

Showcasing Skills for Economic Prosperity

WorldSkills Australia not only showcases skills for the economic prosperity of Australia, we also equip young Australians with the skills to compete in the globalised economy of the future.

Through our programs of competitions and international pathways WorldSkills Australia is inspiring excellence in skills and instilling confidence to succeed.

Despite the fact that we were faced with a global economic slowdown last year, everyone involved in the training sector continued to highlight the importance of a strong skills base. As a result, the need to continue to strive for skills excellence and to raise the awareness of the opportunities that are available in a trade or skills based career remains the best way of achieving this is by showcasing real role models.

Throughout 2009 we have been privileged to witness some tremendous role models – Skill Ambassadors to whom all Australians can aspire.

Unfortunately, not everyone is aware of the fantastic achievements that our 2009 Team Australia *Skillaroo achieved at WorldSkills International Competition, Calgary 2009*. . **12 medals, 12 medallions** of excellence and a ranking of **5th in the world**, a magnificent and well deserved result.

Each member of this team proudly represented their country in Calgary and without doubt, the results they were able to achieve will act as a catalyst for many young Australians to consider a future in a trade or skills based career.

The most pleasing aspect of their success is that Team Australia are now starting to gain the recognition that they deserve. From a Welcome Home reception at Old Parliament House, hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard to a *Try'aTrade* event at Parliament House and acknowledgement of their efforts, again by the Deputy Prime Minister at the Australian Training Awards – all are a just reward for their years of hard work and commitment.

In a time when we continually hear complaints regarding the lack of funding for some of our Australian sports stars it is pleasing to see the recognition begin to flow for our *Skillaros* – all who give up so much for the opportunity of representing their trade and their country.

Team Australia Skillaros commitment to training and their elite craftsmanship was highlighted in a speech delivered by Dr Stephen Hollings Director of Sales Strategy News Limited (former CEO, CareerOne Pty Ltd) at the official uniform presentation last year where he said “Sport provides much to our nation – let’s be honest, it makes us feel great to see Australians winning, it makes us prize devotion and endeavor, the value of competition and encourages us all to meet the challenges in our lives.

These elite athletes (*the Skillaroos*) are also elite craftsmen and women and their inherent skills are also nation building skills – they possess what Australia needs to create a strong nation with a strong economy going forward.”

“Skills will provide our young people with something incredibly important: a guaranteed lifetime of economic security. They are an asset no one can ever take away. And they will give their owners the chance one day to start businesses of their own.”

The Hon Julia Gillard The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Minister for Social Inclusion, Deputy Prime Minister

“Our nation faces huge challenges – like the global economic recession, and fierce international competition to raise productivity.”

The Hon Julia Gillard The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Minister for Social Inclusion, Deputy Prime Minister

“Of the Skillaroos “I had the pleasure of meeting some of our young Skillaroos at the Try A Trade event at Parliament House and. I can report that our future is in good hands.”

The Hon Julia Gillard The Hon Julia Gillard MP, Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Minister for Social Inclusion, Deputy Prime Minister

Just as important as the *Skillaroos* though are the young men and women from around Australia who have taken up the challenge of skills excellence by competing in a WSA regional competition. Each and every one of these regional competitors has benchmarked their skill level and will return to their workplaces and places of training with the knowledge of what it takes to become a more skilled and better tradesperson. This can only assist with increasing the productivity of Australia.

WorldSkills Australia Competitions unearth Skill Ambassadors – the perfect role models for all young Australians who are contemplating their futures and perfect examples for all Australians of what can be achieved in a trade or skills based careers.

WorldSkills Australia is showcasing the importance of skills for economic prosperity; we do this with every competition cycle. We celebrate and acknowledge and promote skills as a viable first choice career path.

One of the ways WorldSkills Australia does this at the National competition level. In May WorldSkills Australia will showcase 500 of the nations best these

competitors, they will be taking the next step in their skills journey and heading to Brisbane 7, 8, 9th of May to compete in the 2010 National Competition and from there it could be off to London in 2011. This is where the next generation of Skillaroos will emerge and a new life changing journey commences.

For further information got www.worldskills.org.au