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MEDIA RELEASE

Apprentice employers welcome PM's \$2bn JobTrainer package

Australia's largest network of employers of apprentices and trainees today welcomed the federal government's \$2 billion package of support for apprentices, trainees and skills development.

The National Apprenticeship Employment Network (NAEN) said the JobTrainer package will substantially widen the existing support measures to thousands of additional apprentices and trainees, and help save jobs.

The Chief Executive Officer of NAEN Dianne Dayhew said JobTrainer will help avoid the 'cliff' that many businesses expect to face when existing payments end in September.

"The critical thing is that it extends the current wage subsidy for apprentices from small firms to larger businesses with up to 200 employees, so it really gives support to a lot of firms that might struggle to retain their apprentices.

"It will provide much-needed support and confidence to many businesses that will be wondering what happens when the current measures end.

"This provides an added six months of assistance. It will help them avoid the September cliff and hopefully see them through until the economy starts to pick up," Ms Dayhew said.

"This will be most welcome for apprentices because it safeguards their jobs and helps avoid being laid off or being forced to give up their apprenticeships entirely."

Ms Dayhew said the apprenticeship system is experiencing one of its most challenging times with numbers in decline and many businesses struggling to retain their existing employees.

"It's also a difficult time for apprentices and trainees who have been laid off and are struggling to find work."

NAEN represents the country's group training organisations that employ some 22,000 apprentices and trainees and places them with host businesses. Approximately 5,000 apprentices and trainees have been placed in 'hibernation' due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NAEN recently released its policy paper, [Dealing with the Apprenticeship Emergency](#), based on feedback from group training organisations around the country.

"Supporting the current generation of apprentices and trainees is vital for their livelihoods and the skills that they have taken so much time and effort to develop," Ms Dayhew said.

"If we fail to look after them, we face thousands of young people whose aspirations have been dashed, and a skills crisis that will emerge once the economy rebounds," she said.

"One area that we believe requires additional focus is on measures to encourage apprentice enrolments so that numbers can rebuild to per-COVID levels and so we have a pipeline of people ready to start."

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The National Apprenticeship Employment Network is the national peak body representing the network of over 100 Group Training Organisations (GTOs) employing apprentices and trainees throughout Australia. www.naen.com.au