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150 NEW EMPLOYER INCENTIVES ANNOUNCED WHILE 2006 EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING BUDGET SET TO REACH $84 MILLION

Employment, Education and Training Minister, Syd Stirling, today announced a new round of employer incentives for small business and skill shortage trades, urging employers to take on an additional apprentice or trainee to help overcome the Territory’s skills shortages.

Mr Stirling also announced that the implementation of the Martin Government’s Jobs Plan, Employment and Training program will see $84 million spent on training and employment outputs across the Territory in 2006-07.

“The Martin Government is intent on building a strong Territory future through the development of a skilled workforce. We cannot rely on interstate or overseas immigration. We must train our own people,” said Mr Stirling.

“The new round of incentives will include 50 skills shortage trade incentives - worth $7000 each to employers. There are a further 100 incentives, worth $3000 each, available to small businesses employing a trainee or apprentice.

“As part of the $84 million budget this financial year the Martin Government will also provide:

- Around $37 million for training at the Charles Darwin University.
- Around $8.8 million for training at Batchelor College
- $4.4 million for School to Work transition programs

“In addition, Budget 2006 will provide Departmental services in support of training advisory bodies, registered training organisations and apprentices and trainees generally.

“The Budget will continue its strong support for employers and trainees and apprentices with:

- $1.4 million allocated to employer incentives
- $1.1 million to employee incentives such as the $1000 Work Wear Work Gear bonus
- $160 000 supporting scholarships and awards for vocational training
- $4.4 million in support of training for remote Territorians
“$500 000 will be spent on Buildskills, which will help existing workers upgrade their skills and gain nationally recognised qualifications, while we will pour $200 000 into providing improved school to work transition and pathways,” Mr Stirling said.

The Minister said the Territory Government is on track to achieve its election commitment of 10 000 trainee and apprenticeship commencements over four years, with over 2600 already starting in the first year.

“Budget 2006 supports an expected 2600 trainee and apprentice commencements in 2006.”

“The Territory economy is experiencing strong growth. New jobs are being created all the time in the construction, pastoral, tourism and service industries as well as in retail trade and the mining business.

“By focussing such attention on training, the Martin Government is ensuring that skilled workers are available into the future to expand and grow the economy. The Government is building the Territory’s future and solidly backing business and workers with these training initiatives,” said Mr Stirling.

Contact Minister Stirling's Office: 08 8901 4053