Employment, Education and Training Minister, Syd Stirling, leaves for Perth this afternoon for 2-days of higher education and training meetings.

Mr Stirling said tomorrow’s Ministerial Council on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs would focus on international students and off-shore education standards, university protocols for operation, commercial opportunities for universities and better connecting skills shortages with university courses.

“I am very keen to discuss ways we can continue to train and build our skilled workforce, such as better targeting university courses, so that Territory business can get the workers they need and deliver on the potential for growth,” he said.

The Minister will present the New Apprentice (Trainee) of the Year award at the Australian Training Awards on Thursday night.

Six winners from the Territory awards are in the running for the national awards – four students and two local organisations, TIO and International College of Advanced Education.

“The high quality of local winners is a reflection of their efforts and highlights this Government’s commitment to training – it’s a key area to build our economy and keep the Territory moving ahead.”

On Friday Mr Stirling will attend the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education. The key topics for discussion include employer incentives, funding and vocational education and training in schools.

“I will be pushing to get the best deal for the Territory and position us to capitalise on any future programs or funding,” he said.

“In the Territory – where we are experiencing strong growth and a demand for workers – we have significantly increased funding and placed a serious focus on training to meet this demand.

“The Territory leads Australia in a number of areas for training and this meeting will be useful to discuss future directions and how to continue to build and skill our workforce.”

Contact: Craig Rowston 8901 4010 or 0401 119 777