

Monday 19 February 2024

## Unions welcome review of Australian apprenticeships incentive system

The ACTU welcomes the Albanese Government's announcement of a Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives System.

The Honourable Iain Ross AO and Ms Lisa Paul AO will lead an in-depth review that will examine the effectiveness of current support mechanisms for apprenticeships and traineeships to ensure a better, more sustainable, and long-term incentive system.

The Review will evaluate how current rates of pay and cost-of-living pressures for apprentices and trainees impact both the uptake of these pathways as well as completion rates.

The Review will further assess the role of industry support, workplace conditions, and incentives for promoting apprenticeship and traineeship programs for women, First Nations people, people with a disability and those living in regional, rural, and remote communities.

The announcement comes after a decade of Coalition government cuts and neglect of the VET sector, which contributed to a crisis in apprenticeship and trainee completion rates and the shortage of skilled workers that some industries are currently experiencing.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Assistant Secretary Liam O'Brien:

"Unions are encouraged by the Albanese government's commitment to rebuilding our skills system after a decade of neglect under the Coalition. The review is an important step in ensuring Australia has world-class training that pays apprentices and trainees properly and treats them with dignity.

"Apprenticeship and traineeship completion rates are far too low. A strategic review of the system that is focussed on ensuring young Australians have the support and resources they need is critical to lifting completion rates.

"Apprentices and trainees are struggling under cost-of-living pressures. This review must address the systemic issues of low pay if we want to see young people undertake and complete apprenticeships and traineeships in higher numbers in the future.

"When the Liberals were in power, they neglected our apprentices and trainees. It's great to see a government that cares about supporting workers who are starting out in their industry and recognises the need to invest in their futures."

**ENDS**

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