



CONNEXIS  
INVESTMENT PLAN  
2018 - 2019



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## OUR PERFORMANCE STORY

This Investment Plan sets out how Connexis, the Infrastructure ITO, will strengthen its contribution to the outcomes sought through the Tertiary Education Strategy and the expectations set by the Tertiary Education Commission.

Our organisation's mission is to ensure a great foundation for our nation by:

- Ensuring a better built New Zealand,
- Building people building New Zealand; and
- Creating a legacy.

Connexis has a central role in supporting the horizontal infrastructure industries which comprise civil infrastructure, electricity supply, telecommunications and water infrastructure. These industries provide over 50,000 people with well-paying, highly productive employment that underpins an annual \$10-11 billion investment in New Zealand's infrastructure and the national economy.

Our engagement with employers and trainees, and analysis of our operating environment, shows that there are opportunities to increase the supply of well-performing advanced trades and technical training, and that employers are looking for a coherent, integrated, consistent, and high-quality service that reflects the way their businesses are structured.

During the last Investment Plan period our objective was to realise the synergies and benefits resulting from the merger of infrastructure ITO's, to improve the quality and relevance of our products, enhancing customer satisfaction, and strengthening our contribution to the Tertiary Education Strategy. Much of the focus during the 2016-2017 period was on the Targeted Review of Qualifications (TROQ) and in particular the rollout of the Civil industry qualifications. This work impacted heavily on the completion of electrical, water and telecommunications qualifications.

The slower than anticipated take up and recognition of qualifications by the civil industry, coupled with the delayed release of revised qualifications for the other horizontal infrastructure areas, impacted on trainee signups in late 2016 to mid-2017. The termination of National Certificates meant that there was a significant gap in qualifications available, which impacted on industry momentum.

In late 2016, early 2017 significant changes were made to the Connexis operating model which also coincided with a change to the management structure. The changes we made to the way we do business will contribute to better quality infrastructure for New Zealand, and a better skilled workforce in the infrastructure industries. To deliver these outcomes, Connexis is emphasising the following major activities over the term of this Investment Plan and in particular to meet the challenges set in the TEC Supplementary Plan Guidance Document:

- Increasing the number of New Zealand Apprenticeships in the civil infrastructure industry
- Further consolidating training in the Electricity Supply industry, Water and Telecommunications industries
- Continuing our investment in the success of Māori and Pasifika trainees
- Driving greater diversity particularly in the civil industry leveraging off our Ultimit and Girls in High Vis programmes which have been successful in the electricity sector.
- Upskilling lower skilled workers, particularly strengthening the literacy and numeracy skills of trainees
- Further contributing to the efficiency of the tertiary education system
- Improving the quality of our relationship with industry and being proactive with our products to meet their needs in areas such as emerging technologies in the electricity sector.
- Developing our central role in supporting the infrastructure industries large infrastructure projects. Also developing and testing models, in conjunction with TEC, to make best use of the project environment to develop and recognise skills to provide a base for continuing vocational education and training

Following the \$110 billion investment identified in the 30 year Infrastructure Plan, demand for competent, qualified people in horizontal infrastructure is at an all-time high and will further accelerate during the 2018-2019 plan period. It is forecast that a further 49,000 people will be required for the infrastructure workforce by 2025, including an additional 19,600 new people needed in the civil sector alone by 2020. We expect to significantly increase the number of people with advanced trade and technical qualifications who are employed in the infrastructure industries, and to increase our responsiveness to the employers, trainees, iwi and Pasifika communities that we work with over the term of this Investment Plan.

**David Worsnop**

**Interim Chief Executive Officer**

## MISSION AND ROLE

The mission of Connexis is to ensure a great foundation for our nation by:

- Ensuring a better built New Zealand,
- Building people building New Zealand, and
- Creating a legacy.

Connexis has distinctive roles within the overall network of provision in relation to industry training, and the wider vocational education and training system.

