

Media Release



MASTER BUILDERS
A U S T R A L I A

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Apprenticeships Important Election Policy Debate

Master Builders today welcomes the focus on apprenticeships and training in the election campaign with the release of the Australian Labor Party's policy agenda for apprenticeships. While the announcement is welcome in raising the issue of apprenticeships, more policies are needed.

"Labor's plan for apprenticeship quotas may assist but should not be a substitute to tackling the more fundamental policy challenges in the apprenticeship system," Wilhelm Harnisch CEO of Master Builders Australia said.

"Apprenticeships are an important part of the supply equation in making sure that we have the skilled workforce necessary to lift productivity in the building and construction industry," he said.

"Master Builders now calls on the major parties for their detailed policy solutions to dealing with the more fundamental challenges such as making apprenticeships an attractive career option; to redress the current fifty percent drop-off rate and to make the curriculum relevant to needs of the industry that is facing rapid construction technology changes," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

"A strong focus on apprenticeships is necessary to drive productivity and safety in the construction industry," he said.

"Providing young Australians with the opportunity to gain valuable training as an apprentice in the building and construction industry is an important component of making sure that the industry has a skilled workforce so that it can help build the future of this nation," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

"Investment in the construction industry is projected to expand and Master Builders projects that an additional 300,000 workers will be required over the next decade but is being constrained by an apprenticeship system that has not kept pace," he said.

"Master Builders has set benchmarks that would see 80% of the construction workforce holding a post-school qualification; 100,000 apprentices in training; training programmes delivered by both public and private RTOs delivering job ready apprentices; substantial improvement in the number of apprentices completing their apprenticeships and a training system that recognises the needs of business," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

"Master Builders welcomes Labor's plan to introduce an apprenticeship portal to connect young apprentices to employers and to the Apprentice Support Network Providers," he said.

"Master Builders also welcomes to focus on training quality with the appointment of a National Training Ombudsman and a National Apprentice Advocate to help protect apprentices from poorly performing RTOs," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

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