



INDUSTRY INFO

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2006

The Apprenticeship Factory – Awards Night 2006

Good luck to all the nominees!
Look out for a special Awards Night edition of the Industry Info Newsletter...coming soon.

Reminder – The Apprenticeship Factory Timesheets

**DON'T FORGET the NEW fax number and address for
The Apprenticeship Factory Payroll**

All timesheets must be sent to:

FAX: 5822 4599

ADDRESS: 68 High Street, Shepparton VIC 3630

A Big Congratulations!!

Congratulations to ADI Mulwala and Border Express in Albury for taking out the 2006 Ministers Awards for Excellence - Employers of Australian Apprentices. Both companies collected their awards from Minister Hardgrave in Sydney during September.

Special congratulations also go to Jodie Garvey and Peter Harvey who worked with The Apprenticeship Factory RASS team until earlier this year and provided New Apprenticeship Support Services to both of the winning employers throughout 2005/2006. Well done guys!



Geoff Luff – Director Border Express & Minister Hardgrave



Border Express: Geoff Luff – Director, Don Hamilton – Workshop Manager & Dave Kreutzberger – Apprentice



Jodie Garvey TAF & Dave Kreutzberger – Border Express



Peter Harvey TAF, ADI Mulwala -Bob Hamson, Patrick MacMahon & Bill Young

Important Workcover Information for Apprentices

It is important to remember that all accidents that occur, no matter how minor they may seem at the time, should be reported to your supervisor immediately. Then as soon as practicable notify The Apprenticeship Factory. This is important as this type of injury can sometimes lead to problems in the future and if you have not reported the incident then you may find it hard to prove when claiming compensation at a later date.

We ask you to take all reasonable care in whatever job you are working on. However, should you have an accident at work there are some things you should know...

- a. You must inform the medical clinic that you attend, that The Apprenticeship Factory is your Employer and this is a workcover claim.
- b. **Advise your supervisor and The Apprenticeship Factory as soon as possible after the accident.**
- c. All accounts must be forwarded to The Apprenticeship Factory.
- d. An Initial WorkCover Medical Certificate must be obtained from your doctor and be forwarded to The Apprenticeship Factory as quickly as possible so the necessary paperwork can be completed to allow payment for time off work.
- e. Complete a claim form, available from The Apprenticeship Factory.

This is important as without a claim form being received fairly quickly your claim for compensation may not be accepted.

Workchoices Info For Young People

Earlier this week Industrial Relations Minister Rob Hulls launched an information brochure to help young people avoid exploitation under the Federal Government's workplace changes.

"Research shows young people are at risk of being exploited under WorkChoices because they have the least experience in negotiating pay and conditions," Mr Hulls said.

"Young people also have the least information about what the Federal Government's changes mean for them, and are less likely than older workers to know what their entitlements are. This group in our community is high on confidence but low on experience. Young people are also unlikely to seek help from their parents or a union when asked to bargain with an employer – a recipe for exploitation."

Mr Hulls launched the brochure prepared by the Office of the Workplace Rights Advocate, titled **Work Choices: What Parents & Young People Should Know**.

The brochure provides parents and young people with advice about their rights and entitlements under WorkChoices, and who to call for information on appropriate wage rates and conditions. It also reminds parents they must consent to agreements made with children under the age of 18.

The brochure is available through the Workplace Rights information line on 1300 882 648.

Workchoices - Time and Wage Records

The *Workplace Relations Regulations 2006* provide a single set of record keeping and payslip requirements. The new requirements reflect the operation of the new Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard, which provides a new benchmark of minimum entitlements for all employees covered by Workchoices.