Connexis is one of the eleven ITOs that make up the industry training system. Connexis is the ITO for the Electricity Supply, Civil and Water Infrastructure industries. The full gazetted coverage for Connexis which is valid until 30 September 2018 is available online at <http://www.tec.govt.nz/Resource-Centre/Directories/Industry-Training-Organisations/Infrastructure-Industry-Training-Organisation/>

Connexis makes a distinctive contribution to the wider vocational education and training system through its role as a standard setting body for the infrastructure industries, and by facilitating opportunities for lifelong learning for people employed in those industries.

Connexis will work towards the following outcomes over the term of this Investment Plan:

- Better quality infrastructure for New Zealand; and
- A better skilled workforce in the infrastructure industries.

The rationale for why Connexis has decided to focus on these outcomes is set out in our Strategic Plan.

The mission and outcomes reflect the ITO's role as the primary supplier of training and education services to the industries that it serves, and reflects the needs of its stakeholders.

# CONTRIBUTION TO GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Connexis has made considerable progress over the past three Investment Plan cycles to strengthen its contribution to New Zealand's economic productivity. Training arrangements are more closely aligned to the skill needs of industry, the level of engagement by industry has increased, and we have laid the foundations to offer an increasing number of New Zealand Qualifications to the trainees that we serve.

The following major activities contribute to this priority:

- Increasing the number of New Zealand Apprenticeships in the civil infrastructure industry
- Further consolidating training in the Electricity Supply industry, Water and Telecommunications industries
- Improving the quality of our relationship with industry
- Developing our central role in supporting the infrastructure industries

## Increasing the number of New Zealand Apprenticeships in the civil infrastructure industry

Employers in the civil infrastructure industry recognise that their customers expect high quality infrastructure delivered by skilled people working safely and cost effectively.

Analysis of the existing workforce in the civil infrastructure industries indicates that there are considerable opportunities to increase the skill level of employees. For example, 63.6 percent of people working in the Civil Infrastructure industry in 2006 had no secondary school qualifications. Employers report that the current skill level of employees in the industry has contributed to a variable track record on health and safety, and product quality.

The civil infrastructure industry has lacked a well-defined career pathway for current and potential employees. The existence of trades training pathways for other industries means that the civil infrastructure industry is relatively speaking, less attractive to potential and current employees. The industry recognises that to recruit top-quality candidates well-defined career pathways are required that enable employees to obtain advanced trade and technical qualifications. The industry also recognises that employers need to take greater responsibility for 'owning' these pathways to address what are sometimes variable levels of investment in the development of the workforce.

Connexis has worked closely with the industry over the past three years to better understand the needs of employers with a particular focus on supporting the industry to realise its aspiration for a more professional workforce. An important outcome of this process has been the establishment of the Civil Trade Certification Board (CTCB). The CTCB is constituted as a committee of the Board of Civil Contractors New Zealand, the peak body for the civil infrastructure industry.

Connexis has worked with the industry to document the requirements that they have for registration. These requirements combine a mix of competencies recognised through assessments of current competency, completion of qualifications registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework, and evidence of 2,000 hours of practical experience following completion of a level four qualification. Connexis intends to administer the accreditation and registration regime on behalf of the CTCB, and is represented on that organisation's Board.

During the term of this Investment Plan increasing numbers of people working in the civil infrastructure industries will become certified through the Board's processes. Investment in the new civil infrastructure trades training pathways will have a number of immediate benefits including encouraging engagement with training at higher levels and increasing the number

of New Zealand apprentices. Over the medium term, the new pathways are expected to lead to higher wages and better employment outcomes for employees, safer workplaces, and better quality infrastructure for New Zealand.

The return on the investment in these pathways is likely to be greater than other potential opportunities because of the relatively low skill level of the current workforce, the current state of workplace health and safety in the industry, and the significant investment being made in civil infrastructure in New Zealand.

#### Further consolidating training in the Electricity Supply industry

The Electricity Supply Industry has a strong track record of investment in workforce development. Some aspects of this investment have not been fully integrated with the National Qualifications Framework. The owners of significant electricity supply assets have in the past set specific skill requirements for suppliers that are met through 'in-house' training programmes.

