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## Cash's Australia: higher youth unemployment, fewer women in trades

ABS data released this week shows that on Minister for Women and Employment Michaelia Cash's watch, apprenticeship numbers have tumbled, and the share of women in apprenticeships has also fallen.

Apprenticeships are a highly effective path to good, steady employment for young people, but despite youth unemployment being in double digits nationally the LNP has allowed the total number of apprenticeships to fall by 41,000 - from 226,500 in 2011 to 185,400 this year.

The share of apprenticeships held by women has also fallen, from 23.5% in 2009 to 17.1% this year.

The Abbott/Turnbull LNP government has cut \$1 billion from apprenticeships, cut funding to TAFE, completely cut the Industry Skills Fund, allowed opening of the visa system and brought in the PaTH program, which pays young people \$4 an hour but at no cost for big businesses.

The youth unemployment crisis is entirely the creation of the Abbott/Turnbull government's refusal to invest in skills training for young people, coupled with its willingness to do anything that business asks, including providing young people as free labour and allowing the exploitation of migrant workers.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU President, Ged Kearney:

"The gutting of apprenticeships will be part of the disastrous legacy of Michaelia Cash's term as Employment Minister. The Minister has made savage cuts to skills training which we know is the pathway to good, steady jobs for our young people."

"The refusal of the LNP to do anything to address the youth unemployment crisis is selling out an entire generation of young people who are growing up in insecure work, without a viable path to a proper job."

"We need to change the rules to give young people access to properly funded skills training, and end programs which exploit them, or allow the exploitation of migrant workers."

"This government promised jobs and growth, but has cut funding to skills training and universities, wage growth is flat-lining, insecure work is rampant, and youth unemployment is a national crisis."

"This has been a disastrous period for employment policy in Australia, overseen by one of the most reactionary, anti-worker Employment Ministers in recent memory."

**ENDS**

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