CONSTRUCTION WORKERS GAIN LONG SERVICE BENEFITS

Territory building and construction workers will have access to portable long service leave for the first time after legislation was passed in Parliament today.

Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said the new entitlements were part of Government’s efforts to retain and attract skilled workers and keep the Territory moving ahead.

“This is a landmark day for the Territory’s construction workers who have, until now, been largely ineligible for normal long service leave provisions because of the project-based nature of their work, which sees them moving between employers to find work.

“This has prevented workers from accruing enough continuous work with one employer to become eligible for long service leave entitlements.

“The legislation passed today allows construction workers to accrue long service leave entitlements even if they move from employer to employer.

“Under the legislation, construction workers will be required to register with a scheme, NT Build, which will keep track of their length of service.

“Registered workers will be credited with 6.5 days of leave for every 260 days worked. After ten years of service, they will be entitled to 65 days of long service leave. After that, workers will be entitled to 32.5 days leave after every five years’ service. Entitlements accrue from January 1 this year.

“The scheme will be funded by way of a levy on construction projects costing $200,000 or more, excluding residential construction. The decision to fund the levy this way is the result of extensive consultation with industry.”

Mr Stirling said building the Territory’s population and boosting our skills base were priorities for the Government.

“Making Territory working conditions more attractive through initiatives like portable long service leave for construction workers will help us achieve these goals,” he said.

“It comes on top of a range of other Government initiatives, including the Jobs Plan, interstate advertising for skilled workers and boosting efforts to attract skilled migrants, which will help us build a skilled, flexible workforce and keep the Territory moving ahead.”

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