Connexis has worked with these asset owners and the Electrical Workers Registration Board to map these training requirements to competencies linked to relevant unit standards and qualifications. The result of this work has been a single Work Type Competency regime linked to relevant National Qualifications.

During the term of this Investment Plan, the number of trainees undertaking bespoke, single employer training programmes will reduce as more people in the electricity supply industries undertake recognised National Qualifications. This initiative will be important for employees because it will provide them with better access to transferable qualifications, and increase the return for employers and trainees from their investment in workplace training.

#### Improving the quality of our relationship with industry

The employers in the infrastructure industries have told us that they want a relationship with and support from Connexis that is tailored to their individual needs.

Our emphasis on a better, more outwardly focused relationship with employers is central to our contribution to the infrastructure industries. We will work with employers to continually review their current needs and future aspirations and better understand how we can support them.

This approach is interweaved within the other major activities discussed above. For example, our work to develop the Civil Infrastructure Trades Certification regime provides a locus of attention that draws in our partners in industry and consolidates the fragmented trades training environment within that industry. Similarly, our work with the owners of electricity supply, water and telecommunications assets reflects both the confidence of those employers in our work, and our central coordinating role for the sector.

Connexis has a set of strong and highly effective relationships with employers that reflect our central, coordinating role for the horizontal infrastructure industries. During the term of this Investment Plan we will extend our relationships with more employers, particularly those that have been underrepresented in industry training, and re-engineer the way we do business and the products that we offer so that we can be more responsive to the needs of trainees, industry and communities.

#### Developing our central role in supporting the infrastructure industries

Employers in the civil, electricity supply, telecommunications and water infrastructure industries have told us that they value the ability to engage with a single, trusted partner for their industry training needs.

A major focus of the last Investment Plan period has been establishing and realising the benefits of the merger between the Electricity Supply Industry Training Organisation and InfraTrain New Zealand, and the more recent incorporation of water and telecommunications infrastructure within our industry coverage. A major strength of our model has been our internal coherence organised as we are around the horizontal infrastructure industries.

Our internal coherence reflects wider trends toward convergence within the infrastructure industries that we serve. These industries deal with common issues (such as network reliability, geographically dispersed high value assets, and complex regulatory environments), integration of service delivery (across rail, water, waste water, roading, gas, telecommunications and electricity), and the need for integrated workforce development solutions.

Our analysis of the wider sector suggests that there are opportunities to incorporate other industry areas that are either significantly or exclusively engaged in the development of New Zealand's horizontal infrastructure such as gas transmission and distribution. These assets are owned and operated and maintained by the same stakeholders as we currently work with.

A second major opportunity is to strengthen the connectedness of employers to the industry training system. Connexis is currently working with employers to better understand the reasons why they may choose training that is not registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. The results of that work will inform how we go about re-engineering our product mix to meet their needs.

Connexis has made considerable progress over the past two Investment Plan cycles in strengthening and clarifying the pathways for ‘at risk’ trainees to higher level qualifications, and targeting the provision that we arrange to higher level qualifications. The main contributions that Connexis will make to this Tertiary Education Strategy priority are described below.

Connexis works closely with Iwi and Pasifika Groups to attract interest in careers in infrastructure.

Connexis has a strong track record of success with and a genuine commitment to innovative approaches to working with priority populations. We have identified ‘*Continuing our investment in the success of Māori and Pasifika trainees*’ as a major activity that we will undertake over the term of this Investment Plan.

