



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

# MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 30 December 2009

## APPRENTICESHIPS A GOOD OPTION FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS

Statement by Mr Peter Anderson, Chief Executive

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, calls on school leavers weighing up their future career options in the New Year to consider taking on an apprenticeship.

"Employers who can give an apprentice a go, should do so once the New Year ticks over. With the economy strengthening as we leave 2009 behind, and an ever-increasing population boosting demand, skill shortages are looming large on the horizon, which provides school leavers with good future employment prospects if they choose an apprenticeship. An apprenticeship offers a chance to earn while you learn."

"Nationally, we should aim in 2010 to increase apprenticeship take-ups by 10% and reduce apprenticeship drop-offs by 15%."

Apprentices in traditional trades or agricultural traineeships may be personally eligible for five tax-exempt cash payments totalling \$3,800 over the life of the Apprenticeship under the Australian Government's Tools for Your Trade payment initiative.

As an added incentive for businesses over the summer period, the Australian Government has also committed to increasing apprentice commencements by boosting the first year bonus payment to employers of traditional trades apprentices from \$1,500 to \$4,850 or an additional \$2,350. After a period of nine months employers will be eligible for a further \$2,500 payment.

"Beginning a new apprenticeship, or resuming a discontinued one, is a great way to get yourself on track to future self-employment and a good income in industries with varied and interesting work. The long term benefits of undertaking an apprenticeship need to be better understood by school leavers and their parents."

ACCI is a strong supporter of investment in vocational education and training as a means to improve incomes, build long term labour supply, and boost productivity.

In December ACCI joined with Federal Minister for Employment Participation Sen Mark Arbib to launch an ACCI research paper *Worth their Weight in Gold*, which looked into the reasons for apprenticeship non-completions and identified solutions to encourage disengaged apprentices back to complete their training.

Employers and employees wanting to find out more about apprenticeships in Australia should go to [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au).

For further information:

Peter Anderson	Chief Executive	0417 264 862
Mary Hicks	Director, Education, Training & Employment	0417 488 566
Brett Hogan	Director of Communications	0407 273 884

*ACCI represents over 350,000 businesses in every State and Territory and all industries. Our network employs around 4 million employees, ranging from the top 100 companies to tens of thousands of small and medium businesses.*

[www.acci.asn.au](http://www.acci.asn.au)

MR 169/09

LEADING AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS