ALL-TIME HIGH FOR APPRENTICE AND TRAINEE NUMBERS

More Territorians are undertaking traineeships or apprenticeships than ever before with 3144 people in training at the end of 2005.

Chief Minister and Acting Employment, Education and Training Minister, Clare Martin, said that was more than 50% higher than the 2039 people in training when her Government came to power in 2001.

“Training Territorians is the best way to address our skills shortages and to build a stronger economy,” she said.

“There has been a major increase in the number of trainees and apprentices since my Government came to power and we are committed to attracting more people to this area.”

Ms Martin said her Government is on track to fulfilling its 2005/06 budget commitment of 10,000 people commencing training over the next four-years, with 2,574 people starting in 2005.

Importantly, there were 1020 women in training (32.45% of the total) and 685 indigenous trainees (21.8% of the total).

“We set ambitious targets and we are meeting them,” she said.

“I am particularly pleased to see the high number of women and indigenous trainees and apprentices - this is something to be proud of.

“It means more people are getting better opportunities to learn job skills, which helps us build a stronger workforce and healthier economy.”

Of the 2,574 people starting as trainees or apprentices in 2005, the breakdown was: Darwin (1,657), Alice Springs (498), Katherine (197), East Arnhem (111), West Arnhem (63) and Barkly (48).

Of the total 3,144 in training in 2005 the breakdown was: Darwin (2,034), Alice Springs (613), Katherine (244), East Arnhem (134), West Arnhem (54) and Barkly (65).

Ms Martin said business confidence in the Territory was high and economic indicators - especially population growth and construction figures - pointed to a healthy local economy. She said Access Economic recently predicted the strong economic conditions would continue for the next 5-years.