Working alongside Contractors, we provide the conduit to connect with such groups as part of contract negotiations to ensure local community employment opportunities on major projects. Initial touch points include;

- a. Whanau presentations on projects, the company and specific employment opportunities
- b. Enabling young people with the necessary information to be a candidate for possible interviews
- c. Providing a Transition to Work programme to prepare young people with the necessary life/work skills necessary in employment
- d. Provide mentoring support toward the completion of a NZA programme

We have outlined a commitment to developing a more effective pipeline into employment and training as part of our response to the new activities being undertaken during the term of this Investment Plan. We will leverage off our existing programmes that target women (the Ultimit programme, Girls with High Viz, the Women in Infrastructure network), Māori and Pasifika youth (cadetships, iwi and Pasifika focused taster and Transition to Work courses). We will also continue our investment in supporting trainees to transition from vocational pathways to advanced trades and technical qualifications, particularly in the civil infrastructure industries. Connexis, and the other ITF Maori Pasifika forum members, aligns its programmes to meet Iwi and Pasifika Groups strategic long-term goals for its Iwi members by developing a collaborative ITO approach to cohort signing across all Industries.

This will be a 3-year cohort NZA managed programme hosted by the Iwi. Employers in the infrastructure industries and Connexis share the high expectations that Government, iwi and Pasifika communities have for the success of Māori and Pasifika trainees.

Connexis has developed a number of highly effective interventions that target the success of Māori trainees in particular. The delivery and support mechanisms utilised as part of the successful Tama Toa and Wahine Toa initiatives developed in collaboration with Te Puni Kokiri have been tailored to the needs of this particular population group. Connexis will also support approximately 210 Māori cadets per annum to undertake advanced technical training predominantly in the Electricity Supply industry.

Sustaining the parity of achievement and high level of representation of Māori trainees in high quality employment in the infrastructure industries is an important focus for Connexis during this Investment Plan period. While small numbers of Pasifika trainees participate in these tailored interventions, further work will be required during the next two years to explore how best to apply the lessons from our past successes to this group.

Other related contributions that Connexis will make are;

Building on our support for the growth of a Charter School programme curriculum in Napier that staircases at risk Maori and Pasifika youth into employment opportunities in the Infrastructure Industry. This is achieved by;

- a. Having Consent to Assess our Level 2 Infrastructure Works programme and embed it into the curriculum
- b. Provide mentoring to students to support the achievement of NCEA Levels 1, 2, and 3
- c. Assist with work experience placements where NZA positions may exist, or to enhance Industry knowledge during School holidays

The Southern Initiative Infrastructure Consortium: Our key role as a partner of The Southern Initiative Infrastructure Consortium enables us to access a significant population of ‘at risk’

predominantly Pasifika youth in South Auckland. The main focus of this initiative is supporting Māori and Pasifika young people to transition to employment in the civil infrastructure industries and to prepare them to undertake New Zealand Apprenticeships.

Connexis provides an ‘end to end’ pathway to a career in the Infrastructure as Industry follows;

- a. Gateway school student in Water/Civil/Electricity sectors
- b. Industry Taster Course during school holidays
- c. Transition to Work Programme
  - Regular contact with Employer to secure employment
  - Preparation for transition from school to work
- d. Employment
- e. Mentoring support toward the completion of a NZA programme

Connexis and other ITF Maori Pasifika forum members, aligns its programmes to meet iwi and Pasifika Groups strategic long-term goals for its iwi members by developing a collaborative ITO approach to cohort signing across all industries. There will be a 3-year cohort NZA managed programme hosted by the Iwi.

### Strengthening the literacy and numeracy skills of trainees

Connexis has worked closely with employers over the past two Investment Plan periods to strengthen our contribution to the development of literacy and numeracy skills among trainees

We have taken a holistic, system-wide approach in developing the necessary capability and capacity required to deliver meaningful change for trainees. Our approach involves:

- **Employers:** Connexis has worked with employers since 2006 to support them to understand the value of developing the literacy and numeracy skills of trainees, and invested heavily in the recruitment of suitable workplace assessors.
- **Trainees:** Trainees are assessed at the commencement of their training using the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Tool. The results of these assessments are used to prioritise trainees for further intervention and support. The most extensive support involves intensive workplace-based literacy and numeracy assistance provided by Literacy Aotearoa.
- **Assessment and Learning Resources:** Literacy and numeracy skill development has been systematically embedded in our learning and assessment resources, and in supporting the professional development of workplace assessors. A focus has been the development of skillsets relevant to literacy and numeracy and the attainment of the National Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy by these assessors.

