businesses (i.e. producers; promoters; ticketing companies; technical suppliers, such as those that provide stage lighting, special effects, staging, audio, audio-visual and other performance technologies; and other service providers, such as crewing companies and security providers). Our industry also employs workers in business support roles, such as marketing and communications, public relations, philanthropy, finance, accounting, and IT.

As highlighted in previous submissions to Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) via the Occupation Shortage List process, the live arts and entertainment industry is experiencing skills shortages in technical and production roles. While the 2024 Occupation Shortage List acknowledges that sound and lighting technicians are in national shortage, industry feedback suggests that skills shortages extend to roles such as stage managers, production managers, staging technicians, technical directors and other specialist technical and production roles.

The live arts and entertainment industry is trying to rebuild capacity and capability, after having lost many skilled workers during the pandemic to positions with greater job security, and while trying to compete for skilled workers from other industries that can offer more attractive salaries.

3. Summary of Recommendations

The table below summarises LPA’s position with respect to occupations relevant to the arts and entertainment industry that were identified on JSA’s ‘targeted for consultation’ list, plus some additional occupations not identified on JSA’s ‘targeted for consultation’ list.

In essence, LPA advocates for the broadest range of occupations possible to be included on CSOL. While the number of people brought into Australia using the current range of employer sponsored visas is small, it is an avenue that some employers in the live arts and entertainment industry (such as circus and physical theatre companies, dance companies and orchestras) look to when all other options have failed to find a suitable local candidate. Many of Australia’s performing arts companies are world-class and they need to be able employ the best candidates to continually produce artistic excellence. The ability to recruit skills from overseas must remain open and expand, otherwise the business activities of those employers that need overseas workers to fill skills gaps are placed in jeopardy.

LPA’s response is informed by member feedback, plus from the results of member surveys. See Attachments 1 and 2 for additional information.

OSCA Code	Occupation	LPA recommendation	Rationale and evidence
Targeted for Consultation			
231132	Circus Performer or Trainer	Include on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia’s elite and internationally renowned circus and physical theatre companies look internationally for skills once local options have been exhausted. Often, the skills sought are highly specialised, meaning there is an extremely small pool of talent from which to choose. • Strong competition for Australian circus and physical performers, from both local and international companies. • Strong employment outcomes for graduates from Australia’s principal circus training provider (National Institute for Circus Arts (NICA)). According to NICA’s 2023 Annual Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 70% of NICA’s Bachelor’s graduates are employed at Australian companies ○ 15+ international performing arts companies employ NICA graduates.

OSCA Code	Occupation	LPA recommendation	Rationale and evidence
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All performers employed within Australian companies benefit from the diversity of training backgrounds and skills brought by international performers. The median wage for circus performers is well below the threshold for the Specialist Skills Stream; therefore, this visa option is not appropriate for circus and physical theatre companies. Performers employed at ensemble circus and physical theatre companies are paid according to the Live Performance Award.
231199	Actors, Dancers and Other Entertainers nec#	LPA has not identified any roles/occupations in this category that require being included on CSOL	
231432	Audio or Live Performance Director	Include on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPA members report consistently of skills shortages of Audio and Live Performance Directors. According to LPA's 2025 member survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of audio directors/sound designers (35% in 2024) 43% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of theatre directors
231435	Production Manager (Screen or Live Performance)	Include on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPA members report consistently of skills shortages of production managers. According to LPA's 2025 member survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 62% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of heads of departments/production managers (58% in 2024) 52% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of stage managers (65% in 2024)
231437	Screen or Live Performance Designer	Include on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPA members report consistently of skills shortages of live performance designers. According to LPA's 2025 member survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 42% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of costume designers (35% in 2024) 33% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of lighting designers (42% in 2024)

OSCA Code	Occupation	LPA recommendation	Rationale and evidence
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of set/scenic designers (44% in 2024)
231499	Media Directors and Designers nec#	Include Casting Director on CSOL Include Lighting Director on CSOL (although this occupation may also be covered as Lighting Designer, as part of 231437 – Live Performance Designer)	
231532	Live Performance Producer	Include on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPA members report consistently of skills shortages of producers. According to LPA's 2025 member survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 53% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of producers (46% in 2024)
231699	Music Professionals nec#	LPA has not identified any roles/occupations in this category that require being included on CSOL	
391299	Performing Arts Technicians nec#	Include Performing Arts Road Manager and Theatrical Dresser on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPA members report consistently of skills shortages of technicians. According to LPA's 2025 member survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 63% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of theatrical dressers 39% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of road managers
599934	Production Coordinator (Audio, Screen or Live Performance)	Include Production Coordinators on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPA members report consistently of skills shortages of production coordinators. According to LPA's 2025 member survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of production assistants/coordinators (36% in 2024) 33% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of crewing coordinators
Other			
231134	Dancer or Choreographer	Include on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As raised in our 2024 submission, LPA seeks the inclusion of dancers on CSOL. Australia's elite ballet/dance companies look internationally for skills once local options have been exhausted. Often, the type of

