

Tuesday 14 June 2016

Apprenticeship programs a boon for young and mature job seekers

The creation of 10,000 pre-apprenticeship places at TAFE for young people and a pilot program for mature-aged and retrenched workers are a win for Australian job seekers.

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten today announced details of 10,000 new Apprentice Ready places that will give young job seekers who have been unemployed for six months or more access to a 20-week, industry endorsed pre-apprenticeship course for trades on the National Skills Needs List.

A pilot National Skills Recognition Entitlement program to help 5,000 mature and retrenched workers return to the workforce, matching the workers' skills to a relevant traineeship, apprenticeship or emerging occupation, was also announced.

These two new programs follow Labor's earlier election commitment to ensuring one in 10 jobs on major Commonwealth-funded infrastructure projects go to apprentices, creating a further 2,600 jobs.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Ged Kearney:

"The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) views the creation of jobs and training as a core issue of the 2016 election and fully supports these two new programs."

"Australia's youth unemployment figures remain stubbornly high in the double digits across the country, with 12.3% of 18 to 24 year olds unemployed according to the latest jobless statistics."

"The Apprentice Ready program will see young people trained to be the mechanics, engineers, hairdressers, carpenters and bakers our country needs."

"It will give young people who are in dire need of work the qualifications they need, as well as providing an incentive for businesses to take them on as legitimate employees."

"Beyond his \$4 an hour 'interns' program, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has been silent on how a Coalition Government would create new jobs for young people within Australia."

"Mature-aged and retrenched workers also need support and training — opportunities for this important segment of the workforce has also been neglected by the Liberals."

"It's time to end the constant drivel about corporate tax cuts being the knight in shining armour for Australian job seekers."

"The ACTU and industry groups like the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Australian Industry Group agree that apprenticeships underpin the Australian workforce."

"The strength of these programs is another definitive reason to put the Liberals last this election."

Note: ACTU President Ged Kearney will hold a media conference on the steps of the West Australian Parliament House at 11.45am (WST) today.

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