Further work will be undertaken during the term of this Investment Plan to build on this platform for future success by targeting our support to trainees, particularly those undertaking training at levels 1 and 2, and understanding how best to maximise measured change in literacy and numeracy skills.

Connexis will also make the additional contribution described below.

Connexis includes literacy and numeracy training for supervisors as part of their First Line Management programme.

It also includes:

- a. Improving communication skills
- b. How to manage differences in learners
- c. Mentoring skills

### Further contributing to the efficiency of the tertiary education system

The continued restraint in Government spending combined with increased performance and quality expectations for the tertiary education system requires all TEOs to identify opportunities to enhance their efficiency.

Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Connexis is an important component of our Strategic Plan. Programmes with relatively poor credit achievement or completion rates make up a relatively small share of our total provision

We have redesigned a significant number of programmes as part of the TROQ and are engaged in a wider re-engineering of our product mix. A small number of trainees are engaged in training associated with residual programmes, and our mix of provision provides for funding for these trainees to be 'grand parented' to enable them to complete.

The issues of provision and assessment support for these programmes are being addressed as part of the Targeted Review of Qualifications and the long-term outcome will be a new programme. The trainees on the current programmes should achieve a higher completion rate as new collateral is rolled out throughout this year and 2018. Detailed advice has been provided to the TEC about our actions in relation to these programmes separately.

During the term of this Investment Plan, this effort will strengthen the ITO's contribution to a high performing tertiary education system by increasing average credit achievement and completion rates over time.

# ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF STAKEHOLDERS

Connexis has a large, diverse and geographically dispersed stakeholder base. Our engagement plan identifies numerous organisations that we have relationships with including eleven key Government agencies, twelve tertiary education organisations, fifteen industry peak bodies, and over thirty key employer relationships across New Zealand.

At the next level currently, there are over 300 civil infrastructure companies and asset owners together with over 100 electrical supply stakeholders that we are actively communicating with on a range of items from strategic decisions through to qualifications and programme development.

We have developed a comprehensive engagement plan which we will implement over the term of this Investment Plan. This plan segments our employer and other partners based on their functional needs such as the focus of their training requirements, the size of each organisation, and their role in the sector.

- Our engagement with stakeholders operates at multiple levels including: Regional-level meetings by management with customers that focus on relationship building and information exchange; and
- National-level engagement led by the Head of Industry Standards and the Chief Executive with support provided by the Connexis Board as appropriate.

The mechanisms we use to collect information about the needs of stakeholders involve:

- Industry representation: Connexis obtains information about the needs of employers through strong levels of employer representation on its governance board, and industry advisory groups for the civil infrastructure, electricity supply and water industries. Employers in the Electricity Supply industry also have highly structured workforce development systems and information from these are used to inform planning and resourcing decisions by Connexis.
- Industry outreach: Connexis is represented on major sector forums such as the New Zealand Board for Engineering Diplomas. Connexis also is involved in trainee competitions that promote the transferable skillsets developed through our training, attendance and involvement in industry forums which are used to collect information from stakeholders about current and future training needs.
- Qualification advisory groups: Connexis maintains advisory groups comprising industry representatives who give advice and guidance on the development of new qualifications, and changing employer requirements.
- Use of evidence: Connexis has access to and has commissioned a range of reports into workforce supply and demand for the infrastructure industries. Other relevant reports which have informed our strategic and operational planning include the Infometrics Infrastructure Survey 2013-2022 and Auckland Infrastructure projects report together with data mining of publications and press releases.

- Prospective learners: Connexis makes a significant investment in promoting careers in infrastructure, and providing pathways for learners to progress to higher-level training. Significant examples include our Transition to Work programme, Ultimit (Women in Trades) programme, week-long taster courses that target Māori and Pasifika students in South Auckland
- Monitoring: Connexis undertakes a rolling customer satisfaction survey through the year to collect near real time information about our service quality enabling timely responses. This programme is currently under review seeking further improvements particularly to include the survey of trainees and employers immediately upon completion or termination of a programme.
- Direct personalised contact delivered on a business as usual basis by our field staff;

# PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

Increasing and strengthening the ITO's contribution to the strategic priorities of the Tertiary Education Strategy will require the implementation of a number of new activities, and changes to existing activities. These are discussed below.

