

# Become a

# BRICKLAYER

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VICTORIA

MARCH 2009

Newsletter of **ABBTF**  
AUSTRALIAN BRICK & BLOCKLAYING  
TRAINING FOUNDATION LIMITED

## Porter Davis Homes Supporting Apprentices

Leading Victorian home builder Porter Davis Homes, acknowledges its corporate responsibility to assist in the development of apprentices within the industry.

This commitment is evident in the development of our Apprenticeship Program. Porter Davis's, Teresa Wright, said the program focuses on supporting students to achieve a formal trade qualification whilst gaining practical experience through an on site arrangement.

"In providing such support and training we hope, to some extent, to address the current skills shortage within the construction industry. Currently we have five bricklaying apprentices directly employed. One of our apprentice bricklayers completed his qualification in May 2008 with another ready to complete in July 2009.



L-R Mitch Gillet – Bricklaying Apprentice with fellow Porter Davis apprentices Tory Liuzzi and Justin Koob

"During their third year we enrol and fund each of our apprentices to attend the Apprentice to Sub-Contractor course, run through the Master Builders Association. Through the course we hope to have our apprentices "Job Ready" - able to become a registered builder, complete quotations/estimates and have a general understanding of tax and business laws," said Teresa.

Porter Davis provide guidance from qualified trades; with each apprentice initially matched to a suitable sub-contractor. The company tries to get the right mix of personalities, along with the right sub contractor committed to the training and development of the apprentice. Apprentices also learn to work in with other apprentices and trades on building sites.

Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship, and as a sign of the company's appreciation and recognition of their commitment to Porter Davis, each apprentice is presented with a Bunnings voucher to help them get started as a Porter Davis contractor. Assistance is also given for the purchasing of a trailer and additional tools.

"On completion, and on taking up our offer to becoming one of our trades, we provide our apprentices come subbies with ongoing and regular work, prompt weekly payments, work in their local area, and invitations to our regular sub-contactors' events.

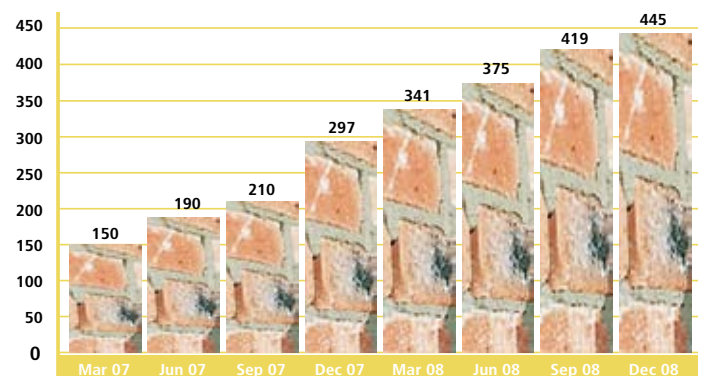
"During their apprenticeship they are also exposed to the general construction operations of Porter Davis through interactions with various building managers, construction managers, supervisors and other office staff," she added.

Porter Davis recognises the valuable support from ABBTF for their apprentice program with a \$6,000 subsidy for each apprentice paid over three years. Porter Davis is a great supporter of the scheme through their contribution via the purchase of bricks and blocks which is matched by their supplier.

## Growth in Subsidised Apprentices

ABBTF subsidies have led to growth in supported apprentices with 445 employers subsidised for their apprentice either directly or through a Group Training Company.

The graph shows a good response from bricklayers to take on a new apprentice.



## Support for Bricklayers Affected by the Victorian Bushfires

The Victorian Government has announced support packages to assist apprentices and bricklayers who have been affected by the recent bushfires.

ABBTF welcomes this support and can assist with information on your entitlements. Contact ABBTF on 1300 66 44 96.

HIA has also established a "Tools for the Tradies" program to assist tradespeople, in affected areas, who lost tools and equipment. Contact HIA on 03 9280 8275.

