

# Aussie BRICKLAYER



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Bricklayer & Apprentice  
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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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## Bricklayers! Federal Government Reintroduces Kickstart Bonus

The great news for the construction industry, from the Federal Budget, was the announcement of a new round of Kickstart incentives for employing apprentices.

This initiative is designed to maintain the increase in commencements of young people into a traditional Australian trade apprenticeship, to avoid skills shortages, as the Australian economy continues its recovery from the impact of the global recession.

Between 12 May 2010 and 12 November 2010 (inclusive), the Australian Government will provide a \$3,350 Apprentice Kickstart Extension. This will apply for employers and eligible Group Training Organisations, who take on a young person aged 19 years and under, into a traditional Australian trade apprenticeship.

Don't forget the normal ABBTF \$6,000 subsidy, the CTF support of \$9,000 and the Federal Government's \$4,000 grant for employing apprentices still apply. The total incentive value in Western Australia (Kickstart inclusive) is \$22,350.

For more information contact Dean Pearson at ABBTF on 1300 66 44 96 or email deanp.abbtbf@bigpond.com

## Record Numbers Ready to Go to Work!

Over the past 12 months more than 288 young people have signed up for bricklayer training through a pre-vocational program. This record number of excellent candidates will give employers a great opportunity to add a quality apprentice to their gang.

With the forecast increase in housing starts and best ever employment incentives there is no better time to sign up an apprentice.

## Ian Fitzgerald Joins ABBTF



We welcome Ian Fitzgerald, formerly RTO manager for Regional Training Services, who has joined the ABBTF WA team to boost our presence in the field. He is a fifth generation bricklayer and a qualified trainer and assessor who has a passion for the industry.

According to ABBTF's WA manager, Dean Pearson, Ian is highly regarded in the construction industry and is a very knowledgeable and well liked identity.

"Ian will be an asset to the WA team where his industry knowledge and relationship building skills will be utilised to help grow bricklaying apprentice numbers in this state.

"His appointment has come at an opportune time as WA is currently enjoying an upsurge in building activity. For instance in a recent West Australian newspaper there were 46 advertisements for bricklayers!

"We want to tap into the industry's need for skilled bricklayers and place some very keen and able bricklaying apprentice starters coming out of the ABBTF's Step Out Programs conducted in schools," said Dean Pearson.

Ian will also be assisting at Careers Expos and some Regional Step Out Programs and is looking forward to reaching more young people to encourage them to take up the trade.

"His appointment indicates a determination by the ABBTF to make every effort to avoid serious bricklaying skill shortages in the industry".

You will see Ian in his new ABBTF van with sign writing on it promoting bricklaying as a career.

## Supported Apprentices Tops 400 in WA

ABBTF is now supporting employers of more than 400 apprentice bricklayers in WA. This rapid growth in supported apprentices has come about in a little more than three years when the ABBTF program was launched.

ABBTF Brickstart subsidies for employing apprentices, is a major investment from brick manufacturers: Midland Brick, Austral Bricks and Geraldton Bricks and their customers.

It demonstrates their commitment to addressing the skill shortage and providing for the next generation of skilled bricklayers. This impressive growth comes as a result of strong promotional campaigns, Step Out Programs in schools and support for pre-entry training in bricklaying.

"Our challenge is to increase this number to over 500 in the next 12 months," said Dean Pearson, WA manager.

## Why Do Employers Take on Apprentices?

An extensive national survey of bricklayers last year, asked the reasons why employers take on apprentices?

The responses included:

- Makes good business sense
- Apprentices are more likely to stay with an employer over the 3 years
- Because the employer was an apprentice once
- It costs less to employ an apprentice

It was also interesting that 54% of bricklayers said they break-even or make money with an apprentice in the first year. Obviously the earlier the training happens, the more productive the apprentice becomes.

ABBTF encourages builders to support bricklayers who indenture or host apprentices of their own for the following reasons:

1. It helps to create future trade based loyalty
2. By having a secure trade base it minimises costly construction blowouts
3. Trade qualified bricklayers have competencies that may add value to the final product, giving you a competitive edge
4. Gives you the integrity as a builder working towards addressing the skill shortage rather than complaining about it!

## Support for Suicide Prevention

Recently ABBTF WA committed to supporting suicide prevention programs for 1st year bricklaying apprentices via Ozhelp, an organisation developed to assist tradesmen and apprentices in the industry with social issues. The program will identify and overcome social issues including the pitfalls of drug and alcohol use.

"As well as providing monetary support, ABBTF will provide access to its stakeholders," said Dean Pearson ABBTF WA manager.

Julian Gimpel and the Ozhelp team will run mentoring training MIC (Mates in Construction) for bricklaying lecturers and field officers where apprentices are employed.

## WA Competes at National WorldSkills in Brisbane

Western Australia recently sent two of its best apprentice bricklayers to the bricklaying competition at the 2010 National World Skills event held in Brisbane in May.

The event included competitors, from all states and the ACT, who had to complete a clay brick and concrete masonry project which required much of their knowledge and skills derived from their apprenticeship training. All but one of the competitors completed the project where our boys Ryan Kretzin and Luke Dixon (employed by the HIA) finished well.



Ryan Kretzin



Luke Dixon

The event was won by Lester Tibbles from NSW who also won the speed bricklaying component of the competition making him The Gun Trowel, sponsored by the ABBTF.

For the competition, ABBTF assisted with the judging and WA state manager Dean Pearson was in the thick of things mixing mud and generally assisting with the event.

Eddie Campbell, senior lecturer Polytechnic West was the trainer and manager of the WA bricklaying team.

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.

## Bricklaying Wins Green Award at WorldSkills

Bricklaying also won the WorldSkills Environmental Award from more than 40 competing apprenticeship categories.

Troy Everett, chief judge of bricklaying, said there was a strong focus on environmental considerations such as recycling water, reuse of off-cuts, tidy work areas and recycling bricks for community projects and other training. There was no waste water that entered any drainage system at all at the WorldSkills venue.

Troy received the Green Award from Cathy Crawley, Principal and Leader ARUP Sustainability in a special awards presentation. This is a great achievement for the group and the trade of bricklaying.

## ABBTF at Careers, Employment & Education Expo in Perth

ABBTF has again held a Try-a-Trade at the Perth Convention Centre in May at the Careers, Employment & Education Expo. This saw a record 15,529 people attend over the four days. Schools that participated included: Clontarf Aboriginal School, Mandurah SHS, Pinjara SHS and Bunbury SHS.

Many school students tried bricklaying for the first time, where over 20 genuine expressions of interest were taken and many more made career enquiries. Industry people supporting the Try-a-Trade included The Homebuyer Centre (ABN), Greg James Bricklaying, Skillhire, Silver Trowel and ABBTF field representative Ian Fitzgerald.



Jamie Lee Auhl and Sarah Jeffries with ABN apprentice Chris Johnson