Emerging Technologies: Connexis is working at a high level with several major organisations in the electricity space including Vector who is leading the integration of solar, battery and smart devices into our networks which have the potential to revolutionise. Connexis recognizes that the type of worker needs will change and intends to change our offerings to this market in a proactive way to complement the needs of the industry.

Extension of coverage for the telecommunications industries: Extending our coverage to include the telecommunications industries reflects the coherence that employers expect and our central role in the horizontal infrastructure industries.

Our central role in the telecommunications industries was reflected in the key role we played in working with Chorus to implement a work type competency regime that transitioned significant numbers of trainees from bespoke, internally recognised programmes to nationally-recognised qualifications. However, the copper and fibre level 3 qualifications were identified by industry for overhaul. This work has commenced in 2016 with review of copper and fibre qualifications which will be upgraded to level 4 and rolled out in 2017

Better digital resources: We will invest in a digital resource platform that will support more flexible training models to better meet the needs of trainees, and reduce costs by shifting away from hard copy learning materials to dynamic and interactive information assets. We anticipate leveraging the implementation experience of other ITOs in exploring similar e-learning systems and approaches. This has been initially piloted in water covering a Pathogens unit standard.

Strengthening the workforce pipeline: Trainees and employers need better, more effective pathways from secondary school to employment and vocational education and training. We will expand our existing efforts to support young people to transition to employment by facilitating recruitment by employers, and offering industry taster courses to secondary school learners to all the infrastructure industries. Connexis will also contribute to better marketing of trades training and engineering programmes through our involvement in the 'Got a trade, got it made' programme, and strengthening connections between the stakeholders that support engineering training through marketing support for the New Zealand Diploma in Engineering Practice.

Integrating the water infrastructure industries: Connexis has assumed responsibility for industry training in the water infrastructure industries.

Our major focus over the term of this Investment Plan will be continuing the development of a professional competency programme with key industry stakeholders, providing employers with higher quality training options aligned to their needs, and implementing at the request of industry a continuous professional development and certification regime. With the suite of new qualifications to become effective in early 2018, we anticipate being able to leverage the existing strong training culture in the industries to grow provision in this critical part of the economy.

Over the term of this Investment Plan Connexis will work to play a more central role in the training 'system' for water industry employers in line with our approach to supporting the civil and electricity supply industries.

Water Treatment Training: A suite of reviewed water treatment qualifications will come into effect in early 2018. There is strong industry support for an end to end blended learning model to be developed. Pilot development for 4 water programmes is underway utilizing this model which will require significant capital investment for Connexis and potentially the water industry.

Certification in the Water Industry: In conjunction with industry we have developed a White Paper which is currently out for consultation which proposes a certification system for operators of water and wastewater equipment similar to that for Civil Trades. This includes a framework of nationally recognised qualifications as a prerequisite to certification. The outcome from the review of the Havelock North Incident may also have an impact on any certification system.

Major Projects Involvement: Experience to date has indicated that recruits into significant projects have been poorly served by VET training provision, especially apprenticeships. Connexis was involved in formation of the Auckland Airport skills hub. To date there have been only 14 apprenticeship agreements signed compared to over 300 new recruits. A similar picture is emerging related to the Auckland City Rail Loop project where there are clear social procurement and apprenticeship clauses but negligible evidence of action. Analysis of these and similar projects identifies two common themes.

- The clauses have no tangible KPI requirements.
- Employers are identifying it is impractical (or not possible) to provide the breadth of training experiences on a long-term project and cannot sign up their project workers to apprenticeships. The projects comprise a narrow task base and do not offer the scope of experiences required for a full apprenticeship. Currently Connexis is working with several government (and non-government) agencies to identify a formula that can progress a trainee through a limited credit programme (subset of a whole qualification) so then can take this forward post project. It should be noted that for this to work, a formula would be required in conjunction with TEC.

