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# MEDIA RELEASE



John Robertson MLC

Minister for Corrective Services  
Minister for Public Sector Reform  
Special Minister of State

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Friday July 24

## **New program gives budding apprentices in the Illawarra a head start**

A group of budding apprentices graduating from the Illawarra TAFE pre-apprenticeship course today are part of the Rees Government's ongoing investment in training and employment, said Minister for Public Sector Reform John Robertson.

### **Pre-apprenticeship graduation ceremony**

**Minister for Public Sector Reform John Robertson and local MP Lylea McMahon**

**11:00am, Friday 24 July**

**Illawarra TAFE Wollongong Campus Auditorium, Block P, Foleys Rd, Wollongong**

Mr Robertson said that in tight economic times the State Government had made a conscious effort to ensure that young people have access to training opportunities and employment.

"These pre-apprenticeship courses are part of a \$370 million commitment by the Rees Government to boost apprenticeships and cadetships for young people in NSW," said Mr Robertson.

"The pre-apprenticeship course runs for six weeks and helps to prepare students for entry into a fulltime apprenticeship. The pre-apprenticeship places are in addition to 4000 apprenticeships and 2000 cadetships to be recruited by the Rees Government over the next four years.

"Taking up an apprenticeship is a great option for school leavers and career changers alike as it gives participants the chance to learn while they earn.

"Australian research has shown that more than 90 percent of former apprentices achieve long-term full-time employment and can potentially earn more than people who have undertaken other types of training.

"I started my fulltime working life as an electrical apprentice so there is no telling where today's graduates will end up.

"Some of today's graduates have already secured a fulltime apprenticeship and all are on their way to completing a trade. By investing in the future skilled workforce the State Government hopes to see some of our youngest workers become our most highly valued employees in years to come."

Today's graduates participated in the pre-apprenticeship courses at Shellharbour and Wollongong TAFE campuses in Automotive Services – Automotive Vehicle Servicing and Engineering (Metal Fabrication and Welding). A total of 23 students will graduate at today's ceremony including two women.

Local Member for Shellharbour Lylea McMahon congratulated the students and called on local businesses to think about bringing on a young apprentice.

"Today we have 23 talented and keen budding apprentices ready to start work," said Ms McMahon.

"They graduate with a head start on the competition – ready for the rigours of a fulltime apprenticeship."

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