National Skills Week will officially be launched by the Federal Minister Senator Chris Evans at the National Press Club in Canberra on September 21, 2011. The launch will be broadcast live on the ABC and Sky News.

“Australian Apprenticeships, especially traditional trades are an undervalued career choice and often described in negative terms.”

“There should be a strategy to lift the status of apprenticeships and traineeships as representing a pathway towards a satisfying career. There should also be strategies to increase involvement by males and females in non-traditional gender occupations. A plan should be developed that targets career counsellors, parents, the community, students and employers.”

Apprenticeships for the 21st Century, January 2011

National Skills Week is a new initiative, a collaborative approach dedicated to raising the status of practical and vocational learning, enabling all Australians to gain a greater understanding of the opportunities, their potential and how they contribute to a successful, modern economy. Learning by doing is as important as academic learning – there are many paths to success.

Importantly, the concept of National Skills Week will provide focus to Vocational Education and Training (VET), its achievements, the contribution, the career pathways, the opportunities and the success stories.

National Skills Week will bring to life the positive messages, highlighting the talents, the skills and the value of apprentices and trainees across Australia to the wider public and employers. The week will be dedicated to raising the status of practical and vocational learning. Further information can be found at www.nationalskillsweek.com.au.

Australia continues to experience an increase in demand for skilled labour, which requires increased workforce participation, increased skill attainment and the employment of attraction and retention strategies.
The recent report *Apprenticeships for the 21st Century* from January 2011 highlighted the need to dispel the outdated myths often associated with vocational training.

Importantly, the concept of National Skills Week will provide focus to Vocational Education & Training (VET), its achievements, the contribution, the career pathways, the opportunities and the success stories.

This concept has been developed by SkillsOne and was submitted to Skills Australia, who endorsed the project through the Skills Australia Board.

Importantly, News Limited has agreed to support National Skills Week as the official media partner nationally (News Ltd. Are sponsors of WorldSkills Australia). This will provide considerable media opportunity and leverage for the Government and VET generally. SkillsOne Television will also add additional programming for the week to be aired via Foxtel and Austar nationally, with promotion and content via Sky News Business Channel.

Rotary are also involved. October is Rotary’s Vocational Month adding further momentum to the week.

The International WorldSkills Competition, often referred to as the skills Olympics, takes place in London (October 5th – 8th, 2011). Over 50 nations will be competing, including Australia who will be sending a team of 29 of Australia’s elite skilled champions.

The Skillaroos will be representing 27 different skill categories such as Restaurant Service, Fashion Technology, Car Painting and Landscape Gardening.

The 41st WorldSkills Competition London 2011 will be a showcase of the global skills standards displayed by competitors from over 50 countries representing 45 skill areas. The competition is expected to draw crowds of over 150,000 people.

National Skills Week will capitalise on and leverage the activities of WorldSkills in London, generating significant media coverage and raising the profile of VET generally, along with its diversity.

Further details, themes, objectives and importantly how you can get involved are available through the website [www.nationalskillsweek.com.au](http://www.nationalskillsweek.com.au) or contact:

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Built on Skills

National Skills Week
Hands and Minds - The DNA of skills and trades
October 1-8, 2011