



Editorial Comment by Peter Hendy, Chief Executive Officer, to the Daily Telegraph, Friday 11 April, 2003

“Boosting Skills”

Dear Editor

In response to your story headed “Any skills with that job? No – Fast food ‘cheap labour’” (Daily Telegraph April 9), new apprenticeships are without question one of the most effective vocational education and training arrangements currently available to entry level employees. New Apprenticeships build on the former traineeship and apprenticeship system which combines both on-the-job experience with structured training, resulting in a nationally recognised qualification.

New Apprenticeships have opened up opportunities to even more Australians by offering this type of arrangement in non-traditional occupations and to people of all ages. The net effect of this transition has made significant improvements to productivity across the overall economy.

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is concerned about skill shortages in traditional trade areas and, along with our members, have been working with government for some time to address skill shortage issues. The proportion of New Apprentices employed in traditional trade areas (36% of all New Apprentices as at 31 December 2002) still outweighs the overall proportion of the Australian labour force employed in these occupations (approximately 13%).

ACCI sees this trend as a positive move towards addressing skill shortages in the traditional trades.

Peter Hendy
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