

# Aussie BRICKLAYER



Supported by the Brick and  
Block Manufacturers of Australia

Bricklayer & Apprentice  
Makes good business sense

VICTORIA

September 2010

## Byrne Construction Systems – A Real Success Story



Award Winning Brickwork at Arden St, North Melbourne Football Club

For 28 years now, Byrne Construction Systems has been serving the commercial construction industry as one of the largest builders and bricklayers in the state.

At the head is Michael Byrne, who began his career in 1972 as a bricklaying apprentice. Michael had some good mentors who guided him through his early years.

"My first was Tom Ellerkamp, then John Brockwell to finish my time. I did trade school at Collingwood Technical College, then my next mentor was Hienze Burmister, who showed me how to do the paperwork required to run a business. As a result Michael has a strong commitment to ensuring his staff learn business skills as well as trade skills," Michael said.

"Since then I have been perfecting site teams and systems to become one of the largest employers of bricklayers in Victoria," he added.

The training systems developed by Michael consists of four modules. These include:

- Tendering, estimating and office administration
- Setting up a project
- Site supervision and production
- Additional training for tickets

Over the years Byrne Construction Systems has completed some major building projects, including Doncaster Shopping Town, Bovis Lend Lease Head Office, Telstra Dome, Melbourne Museum and the restoration of the State Library.

Employing and training younger apprentices is another area where the Byrne company excels, with currently two third year, one second year and two first year bricklaying apprentices on the staff. These numbers include three apprentices from Burma. Since 1986 Michael has trained around 30 apprentices.

"We have our apprentices laying bricks/blocks from the first day on the job. We also teach them how to do the paper work on site and also in the office from time to time. This helps the apprentices understand the effort it takes to employ over 70 tradesmen in two states working sometimes on over 20 jobs a day. It also gives them an idea of the different options they can follow once they finish their time."

"The management staff in my office and my site supervisors are nearly all people whom we have trained, so the instruction of these trades people is a very important part of the business," Michael said.

Michael's sons now work for him in the business.

"ABBTf has done a fantastic job in recruiting good young people into the trade. My company's demographic has completely changed over the last few years with many young bricklayers applying for positions with BCS."

"I believe that every sub-contractor should have an apprentice, and with help from ABBTf and Government it just makes financial sense. It will help improve our trade and the better the people we attract, the better off we will all be in the long run."

Now that's a real bricklaying success story!

## Bricklaying Apprentice Award Winners

ABBTf sponsored award presentations were recently held at both Gordon and Holmesglen Institutes. Congratulations to the following award winners:

### Gordon Institute

- Bryce Torney – Best 1st Year  
Employer: KLG Bricklaying
- Jake Fraser – Best 2nd Year  
Employer: Newtown Bricklaying
- Craig Woods – Best 3rd Year  
Employer: Keystone Bricklaying

### Holmesglen Institute

- Nicholas Unwin – Best Pre-App  
Employer: BR & MT Hancock
- David Tweedly – Best 1st Year  
Host Employer: Cullen Bricklaying
- Reece Turner – Best 2nd Year  
Employer: Andrew Hurll Refractory Services
- Christopher Scarf – Best 3rd Year and Overall Apprentice of the Year  
Employer: Deca Constructions
- Charlie Kallergis – Most Improved  
Employer: EJK Brickworks
- Choi Seok Min – Best International

ABBTf would also like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of all the above employers and the TAFE trainers.

## Flexibility The Key To Vic. Uni. Bricklaying Success



The Vic Uni Bricklaying School at the Newport Campus is experiencing a healthy increase in apprentice numbers thanks to a flexible approach to the teaching of bricklaying and a good rapport with employers.

Lionel Skinner and Colin King are the bricklaying teachers and Colin reckons that numbers of apprentices have doubled in the six years he has been teaching at the campus and they expect numbers to continue increasing.

"Our flexibility includes having students come in for training when they can't work on site due to bad weather or perhaps the bricks have not arrived. By the same token we understand if the trainee can't leave a job to come in for training because they are at a particular stage on a project.

"Lionel Skinner also goes out on site to "meet and greet" employers and we are building a good rapport with them. Lionel does the signing up of apprentices on site and we can keep them in touch with our activities. We now have a lot of employers ringing us when they want to put on an apprentice which is great," said Colin.

The bricklaying teachers saw that ABBTF's subsidy for bricklaying apprentices is helping the industry and they support our pre-apprenticeships at VU as well as the Step Out Programs we run. ABBTF's Victorian manager, Jane Alexander, keeps in close contact.

The bricklaying school at the Newport campus has a new building completely dedicated to bricklayer training. The facility has given the bricklaying team the space they need for a growing bricklaying school as well as room to accept deliveries of bricks and other materials.

Tim Malberg and Murray Millar handle the pre-apprenticeship courses which run full time for 16 weeks.

