



INDUSTRY INFO

DECEMBER 2006 / JANUARY 2007

Merry Christmas

It's that time of year again – another Silly Season is upon us. As this is our last newsletter for the year we would like to take this opportunity to wish our Apprentices, Trainees and Hosts a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable holiday season and would like to thank you all for your support throughout 2006.

2007 will be another exciting year with The Apprenticeship Factory being awarded funding to extend our Field Officer team to address some Skills Shortage areas in the region – Engineering and Automotive. We have also had our Youth Pathways contract extended which will enable us to assist even more Secondary School students to determine their career paths.

Once again best wishes to all and their families – here's a little something to get you thinking about the meaning of Christmas...

Christmas gift suggestions:

To your enemy, forgiveness.
To an opponent, tolerance.
To a friend, your heart.
To a customer, service.
To all, charity.
To every child, a good example.
To yourself, respect.



Don Clutterbuck – CEO The Apprenticeship Factory

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE APPRENTICESHIP FACTORY WILL CLOSE AT 11:00AM ON 22ND DECEMBER 2006 AND WILL RE-OPEN AT 8:30AM ON TUESDAY 2ND JANUARY 2007

Welcome – Shepparton Field Officer



Welcome to Roger Dowsett who has joined our team of Field Officers in our Shepparton Office. Roger has taken over Phil Bunn's caseload, Phil having left our company to once again become a business owner.

Roger commenced with The Apprenticeship Factory on 9th November 2006 and was previously employed by The Safety Factory for 14 months. Roger's region will encompass Shepparton, the Moria Shire and Wodonga and he will be in contact with all Host Employers and Apprentices to formally introduce himself.

Christmas Time Sheets

Don't forget that all timesheets **MUST BE RECEIVED** by The Apprenticeship Factory **NO LATER THAN 10AM WEDNESDAY 20th DECEMBER 2006**. This will be the final payroll for 2006. The first payroll for 2007 will not be processed until 3rd January.

If you have any queries regarding your Christmas payroll please contact:
Jonelle Laws on 5822 1011

Group Training Health Cover

GMHBA has developed Private Health Insurance coverage for Group Training companies. The main benefits of the Group Training Health Plan is that all apprentices and trainees are covered free under a family policy and an additional 4% discount is provided on their current pricing models.

Whether you've had health insurance before or not, becoming a valued Group Training Health Plan member is easy. For immediate cover phone 1800 812 656 (local call cost) or visit their website www.gmhba.com.au/grouptraining

New Minimum School Leaving Age

From 2007, the minimum school leaving age will rise to 16 years. The change has been implemented as young people have a greater chance of finding job success the longer they stay in the education system. The new minimum school leaving age will commence in early 2007, when the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 is proclaimed.

The new Education and Training Reform Act 2006 specifies that all students between the ages of 6 and 16 years must be enrolled at a school or another registered education and training provider. Although most students under the age of 16 attend school, parents can choose to send their child to a registered education and training provider to complete their schooling in a non-school setting, such as a TAFE Institute or adult education centre.

Youth Guarantee – A Place At School, TAFE, AMES or CAE

The Victorian Government is introducing the Youth Guarantee – an Australian first that guarantees a place at a school, TAFE or participating adult education centre for early school leavers until they reach 20 so they can finish year 12 or a training equivalent.

The new Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides a guaranteed place to all young people meeting the criteria. Places will be available in TAFE Institutes, the Centre for Adult Education, Adult Multicultural Education Services and participating adult education centres.

Providers will be required to make a place available in a timely manner and as a matter of priority. Providers will work to place young people in courses that will meet their needs and are consistent with government training priorities. Young people will be able to access all the courses available to other students at the particular provider.

Student fees and charges will apply, however students on a low income will be eligible for the exemptions or concessions that are currently available.

We've Overshot Our Footprint

Monday 9 October was "**Overshoot Day**"; when the global population's continued consumption will effectively tip the planet's ecological bank account into deficit for the rest of the year. EPA Chairman Mick Bourke said that on this day (9/10) humanity would already have consumed the total amount of new resources nature could produce for the year.

Skills For The Future

As part of the federal government's response to skills shortages and the development needs of the Australian workforce, the Prime Minister, yesterday announced a major package of skills initiatives worth \$837m over 5 years.

The five major initiatives which constitute the package will be phased in during 2007 and 2008 and are as follows:

1. Support for Mid-Career Apprentices

From 1 July 2007, workers who wish to upgrade their skills mid-career will attract new financial incentives to support a move from their current work to an apprenticeship at Certificate III or IV level. The incentive takes the form of a wage subsidy payable to either the employer or the employee, depending on a range of factors.

