Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling today visited the 100th traditional trade apprentice to be employed this year as a result of financial incentives offered under the Jobs Plan.

Mr Stirling said the latest round of 30 incentives for employers taking on apprentices in skills shortage trades had already been taken up, after becoming available in October.

“That brings to 100 the number of new traditional trade apprenticeships to be taken up under Jobs Plan financial incentives since the start of the year,” Mr Stirling said.

“These incentives are part of Government’s efforts to build a strong, flexible, home grown workforce that has the skills and training to take up the many job opportunities opening up in the Territory.

“To date, 325 apprentices and trainees have been employed under the Jobs Plan Employer Incentive scheme, which also includes small business employer incentives and local/community council employer incentives. The Territory Government’s financial commitment to these incentives is $1.3 million to date.

“The Territory is currently experiencing record levels of apprenticeship and traineeship activity, with a 20% increase in numbers from June 2001 to June 2004.

“There are currently more than 2900 apprentices and trainees in training in the Territory. We are well on track to reach our commitment of 7000 new apprentices and trainees over the three-year life of the Jobs Plan.

“Around 38% of those in training are involved in traditional trade categories, which is the second highest ratio of any Australian jurisdiction.”

The 100th apprentice employed under the Jobs Plan incentive scheme is Jeffrey Osborne, who is undertaking an apprenticeship in cabinet making. His employer is Peter Jackson of PA Jackson Cabinet Making at Winnellie.

As part of his business’s commitment to training local Territorians, Mr Jackson also employs a school-based apprentice, Callan Richardson of Kormilda College.