The school is going so well that sessional or relief teachers have been brought in to assist. Shows what flexibility and commitment can do!

Call Vic Uni to see how they can assist you on 03 9919 8339.

## Kickstart Bonus for Bricklayers

The great news for bricklayers was the announcement of a new round of Kickstart incentives for employing apprentices.

This Federal Government initiative is designed to maintain the increase in commencements of apprentices to avoid skill shortages as the Australian economy continues its recovery from the impact of the global recession.

The Australian Government will provide a \$3,350 Apprentice Kickstart Extension until 12 November 2010. This will apply for employers and eligible Group Training Organisations, who take on a young person aged 19 years and under, into an apprenticeship.

We urge eligible employers to take on bricklaying apprentices and get a total benefit of \$13,350 which includes the normal ABBTF \$6,000 subsidy and the Federal Government's \$4,000 grant for employing apprentices.

Contact ABBTF on 1300 66 44 96 or email [abbtf@abbtf.com.au](mailto:abbtf@abbtf.com.au) for further information.

## ABBTF Moves Office

ABBTF has moved offices and our new address is Suite 24B, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin, Vic 3189.

Contact phone nos. for the Melbourne office are 03 9556 3000 or 1300 66 44 96, fax 03 9556 3099.

## Lester Wins Gold at WorldSkills in Brisbane 2010

NSW bricklayer Lester Tibbles has won the bricklaying competition at the 2010 National World Skills competition held in Brisbane earlier this year.



Lester also won the speed bricklaying component of the competition making him The Gun Trowel.

Victoria's contestants, Joseph Mark from Wendouree, Ben Davies from Thompson and Grant King from Belmont, performed well against the top level competition. Marc Howard from Mt. Martha could not compete due to an injured hand.

Geoff Noble, ABBTF's general manager said, "It is such a great event as it gives our best and brightest young apprentices a chance to compete at a national level and also provides a forum to show off their skills. WorldSkills clearly demonstrates that bricklaying is a real craft and ranks high as a trade in the construction industry.

"Each year we see so many great young people, a new breed of professionals with the right attitude, coming through the ranks of the competition. I am predicting many of them will be future leaders in the construction industry - with bricklaying their passport to success. We were very impressed with the demeanor of the contestants and their attitude to their work," Geoff Noble continued.

Geoff Noble paid tribute to the TAFE trainers and employers who work closely with the contestants to help them reach competition level.

# National REPORT



## Operating results for 2009/2010

During the year to June 2010 Australian Brick & Blocklaying Training Foundation (ABBTf) achieved the following:

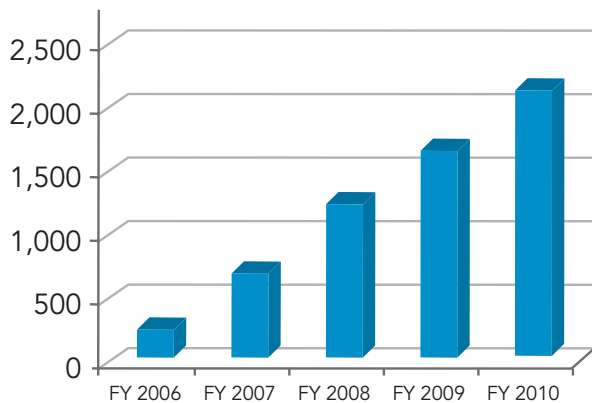
- Increased the number of supported apprentices by subsidies to their employers based on satisfactory training outcomes. The number has increased to 2,144 which is 34% higher than 2009.
- Introduction of new Brickstart bonus to employers in year one in some states as a short term promotion to boost apprentice commencements.
- Support for mature aged apprentices or their employers to overcome their financial disadvantage.
- More than 2,400 secondary students participated in ABBTf Step Out Programs to gain hands-on experience in bricklaying.
- Support for pre-entry training in bricklaying which saw 950 enrolments in preparation for an apprenticeship.
- Deployment of three field representatives across QLD, NSW and WA and two promotional Try a Trade vans to improve our coverage and influence with potential employers, school students and careers expos.
- Extension of the regional travel allowance to apprentices to more states to overcome the disadvantage of distance from training centres.
- Introduced financial support for existing workers to have their bricklaying skills assessed and recognised, to enable completion of gap training to achieve a qualification in bricklaying.
- Support and involvement in events at regional and national levels to promote high achievers and excellence in bricklaying including WorldSkills, Golden Trowel and Brick Masterclass.
- Initiate collaborative meetings of TAFE training personnel for validation of the new training package, resource sharing and receiving ABBTf and industry information.
- Creation of new marketing image and logo to focus on the separate targets of the potential apprentice and to the bricklayer as the employer.
- A new website to attract young people into bricklaying.
- Publication of 18 editions of newsletters which have been revamped to target bricklayers and industry stakeholders.
- Attendance at 134 career events and promotions to encourage young people into the trade.