The subsidies are \$150 per week (\$7,800pa) during the 1st year and \$100 per week (\$5,200pa) during the 2nd year of the apprenticeship.

It appears that this initiative is targeted at workers who are seeking to upskill to a traditional trade with their existing employer, or other workers seeking to change occupations and be retrained in a traditional trade.

2. Business Skills Vouchers for Apprentices

From 1 January 2007, 6,300 vouchers valued at up to \$500 will be available to apprentices each year to contribute towards the costs of accredited small business skills training. Apprentices will be eligible to apply for the voucher any time from the end of their 2nd year until two years after completion.

3. Work Skills Vouchers

From 1 January 2007, Australians aged 25 years and over who do not have year 12 or equivalent will be eligible for vouchers worth up to \$3,000 to assist them complete year 12, undertake literacy and numeracy training or vocational Certificate II courses.

Priority for this assistance will be given to existing workers in the belief that improvements in basic skills will help them move into higher level positions. The Work Skills voucher will also be available to other over 25s without year 12 in the following priority order:

- income support recipients, such as single parents and carers, facing active job search requirements in the next 2 years;
- unemployed job seekers in receipt of income support and undertaking active job search; and
- people not in the workforce who intend to seek work after achieving their qualification.

4. Incentives for Higher Technical Skills

From 1 January 2007, more workers will be supported to undertake Diploma and Advanced Diploma level qualifications.

Employers will receive incentive payments of \$1,500 for each employee commencing one of these qualifications and \$2,500 when they complete. Prior qualification rules will be waived for this initiative which is expected to target the engineering, electrical, gas, mining, oil drilling, automotive and aeronautical engineering industries.

5. More Engineering Places for University

The government will provide for an extra 500 engineering places at university from 2008 which will be in addition to the 510 such places announced in July this year.

More information regarding the package can be seen at <http://www.pm.gov.au/news/speeches/speech2175.html>.

Launch of Mental Health First Aid CD-ROM

As part of the recent Mental Health Week Dr Sharman Stone (Minister for Workforce Participation) launched the Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace CD-ROM. Dr Stone said the CD-ROM offers the basic steps that anyone can take to support a work colleague with mental illness.

The Australian Government wants to ensure that all with a capacity to continue to work can stay in their job even if the individual experiences a mental health problem. We know that employment dramatically improves an individual's self esteem and outlook on life and helps in the recovery process.

For more information or to order a free copy of the CD, call the JobAccess Adviser service on 1800 464 800 or online via the JobAccess website at www.jobaccess.gov.au

The Keys to Retention

Young people are more likely to complete the first year of an apprenticeship if they complete year 12 and undertake school-based work experience, a new study has found. The James Cook University researchers found that schools play a significant role in providing work experience and career advice so that students gained a real understanding of the industry before undertaking an apprenticeship.

Dr Leanne Dalley-Trim said "Staying on to Year 12 and participating in work placements will give young people the best start to their apprenticeships, but having support once they commence is critical". Other important factors in staying in an apprenticeship in the first year are a supportive personal network and a positive host business. The research was conducted in response to the significant drop out rate of apprenticeships, particularly in skill shortage areas.

Source: Campus Review 04/10-10/10/06

Labour Force – October Key Points

TREND ESTIMATES (MONTHLY CHANGE)

- EMPLOYMENT increased to 10,287,400
- UNEMPLOYMENT decreased to 505,600
- UNEMPLOYMENT RATE remained at 4.7%
- PARTICIPATION RATE increased to 65.0%

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES (MONTHLY CHANGE)

EMPLOYMENT

- decreased by 32,100 to 10,256,900. Full-time employment decreased by 48,600 to 7,306,200 and part-time employment increased by 16,600 to 2,950,800.

UNEMPLOYMENT

- decreased by 16,200 to 497,200. The number of persons looking for full-time work decreased by 4,800 to 355,000 and the number of persons looking for part-time work decreased by 11,400 to 142,200.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

- decreased by 0.1 percentage point to 4.6%. The male unemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 4.5% and the female unemployment rate remained at 4.8%.

PARTICIPATION RATE

- decreased by 0.4 percentage points to 64.7%.

Get 'em While They're Young

Australia's skills shortage is so bad that the federal government is now selling apprenticeships to primary schoolers. The federal Parliamentary secretary for Education, Science and Training, Pat Farmer, told a skills conference in Sydney this week that pitching careers in the trades to year 9 or 10 students was too late because they had already formed their attitudes.