In brief the records must include:

- The instrument which covers the employee (eg. Workplace agreement, award);
- Remuneration earned, including the hourly rate of pay, allowances and pay period;
- The total number of hours required to be worked by an employee, whose base salary is less than \$55,000 (indexed);
- The employee's start and finishing times where the employee is entitled to overtime loadings under an industrial instrument or a contract of employment;
- The accrual of annual, personal or other forms of leave and the balance of each type of leave;
- The amount of Superannuation contributions paid and the fund to which they were made

Payslips must include:

- Name of employee and employer;
- The classification of the employee under the relevant award or agreement;
- The date the payment covered by the payslip was made;
- The period to which the payslip relates;
- If the employee is paid at an hourly rate – the ordinary hourly rate, the number of hours paid at that rate and the amount of payment made at that rate. (Even if an employee is not paid at an hourly rate the rate paid at the latest date covered by the payslip must be shown as an hourly rate);
- The gross and net amounts of payment;
- Any other incentive based payments, bonuses and/or monetary allowances;
- Any deductions and made and the name of the fund or the account into which they were paid;
- If superannuation contributions were made the details of the amount of contributions made during the pay period to which the payslip relates and the name of the fund the contributions were paid into.

** An extension to the deadline for meeting these requirements has recently announced.*

This information is only provided as a guide only and is not a complete statement of the regulations. Further information is available from the Workchoices website at www.workchoices.gov.au

Just For Laughs...

Advertising that really gets your business noticed...

On a Plumber's Truck *'We repair what your husband fixed'*

Outside a Muffler shop *'No appointment necessary – we hear you coming'*

At a Radiator shop *'Best place in town to take a leak'*

Holmesglen Heritage Specialists

A new specialist centre to equip tradespeople and apprentices with the skills to conserve some of Victoria's oldest buildings has been opened at Holmesglen Institute of TAFE.

Traditional building, conservation and renovation skills are being included in the curriculum and will stop some of the building and painting techniques used on many heritage buildings from becoming a dying art.

This new heritage centre is expected to provide tradespeople and apprentices with the specialised skills and knowledge they need to ensure the conservation of commercial, public and domestic buildings to guarantee their character lives on.

The state government provided an establishment grant of \$250,000 for the centre and has also contributed an additional \$100,000 for staff professional development.

The heritage centre offers a number of short courses, including specialist skills in brickwork, timberwork, painting and decorating and glass conservation, which will be delivered through a network of TAFE institutes linked with the centre.

Battlers are Turning into Beemer Drivers

A recent article in the Sunday Telegraph titled Battlers are turning into Beemer drivers included the following:

"Anto Pratten, who operates a Sydney-based waterway cleaning business called Stormwater Systems, has been unable to find new employees in the city, forcing him to recruit backpackers and workers from the country. "Even my unskilled labourers get 40% above the award rate...and that's completely unskilled – without even a driver's license" Pratten says. Stormwater Systems also manufactures equipment for its work, but Anto Pratten says crucial but "old-fashioned" tradespeople such as metalworkers are increasingly hard to find.

"It's the old trades – the 'dirty trades', you might call them – that nobody wants to do," he says. For those who are willing, however, there's money to be made.

In the electricity industry, qualified linesmen and general electricians are earning as much as \$120,000 a year when overtime and penalties are factored in. Five years ago, their maximum rate would have been more like \$70,000, according to John Ingram, assistant national secretary of the CEPU. "It comes back to the concern about not putting enough money into apprenticeships," he says.

The article also contains an interesting "analysis" of the impact that higher tradesmen wages are now having on "car choices":

Sales of the iconic Holden utility crashed 19.5 % in the first part of 2006, while Falcon Ute sales fell 12.4%, according to Federal Chamber of Automobile Industries figures. Sales of luxury European vehicles, however, have been steadily increasing, with battlers-turned-BMW drivers thought to be among the biggest customers.

Skills Needs Mapped in Regional Victoria

A report mapping 'skills in demand' in North-East Victoria has found a shortage of workers in the construction, hospitality, transport and storage, and manufacturing industries. The report covered the local government areas of the Rural City of Wangaratta, the Alpine Shire, the Mansfield Shire and Benalla Rural City.

The report found the construction industry was most affected when it came to a shortage of skilled workers, it also found the hospitality, transport and storage, and manufacturing industries are expected to face significant shortages in the coming year.

