INDUSTRY BACKS APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES : MINISTER WELCOMES CAR DONATION

Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Syd Stirling has welcomed the donation of a prototype vehicle by the Frost Motor Group to apprentices and trainees from Charles Darwin University.

“I congratulate the Frost Motor Group for this generous gesture. It is great to see local employers supporting our apprentices and trainees to help build a skilled workforce.”

Local Ford Dealer Daryl Frost said the 2006 model Ford LTD was the pride of the Ford Fleet, and would be for the exclusive use of trainees and apprentices in the automotive trades at CDU.

The donation is the culmination of extensive lobbying by Mr Frost, who has been involved in training people in the motor trades for over two decades and served on the boards of group training companies.

“It is critical that we continue to train local people to fill skilled positions here in Darwin,” Mr Frost said.

“We currently employ seven technicians from the Philippines because it is so difficult to recruit suitably qualified locals. Now that we have sufficient specialised, qualified staff on hand we have been able to take on more new apprentices.

“Young people embarking on a four year program to become trades people need to know that their place of employment has sufficient qualified personnel to mentor and train them.

“I am happy to have organised this donation to CDU. I think it’s important to give young people the right tools and equipment to prepare for their career as trades people. This state of the art car with all its bells and whistles should be a great addition to the classroom.”

The vehicle was built as a prototype for testing and evaluation and instead of having the vehicle destroyed, we negotiated with the Ford Motor Company to secure the car for CDU.

CDU Vice Chancellor, Professor Helen Garnett said she was enormously appreciative of the donation.

“This car will be used in all facets of training for the light automotive discipline, ranging from the mechanical systems such as steering, suspension and brakes, to advanced air conditioning and the automatic transmission controlled by modern electronic technology that is evolving at a very fast rate,” said Professor Garnett.

Frost Motor Group has also organised the donation of a Ford Fairmont Ghia to the CDU in Alice Springs for training through the local Ford Dealership, Centralian Ford, at the end of June 2006. The total value of
both of these motor vehicles is approximately $120,000 and shows the commitment by Ford to local training in the Northern Territory.

The Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Syd Stirling said the Martin Government was committed to building a skilled workforce.

“We recently announced $84 million for employment and training in this years’ Territory Budget. That includes $37 million for Charles Darwin University.

“Training is a top priority for the Martin Government, and we will ensure that skilled workers are available in the future to expand and grow the economy.”

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