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Governments' Economic Boost to Housing Creates Even More Urgency For Recruitment of Bricklaying Apprentices

The Federal Government's extension of the generous boost to the First Home Buyers Grant has been a huge success with the number of home loans increasing 25.3% in the seven months period to 30 April 2009.

According to Geoff Noble, general manager of the Australian Brick & Blocklaying Training Foundation (ABBTF), the government economic boosts, combined with low interest rates and strong housing demand, are creating more urgency for the recruitment of bricklayers as the orders for new housing come through the system.

'We are obviously headed toward a strong rebound in residential construction and Federal and State Governments are pumping money into major infrastructure projects such as schools which will create even more demand for bricklaying skills.

"ABBTF has been very active in the recruitment and training of bricklaying apprentices and we provide a subsidy of \$6,000 per apprentices employed. This is being topped up with a \$4,000 grant from the Federal Government.

"The good news is that all this means opportunities for young people who want to establish a clear career path in the construction industry which can go well beyond being a bricklayer," said Geoff Noble.

Noble also believes the push toward housing sustainability is going to create more demand for bricks, due to their thermal mass benefits, an important factor in controlling internal temperatures and reducing energy usage for heating and cooling.

"Research at the University of Newcastle has shown that incorporating thermal mass into a home can reduce energy usage for heating and cooling by up to 22%. With Ministers at the Commonwealth of Australian Government (COAG) meeting agreeing to adopt a Six Star standard in housing, there is going to be more brick used in housing construction due to their thermal mass.

"That will require a surge in the number of bricklayers available, to not only meet increased demand, but also to replace aging bricklayers who will leave the industry over the next two to three years," Geoff Noble added.

He urged prospective bricklaying apprentices to call the ABBTF 1300 66 44 96 and assistance will be provided on the steps required to get started with a

bricklaying career. “We also want employers to give us a call so that we can put them in touch with people who want to obtain an apprenticeship.

“Our website www.becomeabricklayer.com.au is a great resource for everything you want to know about a bricklaying career and there are some very interesting success stories on the site. It’s a very good time to be starting a career in the construction industry with the opportunity to one day be your own boss,”