MORE TERRITORIANS IN TRAINING THAN EVER BEFORE

The Territory Government’s strong focus on skills training is paying off, with 3040 Territorians currently in training – the highest number ever, Employment, Education and Training Minister Syd Stirling said today.

Mr Stirling said this represented a 35% rise from the end of 2001, when around 2200 Territorians were in training.

“This is a significant increase – a sign that the efforts of Government, training organisations and local business to boost the Territory’s skills base are paying dividends,” Mr Stirling said.

“Importantly, around 38% of Territorians in training are undertaking apprenticeships in traditional trade areas where we have the greatest skills gaps. This is the second highest ratio in Australia.

“Our efforts are also paying off in schools. At the end of 2004, there were 129 school-based new apprentices in training, up from five in 2001.”

Mr Stirling said Government was committed to building a skilled workforce to keep the Territory moving ahead.

“We have implemented a number of important initiatives to boost training numbers in the Territory, including:

- providing a properly resourced Employment and Training division in Government;
- introducing an Indigenous Employment Strategy;
- implementing the Territory’s first-ever Jobs Plan, worth $160 million over three years;
- developing a Workforce Training Strategy document – a Territory first;
- creating an annual Workforce Report – also a Territory first;
- providing incentives to employers to put on more apprentices and trainees – over 350 incentives have already been taken up, with more to be made available in 2005; and
- working with local business to boost training numbers.

“Government’s strong focus on employment and training will continue. We have major projects coming on line and the demand for skilled labour in the Territory is growing. We want to ensure as many Territorians as possible are able to take advantage of the many opportunities opening up.

“We will continue to get on with the job of boosting the Territory’s skills base and delivering jobs and economic growth for Territorians.”

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