Media Release

David Tollner
Minister for Employment and Training

$86 million on jobs for Territorians

14 August 2014

The Northern Territory Government will spend $86 million this financial year on developing the skills of Territorians so they can capitalise on opportunities created by Australia’s fastest growing economy.

The Minister for Employment and Training, Dave Tollner, today attended the Skills, Employment and Careers Expo in Darwin which is a one-stop shop for anyone seeking to explore tertiary studies, training and career options.

Close to 5000 people are expected to attend the Expo, organised by the Department of Business, as it travels across the Territory this month.

Mr Tollner said it was just one way the Territory Government was ensuring Territorians got first crack at local job opportunities.

“The Giles Government is unashamed when it comes to putting Territorians first. We believe that our highest priority is helping Territorians into jobs and we are spending near $90 million this year in building local skills and capacity,” Mr Tollner said.

“The Northern Territory has the highest vocational education and training participation rate of anywhere in the country and we have nearly 4000 apprentices and trainees in training. This will help provide the skills required by our growing economy.”

Latest figures show that more than 30 per cent of Territorians between the age of 15 and 19 were participating in vocational education and training.

The Territory Government is also boosting local skills by providing financial incentives to employers as well as apprentices and trainees.

A new round of employer incentives were released in May this year, with 140 occupational shortage employer incentives released and 60 disadvantaged group incentives released. More than 14,000 apprentices have received the workwear/gear bonus.

Mr Tollner said despite the work the Government was doing boosting local skills, local business just can’t get the skills and workers they need to keep pace with the growing economy.
“That’s why we have to look interstate, and if need be, overseas to find the skills or businesses need.

“We have the second lowest unemployment in the country and in Greater Darwin, unemployment is around 2 per cent. Despite the best efforts of the Government to encourage skills development we just simply can’t meet demand.

Chief Executive Officer of the Chamber of Commerce NT, Greg Bicknell said employers’ highest priority was finding local staff to fill vacancies and we welcome skilling initiatives such as today’s event.

“It is also important that there are no barriers to employers accessing skilled staff, if none are available locally, so we fully support the government’s efforts to facilitate recruitment from interstate or internationally if the need exists,” Mr Bicknell said.

The $86 million spent on supporting skills development includes $42 million of Territory and Commonwealth funding for Charles Darwin University, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and other service providers to develop new skills or build on existing skills.

Attached Factsheet: Putting Territorians First

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Putting Territorians First - Training NT.pdf