



## **PRESS RELEASE**

November 2007

# **Gold Coast Training Institute recognised under the Star Rating Scheme**

## **Gold Coast Trade Teacher wins \$10,000**

Trade skill qualifications are in high demand, but how can students and their parents ensure the skills they gain in the classroom will be recognised by industry and future employers?

The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence recently announced the rollout of the Star Rating Scheme. The Scheme will recognise excellence in trade skills training among TAFE and private training providers, with a Star Rating.

Australian Construction Training Services (ACTS) on the Gold Coast was one of the first training providers to take part in trials of the Scheme, and has been recognised with a Two Gold Star Rating in Bricklaying and Carpentry.

Chris Galway, Manager of ACTS said, "As a specialist centre for the building industry, the recognition we received validates our position as the first choice for these trade sectors."

"Taking part in the trials allowed us to assess our current skills training abilities, focus on career progression and meet industry requirements. It also highlighted areas where we can up-skill, which will help us progress as an industry leader," said Mr Galway.

Brian Wexham, Chief Executive Officer of The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence thanked ACTS for participating in the trials and congratulated them on an exemplary outcome.

"The Scheme aims to recognise high performing registered training providers such as Australian Construction Training Services, and help individual schools and faculties understand exactly what their clients want from their training.

"It is a national initiative which will help promote and advance the quality and relevance of vocational and technical training for the trades in Australia," said Mr Wexham.



The Scheme recognises and awards high performing registered training providers with a One Gold Star, Two Gold Star or Three Gold Star rating, with Three Gold Stars being the highest level of recognition.

“The Star Rating Scheme is an industry driven initiative and has been developed by The Institute and industry to provide a platform that will deliver the vocational training outcomes required to meet their needs,” said Mr Wexham.

“The Scheme will also make it easier for students and their parents to ascertain which registered training providers have been recognised at an industry level, within their field of interest.

“Employers will also be able to assess the quality of trade skills training that graduates hold from each registered training organisation rated within the Star Rating Scheme,” said Mr Wexham.

Throughout August and September, a number of registered training organisations took part in trials of the Star Rating Scheme.

The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence has also announced the finalists in the Trade Teacher of the Year Awards this week. The Trade Teacher of the Year Awards recognises trade teachers in each of The Institute’s eight industry reference groups.

Ben Balaba, a Horticulture teacher from the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE won \$10,000 as a finalist for the rural and farming industry group.

Brian Wexham congratulated Mr Balaba for his achievement and said, “Ben is one of 18 teachers recognised for their contribution to trade skills teaching by The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence.”

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**Media Contact:**

Claire Johnston  
The Capital Group  
(02) 9252 3900

**Chris Galway:**

Manager  
Australian Construction Training Services Pty Ltd  
(07) 5564 7023



### **Quotes from Chris Galway**

“During the current skills shortage, we welcome such worthwhile initiatives – such as the Star Rating Scheme, which supports industry and seeks to increase student numbers.

“Australian Construction Training Services was pleased to be able to support the Star Rating Scheme and take part in trials for The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence,” said Mr Galway.

### **Quotes from Ben Balaba**

“I’m deeply honoured to receive the award. I would like to acknowledge the support of The Gold Coast Institute of TAFE, the directors, marketing staff and my Horticulture team.

“I’d also like to thank the most important group, the students of Horticulture Gold Coast Institute of TAFE both past and present, who continue to inspire me to stay in the industry and make teaching and training most satisfying and rewarding.

“Thanks also to The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence and the National Farmers Federation.”

### **The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence (The Institute):**

The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence promotes and advances learning, teaching and training in Australian trades education and elevates the status of traditional trades and trades education as a career choice. The Institute is an industry led, Federal Government funded group that promotes the advancement of learning, teaching and training in Australian trades education. The Institute is owned through its key stakeholders Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), the Australian Industry Group (AI Group) and the National Farmers Federation (NFF).

### **Brian Wexham, Chief Executive Officer of the Institute:**

Mr Wexham has been a Director of Worldskills Australia Inc since 2002 and has taken a keen interest in emerging skills shortages and the quality of trade training in Australia.

His background in media, advertising and publishing is extensive and includes executive roles with The Times and The Sunday Times in London, board positions with The Observer and the Today newspaper, London. He is also the former Chief Executive of Lonhro Media Group PLC East Africa and more recently was the Chief Executive of APN Educational Media (Australia and New Zealand).



**The Star Rating Scheme:**

The Star Rating Scheme will identify the very best training providers, industry by industry. It is a way to enable employers, career counsellors, potential students, and parents to distinguish excellence in trade training by evaluating training providers. Industry areas within RTOs which apply will receive either a One Gold Star, Two Gold Star, or Three Gold Star rating to indicate that they achieve excellent results for their clients.

It's also about creating a better informed market which will expect high quality, and thereby help to lift the quality bar on training.

The Star Rating Scheme focuses on the following eight areas of skill shortage:

- Automotive
- Building and Construction
- Electrical
- Hospitality and Personal Services
- Manufacturing
- Metals and Engineering
- Mineral Resources
- Rural and Farming

Evaluations are carried out against three broad criteria that were developed in partnership with businesses that employ tradespeople. The evaluation process includes an initial self evaluation by the relevant faculty or school, followed by a site visit to schools or faculties who demonstrate potential to achieve a One Gold Star, Two Gold Star or Three Gold Star rating.