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Huge boost for apprentices, employers

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Around 6000 Territory jobseekers will gain apprenticeships over the next three years under a new \$8 million contract between the Commonwealth and NT governments and Group Training NT.

Announcing the New Apprenticeships Support Services contract today, Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said it would provide an enormous boost to apprenticeship training in the Territory, as well as helping small and large businesses to save time and money in recruiting apprentices.

Funding for the scheme of around \$8 million over the next three years will be provided equally by the Territory and Commonwealth governments.

The scheme will be administered by Group Training NT, in conjunction with the NT Chamber of Commerce and Industry, through the New Apprenticeships Centres in Darwin and Alice Springs.

The new contract includes a range of additional support services including:

- indigenous community contact officers with relevant language skills to help indigenous New Apprentices sign up to the scheme;
- employer workshops to assist with the recruitment and selection of New Apprentices;
- an Industrial Relations advice service;
- strong communication links with CDEP coordinators, Job Network members and Centrelink;
- an Employee Assistance Service to help resolve any employee-employer issues that may arise; and
- a mentoring support network for all indigenous New Apprentices.

"The scheme underlines Government's continuing commitment to supporting current and future new apprentices and employers in all areas of the Northern Territory," Mr Stirling said.

"Both employers and apprentices will benefit from increased access to these services in regional and remote areas of the Territory.

"In addition to existing information sites in Katherine and Nhulunbuy, a new information site will also be set up in Tennant Creek.

"The overall increase in New Apprenticeships Centre sites is further proof of the increasing demand for new apprentices who can contribute to a business's bottom line with the practical skills and knowledge they acquire through flexible training.

"New Apprenticeships Centres offer information and services to employers and people interested in becoming a new apprentice in more than 500 different occupations.

"These range from traditional job opportunities such as electrical, plumbing, carpentry and automotive, to business, IT, hospitality, community services, health, telecommunications, Indigenous support services and tourism.

"I am confident the new contract will build on the already impressive ability of the New Apprenticeships Centre to deliver high-quality services to employers, new apprentices and other interested people."

[to the top](#)