

Media Release

2010-2011 Budget is good news for the Construction and Property Services Industries

Mr Lindsay Fraser, Chair of the Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council (CPSISC) congratulates the Rudd Government on the 2010-2011 Budget initiatives. Mr Fraser said that the Budget will be a huge boost for our industries. Some of the highlights are detailed below.

Investing Skills for Sustainable Growth

More than \$660 million will be available in training, apprenticeships and adult literacy and numeracy to ensure Australia has the skills it needs to support a growing economy.

This major new investment in Australia's skills is part of the Government's plan to maximise the opportunities ahead so we can face the future with confidence.

The four-year skills package will deliver:

- up to 39,000 additional training places in sectors facing high skills demands through a \$200 million investment in a new Critical Skills Investment fund;
- support for around 22,500 new apprenticeship commencements through an \$79.4 million extension of the successful Apprentice Kickstart aimed at small to medium businesses;
- an offer to the States and Territories to provide a guaranteed entitlement to a training place for all Australians under the age of 25 years to ensure young people have every opportunity gain a qualification;
- Numeracy, literacy and language courses for up to 140,000 Australians to improve their quality of life, career prospects and productivity; and
- Better training for the 1.7 million Australians studying in the vocational training system.

Skills for Recovery

The Government will invest around \$300 million to boost the skills of our workforce, particularly in the construction, infrastructure, renewable energy and resource sectors.

Over \$200 million has been provided for the establishment of a Critical Skills Investment Fund to deliver up to 39,000 new places in sectors where there is a high demand, addressing emerging skills shortages in partnership with industry.

Around \$80 million will go to extending our Apprentice Kickstart program to deliver around 22,500 apprenticeship positions over the next six months and almost \$20 million will go towards the modernisation of apprenticeships.

A better training system for the future

The Government will invest over \$243 million to strengthen the quality of vocational education to deliver higher quality training to more students.

The package extends key elements of the Education Revolution to the vocational education sector. Reforms include:

- an expansion of income contingent loans through the VET FEE-HELP program to help Australians to gain higher level technical and trade skills;
- a Quality Skills Incentive scheme to lift the standards and performance of Australia's largest vocational education providers, including TAFEs;
- the establishment and operation of the new National Vocational Education Regulator and Standards Council; and
- A MySkills website linked to the new national regulator to provide greater transparency and robust comparable information for people when selecting a provider.

Foundation skills for our workforce

A significant number of working age Australians do not have adequate numeracy, literacy and language skills and as a result, are unable to secure high-value, high-reward employment and progress their careers. Addressing this problem will improve national productivity and improve the lives of Australians.

Accordingly, the Rudd Government will provide around \$120 million over four years to ensure that 140,000 Australians receive assistance through the language, literacy and numeracy programs to improve this fundamental shortfall in our workforce.

The workplace program will provide workers with a practical means to improve their skills without having to give up their job to study.

To view the Joint Media Release from the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Deputy Prime Minister and The Hon Wayne Swan MP, Treasurer, go to:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_100511_171800.aspx

Mr Fraser said that CPSISC is delighted to be involved in the above key initiatives and we look forward to assisting the government in implementing these policies in the future.

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