

Aussie BRICKLAYER

Bricklayer & Apprentice
Makes good business sense

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

March 2010

Mark Baker's Flexible Training Program

Mortar Trades lecturer, Mark Baker, has worked in the building industry for more than 30 years. He gained extensive knowledge in carpentry and joinery as an apprentice and then in 1990 he changed to bricklaying and achieved his second trade certificate. "The knowledge I acquired from carpentry and bricklaying also made learning other trades achievable. These included skills in tiling, concreting, painting, brick paving, operating machinery and scaffolding," said Mark.

In 1992 he started his own bricklaying business partnership and his company was later recognised with Master Builders Building Excellence Awards, winning two silver trowel awards. As if this was not enough, Mark began working as a casual lecturer at Bunbury South West Regional College in 2004. In typical Mark Baker fashion he was dedicated to teaching from the start, ensuring each student received constant individual tuition and understood the delivery of the assignment.

Now a senior lecturer at the college, Mark recently completed a Master Builders Safety Course adding even further to his skills.

He has now worked, with his training colleagues, on the development of a new flexible training program based on a practical project which is supported by skills progression or milestones indicating skills needed in a particular time period.

"The program is designed to separate training from assessment so we take into account their skills on-site. If skills gained on-site can meet the skill progression milestones the off-site training component may not be required. This involves regular site visits to carry out assessments, as well as talking to the employer about the students' real life progress.

"Put simply this practical project and all of its content will simulate the real thing. Students will be able to research all the components online from suggested websites. This is flexible and self paced learning critical to the needs of students and industry," Mark continued enthusiastically.

We know bricklaying students are in good hands when you look at Mark's achievements and skills, as well as his commitment to the trade.



Mark Baker (2nd from left), with bricklaying apprentices

WA Competes at National WorldSkills in Brisbane

WA apprentices will be competing at the 2010 National WorldSkills competition to be held in Brisbane from Friday 7 to Sunday 9 May 2010.

Over 500 competitors from 30 regions around Australia will compete for a national title. Over 80,000 visitors are expected to attend the free public event. ABBTf is a sponsor and will be assisting with the judging.

Medalists may advance to the International WorldSkills competition in London in 2011. In 2009 Nigel Croke won Bronze in the bricklaying competition at the International WorldSkills competition in Canada.

"This is where you will see the cream of Australia's bricklayers demonstrating their great technical skills. It's an event that nobody in the construction industry should miss," said Dean Pearson.



WorldSkills Bricklaying Competitors
Arena - 2008 in Sydney

Western Australia's bricklaying competitors will be Luke Dixon and Ryan Krentzin. Both are employed by HIA. Ryan's host employers are Charlie Artuso and Anthony Amenti. Luke's host employer is Vincent Ciccarone. The apprentices are being trained by Eddie Campbell from Polytechnic West and both boys are looking forward to the challenge of competing against the best bricklayers in Australia.



SOP Students at Northam Senior High School

Have Trowel Will Travel

ABBTF is very active with Try-a-Trade demonstrations and Step Out Programs (SOP) in the regions to ensure we promote bricklaying as a career across the State. Last year one in every three SOPs were held in various regions including Bruce Rock, Dongara, Kalgoorlie Boulder, Lake Grace, Manjimup, Moora, Mt. Magnet, Mullewa, Narrogin, Narrogin Ag, Newton Moore, Pinjarra, Toodyay and York.

The regions are very important to the ABBTF with many stakeholders reporting the need for more competent bricklayers to undertake trade work in areas of economic growth.

Dean Pearson, ABBTF's WA manager will be on the road again during 2010. "It is going to be a very busy year. With an improving economy we will see increased demand for skilled bricklayers across the State," said Dean.

Occupational Licensing is Coming!

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has endorsed an agreement for a national licensing system for specified occupations including bricklaying. The states and territories have agreed to begin the implementation process which is scheduled to commence on 1 July 2012.

ABBTF supports the recognition of skills for occupational licensing purposes and is keen to promote recognition of prior learning (RPL) where skills, accumulated on the job over the years, can be assessed as part of the learning process to help trades get a qualification.

Contact ABBTF's WA manager, Dean Pearson, for more info on acquiring trade qualifications 1300 66 44 96.

Avatar Star was a Brickie!

Sam Worthington, the star of the blockbuster movie Avatar, was a bricklayer. Sam, originally from WA, spent some time working on site as a bricklayer in Queensland. While bricklaying does provide a career path in construction and other industries, we never thought it would lead to Hollywood stardom!

ABBTF Supports Bricklaying Trade Skills Recognition – \$400 Tool Voucher Incentive

ABBTF is fully committed to promoting bricklayer trade training not only via apprenticeship development but also through the process of recognising the trade skills of existing bricklayers via Trade Skills Recognition (TSR), also known as Recognised Prior Learning (RPL).

To promote TSR, ABBTF is offering a one-off tool voucher incentive to the value of \$400 for those bricklayers undertaking TSR and successfully obtaining a trade certificate from the Registered Training Organisation. Contact ABBTF for further information on 1300 66 44 96.

New Look for ABBTF

Our newsletter "Aussie Bricklayer" has been redesigned and renamed to focus on the bricklaying trade. Our aim is to lift the image of bricklaying, promote the benefits of training and make the industry aware that putting on an apprentice "makes good business sense". We hope you continue to enjoy the articles in our newsletters to come.

Kick Start Bonus Campaign Works

The Federal Government's Kick Start Bonus which operated during the period December, January and February was supported by an ABBTF extensive marketing campaign. The campaign included advertisements highlighting the benefits of the Kick Start Bonus combined with the normal Federal Government \$4,000 subsidy and the ABBTF's \$6,000 subsidy per apprentice.

ABBTF advertisements appeared in the Sunday Times and the West Australian as well as industry magazines such as the HIA and the MBA. Direct SMS messages were sent to bricklayers in the state.

Dean Pearson said; "We received about 60 enquiries regarding the Kick Start Bonus and have been following up to convert them into bricklaying apprenticeships".

Accelerate Your Career

ABBTF is supporting the Fast Track Apprenticeship Program which allows more flexibility and completion based on competency rather than time-served.

Recent changes in legislation allow more flexibility to complete an apprenticeship sooner. Apprentices can now gain a trade qualification by recognising and building on their existing knowledge, skills and experience.

Employers can work with the training provider to deliver an apprenticeship that directly relates to the needs of their business. Employers can use this initiative to reward existing unqualified staff or attract an apprentice with a strong work ethic and motivation to learn.

Financial incentives are available for both employer and employee to enter into a training contract. Contact the Australian Apprenticeship Centre on 13 38 73 to find out what incentives you may be eligible for. To find out more go to www.FastTrack.wa.edu.au or phone 1800 913 233.