Operating Results	2009/10 No.s	2008/09 No.s	Financial Results	2009/10 \$000's	2008/09 \$000's
Apprentices Supported by ABBTf	2,144	1,628	Revenue	7,074	6,635
Mature Apprentices Supported	61	79	Total Expenditure	9,251	6,477
Apprentices in Training	2,776	2,641	Operating Surplus	(2,177)	158
Step Out Program Students	2,424	3,027	Training Reserve	2,247	4,424
App Regional Travel Support	30	0	App Subsidies to Employers	6,420	3,533
Pre-Apprenticeship Enrolments	950	635	Training Support	270	316
TAFE Colleges and RTO's	52	50	Step Out Program	730	747
Group Training Organisations	67	70	Promotion	742	790
Careers Events Attended	134	124	Development	650	649
Newsletter Mailing List	50,000	44,000	Administration	439	442

The full Statutory Annual Report will be available on the website or hardcopy on request.

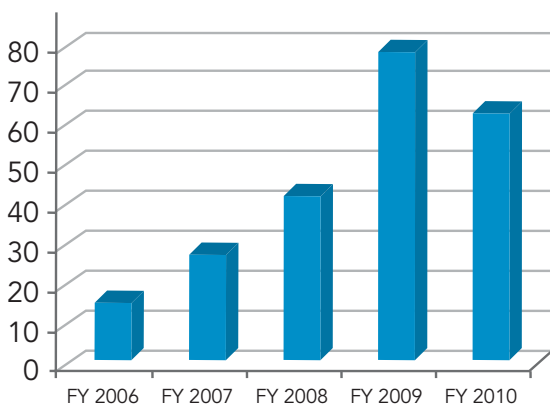
## National Operating Results for 2009-2010

### Supported Apprentices



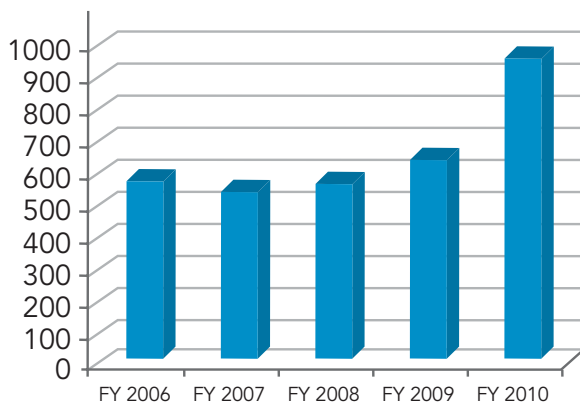
The strong growth in the number of subsidised apprentices has continued in the year to June 2010. ABBTF support has helped employers train and retain their apprentices.

### Mature Age Support



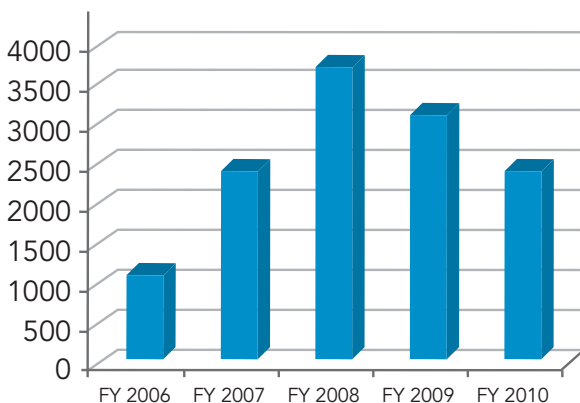
ABBTF supports apprentices over the age of 21 (23 in Victoria) with payments to overcome the financial disadvantage of apprentices in this older age group.

### Pre-Entry Support



ABBTF support has helped encourage young people to complete bricklayer training in pre-apprenticeship or pre-vocational courses to make them work ready to start an apprenticeship.

### Step Out Programs



The ABBTF Step Out Program has been a strong influence on career choices in construction. The one week hands-on taster has varied across regions to a shorter try-a-trade at careers events. More than 11,500 students have completed the schools bricklaying program over the past four years.

## Master Tradesman by Master Builders



ABBTF have partnered with Master Builders to assist trade qualified and non-qualified bricklayers to gain a limited builder license registration and Master Tradesman recognition. Master Builders has launched a new category of "Master Tradesman" to provide registered trades with true recognition of their skills and competence.

ABBTF is providing funding support for non-qualified bricklayers who are assessed for RPL and complete gap training if required, to gain their full bricklaying qualification.

As a Master Tradesman, bricklayers and other trades will have access to all Master Builders support services including industry training, free legal advice, OH&S support and technical advice.

To discuss becoming a Master Tradesman call Master Builders on 03 9411 4552.