The surveys were the result of a partnership between the state government, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and local government. For a copy of the reports on skills shortages visit

<http://www.employment.vic.gov.au/web10/dvcep.nsf/allDocs/RWP349C1F7313A06A42CA2571680010B825?OpenDocument>

Financial literacy for apprentices and trainees

You may be aware that the federal government has embarked on a campaign to improve the financial literacy of all Australians. This is a topic that affects us all. The campaign website is now up and running at www.understandingmoney.gov.au. It may be useful for apprentices and trainees to refer to this website for information that will assist them with various aspects of financial planning.

Apprentices, Maths & Physics

A recent article in The Australian titled Apprentices fall short in math and science once again highlighted the many extra miles that group training organisations are prepared to travel to guarantee quality training outcomes. Here is a flavour of the piece:

"A large workplace training provider has been forced to teach maths and physics to apprentice electricians. The move by Adelaide-based Peer Tec – which trains hundreds of apprentices – follows warnings that universities may need to lengthen courses or drop subjects unless the review of the South Australian Certificate of Education produces more maths and science students.

Peer Tec chief executive Michael Boyce said a shortfall in the maths and physics knowledge of students who had left in years 10 and 11 had forced the company to introduce classes for its first-year apprentices. He said the 40 hours of maths and physics classes were essential for apprentices training to be electricians, refrigerator mechanics and data communications technicians. "We have found that the Maths taught at Year 10 and 11 level is not relevant to what we require in electrotechnology courses" Mr Boyce said.

"The high school maths education does not provide them with the skills to work with formulas. Physics is required to be able to handle the concepts underpinning the trades." Peer Tec's parent, Group Training Australia (South Australia) has also hired senior maths teachers to review the "gaps" between senior school courses and the requirements of an electrical apprenticeship.

Changes to Redundancy Scheme

The Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Kevin Andrews, has announced a significant extension of the **General Employee Entitlements and Redundancy Scheme** (GEERS). The amount of unpaid redundancy pay available under GEERS will be doubled from 8 weeks to a maximum of 16 weeks.

The extension of GEERS brings it in to line with the community standard for redundancy provisions now in awards and agreements. Under GEERS, if a company goes into liquidation, the Australian Government provides swift financial assistance to support eligible employees who remain out of pocket due to their employer's inability to provide them with their entitlements.

Subject to eligibility and assistance limits outlined in the GEERS Operational Arrangements, claimants will now be entitled to:

- Unpaid/underpaid wages
- Unpaid annual leave
- Unpaid long service leave
- Unpaid pay in lieu of notice
- Unpaid redundancy pay up to a maximum of 16 weeks.

Commencement / Completion Update

The number of apprenticeship commencements for the calendar year to 31 July has declined 5.2% compared to 2005 (over 600 fewer apprenticeship commencements). Traineeship commencements have fallen 2.7% for the same period. Commencements of existing worker apprenticeships in July are 31% higher (from a small base) than the same month in 2005, reflecting the Skills Statement initiative for this training to move from fee-for-service to Government funded.

The number of apprenticeship and traineeship completions for the year to date has increased compared to last year (up 1.1% for apprenticeships and 4.1% for traineeships). The total number of apprentices in-training is 3.6% higher than the same point a year ago, which is reflected in the heavy demand on training facilities reported by TAFE Institutes; however, traineeship in-training numbers show a 7% decline compared to this time last year.

NAWIC (Vic/Tas) Trade Scholarship

The **National Association of Women in Construction** (NAWIC) has developed a Trade Scholarship to expand the opportunities and support of women who are currently undergoing an apprenticeship in a trade.

The primary aim of the NAWIC (VIC/TAS) Trades Scholarship is to provide support to women who have recently entered a trade in a construction related field. It also provides mentoring support to increase the opportunities and networks of the Scholarship winner. This is designed to ease the feelings of isolation or frustration that may come from working in a non-traditional area or a small workplace and to help the Scholarship winner progress in their chosen field.

If you would like more information about the scholarship please email shorn@thefactory.net.au

Labour Force Stats Key Points

JULY

TREND ESTIMATES (MONTHLY CHANGE)

- EMPLOYMENT increased to 10,214,200
- UNEMPLOYMENT decreased to 518,000
- UNEMPLOYMENT RATE decreased to 4.8%
- PARTICIPATION RATE increased to 64.8%.