The mechanic turned politician said there was too much emphasis on going to university, and his government was encouraging skills-based training at primary school, such as getting children to lay super-lightweight building blocks. It may seem simplistic, but it encouraged children to dream and set goals at an early age, he said.

Mr Farmer added that industry leaders needed to be brought into schools to explain the advantage of a trade because "many teachers just don't understand industry", having not come from TAFE or trades themselves. Mr Farmer also acknowledged his government had been "caught out" by the national skills shortage and suggested its plan to boost engineering places at university was based on outdated data.

Source: The Australian Financial Review 22/11/06

Careers Kit Available For School Leavers

All secondary schools will soon receive the **Australian Government 2006 Careers Kit**. The kit contains a wide range of information to help students who plan to enter the workforce or go on to further study or training including the most up-to-date information on career options, job websites, employment programmes and further training to help school leavers reach their career goals.

There is also assistance through Job Network and other employment services including websites packed with information, including jobjuice.gov.au, jobsearch.gov.au and jobaccess.gov.au

- **Jobjuice** is a youth focussed website that prompts students to consider what direction they may want to take after leaving school as well as practical tools to help with their resume or job interviews.
- **Jobsearch** is a national database of job and apprenticeship advertisements. It also contains information about Australian Government services to help look for work.
- **Jobaccess** is a website for people with disabilities or someone working with or employing people with a disability. There are many free services and support that can be accessed via the website or by calling 1800 464 800.

Electronic copies of the 2006 Careers Kit can be downloaded at:

jobjuice.gov.au/whats-new/tools-and-resources.

Trendspotting

A new social phenomenon is the so-called CUB (or cashed up Bogan). CUB's are young, suburban men with high disposable incomes. They work in areas that do not have a reputation for producing high-income earners. Many are tradesmen (for example electricians, carpenters, crane operators, plumbers) who have benefited from the mining and construction booms. With their penchants for plasma televisions, flashy cars and even power boats, CUB's are a new consumer force.

Safety In The Workplace

Guarding is a life and death issue for farmers and industry Victorian Workcover Authority

The deaths of two men in unguarded machines in a matter of days has prompted a WorkSafe warning to ensure equipment is protected. A man died in a Melbourne commercial laundry last month when he was caught in the rollers of a drying machine. Again last month, a man died in north-east Victoria when his clothes were caught in an unguarded power take off connecting a tractor to a pump.

"Guarding is one of the most fundamental means of protecting employees, your business and workmates," WorkSafe's Executive Director, John Merritt said. "It should come with new equipment and can be retro-fitted to older plant. It must never be considered an 'optional extra'. When guarding is removed for cleaning or maintenance, it must be replaced."

"Whether you're on a farm, in a factory, workshop or supermarket the dangers, and potential consequences, of unguarded equipment are clear. Industrial equipment can revolve at thousands of revolutions a minute. Equally it can exert great force while moving slowly but be impossible to escape from."

Mr Merritt said many people were killed or seriously hurt each year in incidents involving unguarded equipment. "These incidents are preventable and happen on hobby farms and working farms. They happen in factories, shops, and all manner of workplaces.

"In many cases, guarding is readily available, easy to fit and inexpensive. In all cases, where it has been removed for maintenance or cleaning, it can be replaced. The equipment itself must be turned off or otherwise made safe when the guard is removed.

"While workplace deaths and serious injuries are being reduced in metropolitan and country areas there is no room for complacency. Consult with your workforce and workmates on safety improvement options or if you work on your own, have a 'second set of eyes' help with his review process."

WorkSafe's publication is available online at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Christmas Quotes

"Never worry about the size of your Christmas Tree. In the eyes of children they are all 30 feet tall"

- *Larry Wilde, The Merry Book of Christmas*

"Oh, for the good old days when people would stop Christmas shopping when they ran out of money"

- *Author Unknown*

"Many banks have a new kind of Christmas club in operation. The new club helps you save money to pay for last year's gifts"

- *Anonymous*

"Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen"

- *Author Unknown, attributed to a 7 year old boy*

And just for laughs...

"The Supreme Court has ruled that they cannot have a nativity scene in Washington, D.C. This wasn't for any religious reasons. They couldn't find three wise men or a virgin"

- *Jay Leno*

"What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus? - Claustrophobic"

- *Author Unknown (or no-one will admit to it anyway!!)*