## Peter and Darren Take on Apprentices in South Gippsland

Peter Ryan and his partner Darren Read run a successful bricklaying business, R & R Bricklaying & Paving in Leongatha and employ four apprentices, Daniel Pearce, Luke Bullen, Kevin DeGraaf and Brett Forrester.

Each of the apprentices is subsidised by the ABBTF's subsidy scheme of up to \$6,000 paid over three years to assist training and employment. Two of the apprentices, being mature age, will also qualify for ABBTF's support of \$2,000 in their first year.



L-R: Apprentice Brett Forrester, with Darren Read and Peter Ryan and Apprentices Daniel Pearce, Luke Bullen and Kevin DeGraaf.

Peter and Darren have not considered employing apprentices in the past, as there has not been sufficient government and industry support for small business.

"The new initiatives have enabled our business to expand and provide work and career opportunities to local people," said Peter.

The four apprentices attend training at Holmesglen Institute of TAFE at different times, so only one is away at a time.

Peter, who has been bricklaying for 25 years, has had a long association with bricks with his father, Dennis, running Ryan's Bricks, a well known Build Pro brick distribution and transport company in Leongatha. Peter's brother and sister also work in the family business.

Peter says his apprentices are working well. "We get them onto the trowel as much as possible so that they can learn the skills to make them efficient members of the gang.

"Ken Foster from Holmesglen Institute of TAFE came out to the site recently to do an assessment and was very pleased with their progress. We would take on more apprentices but it is hard to get young people interested or people with the right attitude.

## Options for Employers with Apprentices

If your workload is slowing down and you are concerned that you may have to let your apprentice go, there are many options for you to consider, here are a few:

- Apprentice can be temporarily assigned to another employer provided the employer who signed the training contract takes responsibility for complying with all requirements.
- Apprentice may be able to attend off-the-job training with your TAFE/RTO on a full-time basis during the slow period.

- Apprentice may be able to take annual leave.
- Employers can apply for a temporary stand down of the apprenticeship until their workload improves. If this happens the apprentice should enquire at Centrelink as they may be eligible for financial support.
- Apprentice may also be able to do unrelated work during the stand down period.
- A recent announcement by the Federal Government and Skills Victoria, provide additional incentives to employers who take on an out of trade apprentice to complete their training.
- Maintain an open dialogue with your apprentice, as there may be solution just around the corner that one party has not considered.

For more information call ABBTF on 1300 66 44 96.

## Scott Cam Speaks to Bricklayers



A radio campaign ran in January-February 2009 to attract good quality young people to bricklaying as well as tell contractors about the ABBTF subsidies available for signing on a new apprentice.

The familiar voice of Scott Cam, of television's Domestic Blitz program fame, has told bricklayers about the \$10,000

(\$6,000 from ABBTF and \$4,000 from the Federal Government) on offer for starting a new apprentice.

Scott said, "You would be crazy not to put on an apprentice with such good support available."

The campaign continues the ABBTF's strong promotional push to lift the image of bricklaying and encourage the recruitment of bricklaying apprentices and was run in metropolitan and country areas throughout Victoria.

To listen to the commercials or for further information on apprenticeships or subsidies to bricklayers contact ABBTF on 1300 66 44 96, or you can visit [www.becomeabricklayer.com.au](http://www.becomeabricklayer.com.au)

## Bricklayers Have Your Say

ABBTF is involved in an important national research project to improve the retention and completion of apprenticeships in bricklaying.

The research will provide the Skills Council under the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and ABBTF with vital information for framing future programs to address the skill shortage in bricklaying.

Bricklayers around the country are being asked what works and what doesn't work in training and employing apprentices. Ideas and feedback from bricklayers will be gathered over the next few months.

If you want to take part and have your say, call ABBTF on 1300 66 44 96 or email [abbtf@holmesglen.vic.edu.au](mailto:abbtf@holmesglen.vic.edu.au)