Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling today called on young people under 25 years of age and their employers to sign up for the Northern Territory Worldskills competition.

Worldskills, to be held in the Northern Territory in June, is a day of vocation based competition where young people pit themselves against one another in their respective fields.

Successful contestants may have the opportunity to compete nationally and possibly even represent Australia in the international competition to be held in Switzerland in 2003.

"The Northern Territory Government is committed to ensuring Territorians receive nationally accredited training at a quality standard that is comparable to the rest of Australia," Mr Stirling said.

"We want to make sure all Territorians, including people living in remote and regional areas, receive the best possible quality education and training.

"That’s why the NT Government allocates more Vocational Education and Training dollars per head of population than any other State and Territory.

"I know the money is wisely spent. A sizeable contribution of $11M is allocated to apprenticeships and traineeships for the 2001/2002 financial year.

"The Worldskills competition is the perfect opportunity for young Territory apprentices, trainees and employees to show what they know and what they can do," he said.

The Northern Territory Government has allocated $52,000 to bring the Worldskills competition to the Northern Territory for 2002 to showcase the skills of young Territorians.

"Worldskills competitions offer young people the chance to develop and improve their skills through competitions which challenge them and demonstrate the importance of pride, dignity and self esteem in their work." Mr Stirling said.

"I would urge employers, industry and the community to get behind the competitions and encourage our young people to be the best they can."

Open Round Competitions will be run in the following categories:
There will also be **VET in Schools** Competitions in the categories:

- Business Administration
- Electrotechnology
- Information Technology
- Retail
- Construction
- Food & Beverage Service
- Metals & Engineering
- Tourism

The **Open Round Competitions** are open to young people born on or after January 1, 1978 and competitors do not have to be current VET or TAFE participants. Applications close on May 24, 2002 and the **Worldskills** competitions will be conducted at the Northern Territory University on June 26, 2002.

The **VET in Schools Competitions** are open to VET students in years 10, 11, and 12. Applications close on 24 May, 2002 and the competitions will take place in Alice Springs and Darwin on 19 June.

The winners will be announced at a presentation at Parliament House on June 27, 2002.

Application forms can be obtained by contacting Ms Heather Lee at DEET on 8999 4262.