We have confirmation from the Puhoi to Warkworth Project that they would like to participate in a pilot and would propose a possible second pilot for the CRL project as each has quite different characteristics for the type of activities the workforce would have exposure to. E.g. Puhoi to Warkworth has primarily machine operator's whilst CRL will be dominantly formwork and structural concrete.

Supporting New Zealand Apprentices and other trainees: Connexis has nearly completed a refresh of the systems and processes that align the support provided to trainees across our major industry portfolio areas. This work involves combining the organisation’s field teams, rationalising and optimising processes, and developing a set of new information collateral. An important aspect of our support is an individualised assessment of each trainee’s needs and the tailoring of the intensity of support based on that analysis.

Over the term of this Investment Plan, these changes will enable Connexis to deliver consistent high-quality support to our trainees building on our past performance.

Improving Information for trainees and employers: Connexis is undertaking a review of the way in which it works with employers and trainees as part of the major activity ‘Improving the quality of our relationship with industry’. An important component of this work is to ensure that the informational materials that we produce are fit for purpose, are more dynamic and interactive, and align to guidance from the Tertiary Education Commission about the needs of trainees.

# INVESTMENT

Connexis met or exceeded six of the twelve performance commitments relating to participation and educational output performance at levels four and above in 2016 noted as follows:

- High achievement for programme completion rates with all commitments achieved.
- Credit completion rate commitment achieved for trainees and apprentices under 25 and close the commitment % for all other credit achievement commitments.
- In terms of participation, enrolments at level 4 exceeded the commitment by nearly 100%. However, Maori, Pasifika and trainees under 25 were lower than the committed level primarily due to a significant decline in electrical supply trainees. This trend began in 2013 with trainee numbers in 2016 only 50% of 2013. This decline is expected to be halted in 2018 with the completion of the new electrical supply qualifications and a resurgence of trainee numbers (particularly linesmen) in the Powerco and Delta areas.

The most recent external evaluation and review of Connexis by NZQO was in July 2016. NZQA determined that it was highly confident in both ITO performance, and capability in self-assessment.

The proposed level of investment sought through this plan is based on a review of the actual level of delivery in each industry area over the past four years and seeking feedback from the industries involved to estimate their future requirements. We have reviewed this data considering major factors: influencing the demand for trainees (discussed below); issues that impact on the consumption of STMs (such as trainee terminations and compliance with funding rules); and our product mix as it is released to the market.

Our analysis and projections are also informed by our understanding of the needs of our industries. These are:

- Civil Infrastructure: Evidence of significant roading projects which drive demand generally, and our initial estimates based on industry feedback of demand for our new trade certification regime and associated New Zealand Apprenticeships. For example, we estimate that the demand for New Zealand Apprenticeships will more than triple between 2017 and 2019, from 66 STMs to 210 STMs;
- Electricity Supply/Telecommunications: The impact of the National Competency Framework has been significant, together with a reduced demand since 2013. Going forward, Connexis will have a significantly improved product mix which will coincide with increased demand that has been signaled particularly by Powerco and Aurora. For example, the share of STMs associated with New Zealand Apprenticeships for this industry will increase from 33% (2015) to 48% percent in 2017 to 66% percent in 2019.
- Water: Our increased presence and visibility in the water infrastructure sector because of the integration of support for that industry within our comprehensive training and support programmes.

Overall, our mix of provision demonstrates a rebalancing toward higher-level, more advanced programmes with the share made up by New Zealand Apprentices increasing from 22% percent in 2016 to 30% percent in 2017.

During the term of this Investment Plan Connexis will deliver the following outputs:

- New Zealand Apprenticeships: 604 STMs in 2018 increasing to 824 STMs in 2019;
- Industry trainees: 1,848 STMs in 2018 increasing to 1,928 STMs in 2019;