

Local Jobs and

Training Courses for Wickham Point

In 2004, the Government and Charles Darwin University increased the training effort in metals and engineering areas, to provide skilled Territorians for welding and engineering-related jobs on the Wickham Point (LNG) plant and in local workshops.

In 2005, funding has been provided to train 50 locals as ladders for the LNG plant. Another 50 Territorians may be trained later in the year, depending on the availability of jobs.



Building a skilled workforce is one of the greatest challenges facing the Territory. Over the next four years, the Government will spend \$295 million on training and supporting Territorians to develop better skills and take up local jobs, with \$58.6 million directly committed to vocational education and training in 2005-06.

Jobs Plan 2

Further to the *Jobs Plan: Building the Territory Workforce*, a comprehensive and coordinated approach to addressing skill shortages and developing a skilled, flexible and responsive workforce, the 2005-06 Budget introduces *Jobs Plan 2*, to build on the successes to date and ensure all training dollars are spent in areas that will lead to jobs for Territory workers.

Better Skills

In 2005-06, the Territory Government will assist Territorians to improve their skills by:

- spending \$400 000 on pre-employment programs to increase opportunities for unemployed people to take up jobs or traineeships;
- providing approximately 2500 new apprentices and trainees with bonuses, at a cost of \$850 000, to help them get started in their new trade (for example, to buy work gear, boots, tools and other necessary equipment);
- making 40 one-off \$4000 scholarships available to assist Territorians studying for vocational education and training (VET) Certificate III to Diploma level courses, to assist them with fees and material costs; and
- allocating \$500 000 to industry to increase the skill levels of existing workers, particularly in the automotive, building, construction, hospitality and mining industries.

Funding for vocational education and training at Charles Darwin University will increase by \$1.5 million to \$35.2 million in 2005-06. The additional \$1.5 million is directed at the trades schools.

Incentives for Employers

Jobs Plan 2 provides further financial incentives to encourage and assist eligible employers to take up additional apprentices and trainees:

- Small Business Incentive: 250 incentives per year valued at \$3000 each will be available to small businesses to take on a trainee or apprentice; and
- Traditional Trades Incentive: 150 incentives per year valued at \$7000 each will be available to employers to take on an apprentice in a traditional, hard-to-fill trade.

Over half of the money spent on new incentives during 2004 has gone towards employing apprentices in traditional trade areas where there are skill shortages, for example, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, mechanics and other tradespeople. Over \$500 000 in incentives was paid to employers in 2004.

Six additional qualifications have been also added to the list of skill shortage areas: baker, cabinet-maker, butcher, hairdresser, and mechanical and avionic aeroskills.

10 000 More Trainees and Apprentices

One initiative under *Jobs Plan 2* is to encourage the employment of additional apprentices and trainees.

- \$1.37 million in incentives to private and community sector employers to increase the uptake of apprentices and trainees, particularly in traditional trades and small business.
- 200 more apprentices and trainees commenced in 2004 than in 2003.
- The 2512 new apprentice and trainee commencements in 2004 are well on track to meet the target of 7000 over three years.
- Preliminary March quarter 2005 figures indicate that there are 3136 apprentices and trainees currently in training, an increase of 600 since March quarter 2001.

Better Skills

School to Work Transition

VET in Schools

The 2005-06 Budget includes \$4.4 million for the VET in Schools Program, which is expected to prepare 1100 students for VET while still at school, and support them in gaining the skills they need to move into the Territory workforce. The program includes:

- \$2.27 million to provide VET courses in schools and careers advice;
- \$0.95 million to expand VET under Building Better Schools;
- \$0.2 million for School to Work Transition, which involves training in work placements for students while continuing their normal studies; and
- \$1 million for driver training and licensing for 16 to 18 year olds.

Training for Remote Workers

The 2005-06 Budget also includes \$4.4 million to develop better skills for Territorians living in remote areas, including:

- Flexible Response Funding of \$1.8 million to deliver accredited and non-accredited training or employment on site in remote communities;
- \$1 million for the Training for Remote Youth (TRY) program for structured training of 14 to 19 year olds living in remote communities who are not in school, with the aim of re-engaging them in training and learning;
- \$0.3 million for the Community Response Program, giving remote Territorians work-ready skills such as driver training and first aid training; and
- \$1.3 million for regional and remote training centres.

Further recurrent funding is provided to a number of registered training organisations to deliver a broad range of VET courses in remote communities.

Palmerston Pre-vocational Program

A pre-vocational program in Palmerston targeted employment in the retail sector. Students undertook a VET Certificate II in Retail Operations. The course involved three days of off-the-job training with an accredited trainer and two days of structured work placement every week with host employers Woolworths, Australia Post, Coles and Target.

Ten participants completed the Certificate II and nine are now working full time. Of those remaining at school, two are working part time, and six students are expected to continue their retail studies at a higher qualification level.



Granites Gold Mine

Consultations with Newmont Mining Company and local stakeholders have been successful in increasing the number of Indigenous people in employment and training programs at the mine.

Around 10 per cent of Newmont's employees are Indigenous, working in the areas of administration, machinery operations and general trades.



Winning Partnership

Early in 2004, the Territory Construction Association (TCA) and the Northern Land Council (NLC) identified potential employment opportunities for local Indigenous people in welding and hospitality, associated with construction of the Wickham Point LNG plant.

The Northern Territory funded welding and hospitality training through Charles Darwin University, while TCA and NLC identified employment opportunities and mentored trainees (with Australian Government assistance).

Both training programs were successful:

- 14 young Indigenous people completed the welding program, and 13 started work (5 as apprentices) with a variety of employers;
- 16 local Indigenous people completed the hospitality program and 8 progressed to employment locally or with catering firms related to the mining sector.