HELP AT HAND FOR RETRENCHED APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES

26 March 2009

Premier Nathan Rees today announced practical help for retrenched apprentices and trainees to find new jobs and one-off payments of up to $2,500 to cover relocation costs.

Mr Rees said that a register of retrenched apprentices and trainees will be established with dedicated staff, who will work to find employers who can offer a job, as well as quality on-the-job training.

“This will not only help young people get back into work quickly but will also boost confidence in apprenticeships during these difficult economic times.

“We can’t allow apprentices and trainees who’ve worked hard towards getting qualified to miss out because they’ve lost their jobs in these uncertain economic times.

“Our apprentices and trainees are the people who ultimately keep the wheels of NSW turning and it is important that we provide them with all the support they need.

“Apprentices from regional areas who have to relocate to complete their apprenticeship with a new employer may also receive one-off relocation payments of up to $2,500 through State Training Services.”

The single payment of up to $2,500 for each apprentice, will contribute to moving costs, rent for the first two weeks and a mandatory rental bond of up to 4 weeks rent.

Education Minister Verity Firth joined the Premier today and said that State Training Services would work closely with registered training organisations, including TAFE NSW, to provide a range of training options.

“We realise that it’s critical for an apprentice who loses their job to keep their skills up. Out-of-work apprentices will be able to continue their training at TAFE.

“TAFE will provide fast-tracked training which includes workplace simulation to sharpen their on the job skills. This will help get out-of-work apprentices back into jobs.”

Mr Rees said that over the past ten years there has been unparalleled growth in apprenticeships and traineeships.

“There are more than 153,000 apprentices and trainees currently employed in NSW, and some 53,000 of those are apprentices in traditional trades.

“In the last 12 months, more than 20,000 people have started an apprenticeship, representing a 10 per cent increase from 2006.

“Today’s assistance comes on top of our $370 million plan to create 6,000 additional government apprenticeships and cadetships over four years.”

All apprentices, and those trainees studying in skill shortage areas, can contact the Continuing Apprentices Placement Service on 13 28 11.