OSCA Code	Occupation	LPA recommendation	Rationale and evidence
			<p>dancer sought is very specific and highly skilled, meaning there is an extremely small pool of talent from which to choose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All dancers employed within Australian companies benefit from the diversity of training backgrounds and skills brought by international dancers. The salary rates for dancers employed by ensemble dance companies typically fall within the core skills income threshold.
231633	Musician (Instrumental)	Include on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As raised in our 2024 submission, LPA seeks the inclusion of musicians on CSOL. Australia's elite orchestras look internationally for skills once local options have been exhausted. Often, the type of musician sought is very specific and highly skilled, meaning there is an extremely small pool of talent from which to choose. The salary rates for musicians employed by orchestras typically fall within the core skills income threshold.
231438	Technical Director	Include on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPA members report consistently of skills shortages of technical directors. According to LPA's 2025 member survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57% of respondents reported severe undersupply or undersupply of technical directors (48% in 2024) The median annual income for technical directors typically falls within the core skills income threshold.
399515	Musical Instrument Maker or Repairer	Include Piano Tuner on CSOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of accredited piano tuners is in serious decline, in large part due to an aging and retiring workforce and only one professional course nationwide available to train in this profession. There have been numerous media reports in the past few years highlighting the shortage of skilled and trained piano tuners. To address the skills shortage, in 2023, Tasmania Symphony Orchestra offered scholarships for two people to train interstate, and return to work as a qualified tuner in Tasmania.

Attachment 1: Skills shortages in the live arts and entertainment industry

In a survey, conducted in January/February 2025, LPA Members were asked to indicate their views on the supply of workers based on their recruitment experience in the past 12 months. The table below summarises the distribution of respondents who selected, for each of the roles listed, either:

- Severe undersupply (number of workers is critically insufficient to meet needs)
- Undersupply (not enough workers)
- Meeting Demand (enough workers)
- Oversupply (too many workers)
- Unsure/Not Known

OSCA code	Role	Severe undersupply	Undersupply	Meeting Demand	Over-supply	Unsure	Number of respondents*
	Technical and Production						
372132	Carpenter/Prop and Scenery Maker	25%	33%	25%	0%	17%	n=12
399433	Costume Maker	33%	40%	20%	0%	7%	n=15
599934	Crewing Coordinator	17%	17%	58%	0%	8%	n=12
3812	Electrician	40%	30%	20%	0%	10%	n=10
8212	Entertainment Rigger	23%	31%	38%	0%	8%	n=13
	Exhibition Technician	33%	17%	17%	0%	33%	n=6
741331	Forklift Driver	11%	22%	33%	11%	22%	n=9
231435	Head of Department/Production Manager	31%	31%	35%	0%	4%	n=26
391234	Lighting Technician	21%	39%	36%	0%	4%	n=28
461232	Make-Up Artist	13%	13%	63%	0%	13%	n=8
391933	Musical Instrument Maker/Repairer/Piano Tuner	50%	0%	25%	0%	25%	n=4
391299	Performing Arts Road Manager	23%	15%	54%	0%	8%	n=13
231532	Producer (including Executive Producer, Associate Producer)	5%	47%	37%	5%	5%	n=19
599934	Production Assistant/Coordinator	5%	32%	53%	5%	5%	n=19
391231	Sound Technician	17%	45%	34%	0%	3%	n=29
231435	Stage Manager/Assistant Stage Manager	22%	30%	41%	4%	4%	n=27
899999	Stage Technician/Stagehand/Crew	25%	28%	41%	3%	3%	n=32
391299	Theatrical Dresser	13%	50%	25%	0%	13%	n=8
7131	Truck Driver	11%	11%	67%	0%	11%	n=9
	Performers						
231131	Actor	0%	17%	67%	17%	0%	n=12
231132	Circus Performer	0%	0%	67%	33%	0%	n=3
231135	Comedian / Illusionist	0%	33%	33%	33%	0%	n=3
231134	Dancer	0%	33%	22%	44%	0%	n=9
231633	Musician	0%	27%	60%	13%	0%	n=15
231634	Singer	0%	33%	56%	11%	0%	n=9

