LONG-TERM BENEFIT FROM BECHTEL TRAINING EFFORT

The Territory will gain long-term benefit from training conducted at the Wickham Point LNG Plant, Acting Chief Minister and Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said today.

Visiting apprentices on site today, Mr Stirling said Territorians were gaining valuable skills on the major project that they would be able to carry through into future employment.

“With the Territory facing a skills shortage, it is crucial that major projects have a strong focus on training local residents,” Mr Stirling said.

“Bechtel Construction is providing a range of training to an average 60 people per week as part of its efforts to maximise local employment at ConocoPhillips’ LNG Plant.

After conducting a skills audit and identifying where the biggest skills gaps were, they developed a comprehensive training program to upskill local workers in areas such as welding, rigging, scaffolding and lagging, working closely with the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET).

Early in the project, DEET allocated an additional 10,000 training hours to Charles Darwin University targeted specifically at upskilling workers in the metal trades areas. Bechtel and CDU have worked closely to ensure the success of the training.

DEET has also provided additional funding of $44,000 to Advanced Training International to train 100 local people as laggers for the project.

“This project is a great example of private business working closely with Government to address skills shortages. This is also a major focus of the Territory Government’s Jobs Plan, under which we aim to have a record 10,000 Territorians in training over the next four years.

“Bechtel has also worked closely with Group Training NT to employ Territorians as apprentices on the project, particularly in the metal trades – one of our major skills shortage areas.

“As part of their efforts they identified ‘unskilled’ and ‘semi-skilled’ Darwin-based residents and employed them as apprentices. There are currently 37 apprentices on site, including 29 metal trade-based apprentices, seven electrical apprentices and one building apprentice.

“Each Territorian who has received training out of this project will have those skills for life. They will help to play a crucial role in filling the skills gaps we face in the Territory.”

Two years into the project, construction at Wickham Point is 74% complete. Over 2000 tradespeople are employed on site, of which more than 47% are Territorians.

Contact: Mary Fall  0401 119 770