

# Media Release

## Kickstart Summer With An Apprentice

1 December 2009 - For Immediate Release

Employers are being encouraged to kickstart summer with an apprentice by Skill360 Australia, the nation's foremost Group Training Organisation. From today, employers taking-on an apprentice are eligible to receive the Australian Government's Apprentice Kickstart Bonus, providing an extra \$3,350 in government incentives.

"With the support of the Australian Government Skill360 Australia is able to offer local employers cash incentives of \$3,350 when taking on an apprentice. It makes the decision to take on an apprentice a lot easier," said Troy Williams, Chief Executive Officer of Skill360 Australia.

The Apprentice Kickstart Bonus is an employer incentive designed to counteract the impact of the global recession on commencements and retention of young people in traditional trade apprenticeships. Employers who employ an apprentice who is aged nineteen years and under and is undertaking a Certificate III or IV level qualification that leads to a skills shortage trade occupation. The Apprentice Kickstart Bonus is a total of \$3,350 paid in installments of: \$850 paid at the three month point of the apprenticeship; and \$2,500 paid at the nine month point of the apprenticeship. The bonus is available to apprentices commencing between 1 December 2009 and 28 February 2010.

"Skill360 Australia has been working with businesses across the state's north for more than a quarter of a century to take-on an apprentice. Helping them access the Apprentice Kickstart Bonus is just one of many ways we work with local companies to make apprenticeships easy," Mr Williams said.

There is also welcome news for companies that currently have sufficient workload for an apprentice, but are unsure about their business prospects in twelve month's time. Mr Williams says the solution rests in the group training model, where Skill360 Australia employs the apprentice and places them with host employers.

"Group training is ideally suited for employers who are confident that they can hire an apprentice now, but not sure whether they will be able to do so in a year or so," Mr Williams said.

Under the group training model, such as that managed by Skill360 Australia, if a host employer finds themselves unable to sustain an apprentice, the apprentice is then placed with another employer so that their training can continue.

"We take care of complicated issues such as compliance with awards, payroll management and monitoring the apprentice's progress. Skill360 Australia employs the apprentices, organises their training, provides career guidance and mentoring. The host employers are simply responsible for providing them with on-the-job experience," Mr Williams said.

Costs associated with employing an apprentice through a group training scheme are invoiced to the host employer on a weekly basis. The complexities of awards, calculating leave entitlements and site allowances are all managed by Skill360 Australia who pays the apprentices directly.

"Group training allows employers to get on with the job of providing apprentices with real-life work experience, while Skill360 Australia takes care of the administrative workload." Mr Williams concluded.

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