senator the hon chris evans
leader of the government in the senate
minister for tertiary education, skills, science and research

media release

28 september 2012

$20 million power up for electrical apprentices

around 2,500 electrical apprentices will benefit from a partnership between ee-oz training standards and the gillard government.

minister for skills, senator chris evans, today announced ee-oz, the industry skills council for electrocomms and energy utilities industries, will receive more than $20 million to introduce vital reforms to electrical apprenticeships and improve retention of electrical apprentices.

the initiative, led by industry, enables apprentices to progress through their training as they demonstrate the required competencies, rather than on a time served basis.

"it means that apprentices who meet competencies earlier benefit by obtaining their formal qualification sooner," senator evans said.

"these reforms are about recognising that apprentices are no longer just school leavers – many bring valuable skills and experiences to their apprenticeships which should be recognised through competency based progression.

"with growing demand for electricians, employers will benefit by getting qualified workers sooner."

senator evans said the apprentices would also receive help to complete their training, with targeted mentoring and support.

ee-oz will engage 50 industry qualified mentors and advisers to support apprentices and employers to help raise completion rates.

"mentoring is a proven way to help improve the experience of an apprentice, especially in the first years of their training when they are not only learning new skills, but also getting used to the routine and discipline required in a workplace," senator evans said.

"the mentors and advisers will help to improve retention rates by giving potential apprentices a realistic expectation of the requirements of technical training by providing a comprehensive mentoring service.

"this partnership with ee-oz is an investment in the future skills of australian workers, the strength of australian business and the national economy.

"it reinforces our government's strong record of reforming australian apprenticeships to meet future skills needs."

ee-oz will contribute just under $5 million to the initiative.

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