OSCA code	Role	Severe undersupply	Undersupply	Meeting Demand	Over-supply	Unsure	Number of respondents*
<i>Creatives</i>							
231431	Artistic Director	0%	50%	38%	13%	0%	n=8
231432	Audio Director/ Sound Designer	8%	38%	54%	0%	0%	n=13
231499	Casting Director	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%	n=2
231134	Choreographer	0%	13%	75%	13%	0%	n=8
231437	Costume Designer	17%	25%	58%	0%	0%	n=12
231437	Lighting Designer	17%	17%	67%	0%	0%	n=18
231632	Music Director / Orchestra Conductor / Choral Director	11%	33%	44%	11%	0%	n=9
231437	Set/Scenic Designer	23%	8%	69%	0%	0%	n=13
231438	Technical Director	43%	14%	43%	0%	0%	n=7
231432	Theatre Director	14%	29%	43%	14%	0%	n=7

*Note: Survey results exclude responses where respondents indicated the role was not applicable or they did not recruit for the role.

Attachment 2: Comparison of LPA member surveys

Proportion of respondents who believe there is currently an undersupply or severe undersupply of workers

ANZSCO	Occupation	May 2022	Nov 2022	Jan 2024	Feb 2025
Technical and Production roles					
331212	Carpenter	d.n.a	60%	24%	58%
599912	Crewing Coordinator	d.n.a	65%	d.n.a	33%
341111	Electrician	d.n.a	62%	20%	70%
399999	Exhibition technician	70%	60%	17%	50%
721311	Forklift driver	d.n.a.	42%	7%	33%
399599	Head of Department	d.n.a.	d.n.a.	27%	62%
399513	Lighting Technician	89%	92%	64%	61%
399514	Make-Up Artist	61%	38%	17%	25%
399515	Musical instrument maker/repairer (e.g. piano tuner)	d.n.a	d.n.a	17%	50%
399599	Performing Arts Road Manager (i.e. Tour Manager)	83%	72%	40%	39%
212112	Producer	58%	59%	46%	53%
599912	Production Coordinator/Assistant	100%	74%	36%	37%
212399	Production Manager		83%	58%	62%
821711	Rigger - Entertainment Rigger	d.n.a	79%	41%	54%
399516	Sound Technician	87%	88%	64%	62%
212316	Stage Manager/Assistant Stage Manager	87%	89%	65%	52%
899999	Stagehand/Crew	89%	89%	49%	53%
399599	Theatrical Dresser	76%	44%	15%	63%
733111	Truck driver	d.n.a	57%	8%	22%
393213	Wardrobe Assistant / Costume maker	83%	58%	44%	73%
393213	Wardrobe Coordinator	70%	d.n.a		
Performers and Creatives					
211111	Actor	3%	31%	21%	17%
211112	Dancer	14%	24%	13%	33%
211112	Choreographer	16%		4%	13%
211213	Musician	21%	28%	13%	27%
211214	Singer	16%	13%	4%	33%
211199	Circus Performer	11%	5%	8%	0%
211199	Comedian/Illusionist				33%
212311	Art Director	33%	38%	9%	d.n.a
212311	Production Designer	53%			
212111	Artistic Director	d.n.a	33%	17%	50%
212399	Audio Director / Sound Designer	68%	d.n.a	35%	46%
212399	Casting Director	d.n.a	13%	4%	50%
232311	Costume / Fashion designer	d.n.a	28%	35%	42%

ANZSCO	Occupation	May 2022	Nov 2022	Jan 2024	Feb 2025
212312	Director	32%	37%	8%	43%
212399	Lighting Director/Designer	65%	d.n.a	42%	33%
211212	Music Director / Orchestra Conductor / Choral Director	34%	16%	23%	44%
212311	Set / Scenic Designer	d.n.a.	d.n.a.	44%	31%
212317	Technical Director	70%	d.n.a	48%	57%
Front of House					
639411	Ticket Seller (i.e. Box Office) and Box Office Manager	68%	60%	27%	35%
899921	Usher	66%	64%	13%	19%
	Food and Beverage	68%	84%	13%	6%
442213	Security	50%	55%	5%	50%
Management					
111111	Chief Executive Officers and General Managers	24%	32%	24%	33%
139911	Art Administrator or Manager	53%	66%	21%	52%
149311	Event Manager	58%	50%	35%	43%
149912	Cinema, Theatre or Venue Manager	50%	41%	18%	50%
Business Support					
	Marketing & communications	59%	53%	40%	27%
	Finance & accounting	42%	46%	38%	44%
	People & culture	42%	38%	11%	25%
	Legal	d.n.a	14%	4%	n/a
	Philanthropy	d.n.a	47%	31%	48%
	Education & outreach	d.n.a	39%	14%	36%
	IT	34%	31%	14%	25%

d.n.a = did not ask

n/a = no respondents recruited for this role