

# Jobs and



## The Jobs Plan

Creating jobs is one of the Government's key priorities. In November 2003, the Territory Government released the first ever *Jobs Plan: Building the Northern Territory Workforce*. The three year plan complements the Territory's economic and industry strategies. It is a comprehensive and coordinated approach to addressing skill shortages and developing a skilled, flexible and responsive workforce by:

- supporting job creation across the Territory;
- building a highly skilled and flexible workforce in partnership with industry, business, unions and community;
- linking training to skills demand and jobs growth areas;
- boosting apprenticeship and traineeship numbers; and
- supporting regional development through training, job development and increased opportunities.

The Government has allocated \$160 million over three years to implement the Jobs Plan.

## Workforce NT

The Government is committed to ensuring the Territory workforce has skills and training that reflects the needs and requirements of Territory industries. The first ever report on the state of employment in the Northern Territory, *Workforce NT*, is due for release in September 2004. *Workforce NT* will comprise information about the nature of Territory employment, including areas of skill shortages, regional and Indigenous employment data, and employment growth forecasts by occupation and industry. The information in *Workforce NT* will assist the implementation and future direction of the Jobs Plan, particularly in respect of addressing potential skill shortages.

## Training and Apprenticeships

Education and training are essential for developing and growing the Territory economy. During 2004-05, the Territory Government is providing \$38 million to registered training (VET) organisations to deliver a broad range of vocational, education and training programs and courses in both urban and remote settings. These programs and courses aim to build and capitalise on skills that lead to employment and strengthen communities.

Under the *Jobs Plan*, the Government will train, prepare and support up to 7 000 apprentices and trainees over three years. During 2004-05, about 2 400 apprentices and trainees will be employed across 180 discrete qualifications in 16 industry sectors, with \$11.75 million for training purposes.

The Territory Government will itself employ an additional 200 trainees in the Northern Territory Public Service over three years. Around 80 new apprentices have been employed to date.

## Employer Incentive Scheme

Government will provide \$1.75 million under the Employer Incentive Scheme in 2004-05 to assist businesses with the cost of employing apprentices and trainees.

*Regional and remote apprentices and trainees currently make up 19 per cent of the overall apprentice and trainee numbers for the Northern Territory. Indigenous apprentices and trainees make up 54 per cent of the regional and remote numbers.*

# Training

The three levels of incentives available to employers of new apprentices and trainees are:

- \$2 200 per apprentice or trainee, for small businesses with less than 10 employees;
- \$4 400 per apprentice or trainee, for local and community councils; and
- \$7 700 per apprentice or trainee, for businesses employing an apprentice in a skill shortage area.

Since February 2004, the employers of 120 apprentices and trainees have become eligible for incentive payments.

In 2003, a number of successful pre-vocational training programs were run in the automotive, electrical and aviation sectors. The Government has allocated \$1.2 million over the next three years for similar programs, which aim to better prepare Territorians for apprenticeships and traineeships in skill shortage areas.

## School-Based New Apprenticeships

School-based new apprenticeships allow secondary school students to undertake training in a workplace while continuing their normal studies. The training is considered part of a student's secondary education and contributes towards their Northern Territory Certificate of Education.

This facilitates the transition from school to work, and provides workplace experience to young people getting ready to enter the workforce.

A school-based new apprentice or trainee must attend school, work and training, based on an agreed a training and assessment plan.

The apprentice or trainee is paid for the time spent in productive work in the workplace according to a training contract which links to an industrial award or agreement, and must be engaged for an average of 10 hours or more per week of paid work in any 12 month period (that is, a minimum engagement of 400 hours per annum).

There are currently 128 school-based apprentices and trainees in training. Around 180 students are expected to commence a school-based new apprenticeship in 2004-05, ensuring that the Territory is well placed to exceed the Jobs Plan target of 400 commencements over three years.

## Training in Schools and Communities

The VET in Schools program offers vocational education and training subjects in secondary schools, providing additional options and pathways for students as they complete their schooling.

The Training for Remote Youth (TRY) program aims to give school students and young people (between the ages of 14 and 19 years) in remote areas access to training in an area of interest to the individual and of value to the community. The \$1 million TRY program helps young people in remote communities improve their work-related skills and encourages them to actively learn and develop skills.



# Training

## Flexible Response Funding and Community Response Programs

Examples of training courses offered under these programs include:

- vessel handling training in the Tiwi Islands;
- horticulture training at Beswick;
- arts and crafts training at Goulburn Island;
- textiles and enterprise skills at Maningrida;
- civil construction skills at Tennant Creek; and
- health and nutrition training at Kintore.

The Government has provided \$2.1 million to facilitate accredited and non-accredited training of Indigenous people living in regional and remote communities through the Flexible Response Funding and Community Response Programs. These programs provide specific training that meets the needs of Indigenous clients and, in most instances, the training is delivered onsite in communities.

Regional Training Centres are located in Jabiru, Nhulunbuy, Katherine and Tennant Creek and provide facilities which enable training programs to be delivered in those communities, with requisite flexibility and relevance to local needs. The centres allow for flexible training options to become an integrated part of training delivery in regional and remote communities.

## Footprints Forward

Footprints Forward is an initiative of the *Alice in 10* Indigenous Employment Challenge. It is a 'one-stop-shop' that offers mentoring support, work placements, support for school-based new apprentices, school and employer workshops, referral services, skills audits and other services aimed at improving the employment outcomes of Indigenous students still at school, and young Indigenous people no longer at school.

The Territory Government supports the community-driven Footprints Forward project together with the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. In 2003, the Territory contributed \$101 000 towards establishment costs, and will contribute an additional \$386 000 in 2004.

## University in Partnership with the Territory Government

In June 2003, the Government entered into a Partnership Agreement with Charles Darwin University (CDU) to work together to increase the Territory's

local knowledge base and reduce the number of courses and consultancies delivered by 'fly in, fly out' professionals. The Partnership enables joint approaches to be taken to applied research and industry development that match the Territory's needs, using the academic capability of the University and the practical experience of the Territory's public sector.

Increasingly, the business sector and Government will be able to draw on information and advice that is specific and relevant to living and working in the Territory and which properly reflect the range and complexity of our development needs and challenges.

Territory Government funding to CDU for higher education purposes is around \$6.5 million per annum, including \$1.5 million for the Institute of Advanced Studies which is undertaking research and development in practical and Territory-specific industry-oriented areas.

For further information on the Partnership Agreement, go to <http://www.cdu.edu.au> – the Government Partnership is under Quick Links.