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES (MONTHLY CHANGE)

EMPLOYMENT

- increased by 50,700 to 10,247,500. Full-time employment increased by 27,100 to 7,305,300 and part-time employment increased by 23,600 to 2,942,300.

UNEMPLOYMENT

- decreased by 14,100 to 513,900. The number of persons looking for full-time work decreased by 8,200 to 362,200 and the number of persons looking for part-time work decreased by 5,900 to 151,700.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

- decreased by 0.1 percentage point to 4.8%. The male unemployment rate decreased marginally to 4.7% and the female unemployment rate decreased by 0.3 percentage points to 4.8%.

PARTICIPATION RATE

- increased by 0.1 percentage point to 65.0%.

AUGUST

TREND ESTIMATES (MONTHLY CHANGE)

- EMPLOYMENT increased to 10,252,600
- UNEMPLOYMENT decreased to 518,400
- UNEMPLOYMENT RATE remained at 4.8%
- PARTICIPATION RATE increased to 65.0%

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES (MONTHLY CHANGE)

EMPLOYMENT

- increased by 23,400 to 10,265,500. Full-time employment increased by 22,600 to 7,324,200 and part-time employment increased marginally to 2,941,300.

UNEMPLOYMENT

- increased by 9,500 to 523,600. The number of persons looking for full-time work increased by 4,900 to 367,300 and the number of persons looking for part-time work increased by 4,700 to 156,300.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

- increased by 0.1 percentage point to 4.9%. The male unemployment rate remained at 4.7% and the female unemployment rate increased by 0.2 percentage points to 5.0%.

PARTICIPATION RATE

- increased by 0.1 percentage point to 65.1%.

Managing Workplace Depression

The cost of lost productivity in Victoria due to employees with untreated depression is estimated to be \$1.14 billion. For an organisation of 1000 staff, this equates to approximately \$650,000 per annum in lost productivity.

To help employers understand and deal with the issue, VECCI has joined with beyondblue – the national depression initiative, to deliver a series of employer briefings over the coming months. Neil Coulson, VECCI CEO, said depression in the workplace was an issue which businesses could understand and where they could assist.

“While depression is an individual condition with many and varied cases, businesses can take positive measures to assist employees with this illness” he said.

Beyondblue has developed, evaluated and extensively implemented a Depression in the Workplace program to more than 18,000 employees across the public and private sectors.

‘Depression in the Workplace’ briefings will be held at East Melbourne, Fairfield and Rowville. For full details, visit www.vecci.org.au. For further information on depression generally and the beyondblue workplace program, visit www.beyondblue.org.au or call the beyondblue information line on 1300 224 636.

Safety in the Workplace

Talking everybody’s language - WorkCover info for all Victorian workers

The Minister for WorkCover, John Lenders has launched a new telephone translating service for injured workers requiring help and advice.

The new service would help injured workers in Victoria that have previously found WorkCover information difficult to access due to language barriers.

The service will provide information about WorkCover entitlements and advice to return to health and work. If the recorded information does not answer questions callers can be put through to the WorkCover Advisory Service with the help of a translator.

The Talking your language service will also assist injured workers with English as their first language who have difficulty reading.

The new WorkCover service provides injured workers with information about how to apply for compensation for their injury and payment of medical bills and what support they can expect to receive to help them recover from their injury so they can return to work.

WorkCover information will be provided in Italian, Spanish, Greek, Turkish, Macedonian, Vietnamese, Cantonese Mandarin, and Arabic however people speaking other languages can get assistance through interpreters.

Talking your language service phone numbers:

Arabic 1300 554 987	Serbian 1300 722 595
Cantonese 1300 559 141	Spanish 1300 724 101
Greek 1300 650 535	Turkish 1300 725 445
Italian 1300 660 210	Vietnamese 1300 781 868
Macedonian 1300 661 494	Other 1300 782 343
Mandarin 1300 662 373	English 1300 782 442