

QUEANBEYAN AGE COLUMN 15 AUGUST 2008

Trade Skills Shortage? Queanbeyan is meeting the challenge -

Queanbeyan Business Council and Capital Region BEC were this week invited to address TAFE educators from Illawarra and SE Region. Part of the purpose was to see how our local TAFE campus could work more closely with local business.

For those who have not recently visited **Queanbeyan TAFE** campus, it is quite an eye opener with several new buildings containing a variety of lecture rooms and upgraded facilities. An air of enthusiasm was clearly evident.

Naturally, the topic of trade skills shortages was raised, and it is clear that TAFE has the capacity to be an important part of the solution. Businesses who want to learn more should contact TAFE's Manager District Operations, David Guthrey on 4823 1820.

Queanbeyan High School based **Queanbeyan Trade School** is an important part of the equation. Operating in partnership with TAFE under NSW Department of Education & Training, Queanbeyan Trade School specialises in metal working. The Trade School is to hold open days on Wednesday, 17th and Thursday, 18th September, with two information sessions on each day. To find out which session suits you, contact Quality Teaching Coordinator Noelene Streets on 6200 5005 or email noelene.streets@det.nsw.edu.au.

The Federally funded **Australian Technical College Queanbeyan Region** (ATC) in Bayldon Road is a further string to Queanbeyan's bow. There are presently seventeen year 11 students studying at the facility. These are expected to move to year 12 next year and be joined by approximately thirty additional year 11 students. Each student is conducting a schools based apprenticeship program in partnership with trade organisations such as MBA, HIA and MTAA, and the facility is keen to work in cooperation with the TAFE and local High Schools. QBC Executive Committee recently held a meeting at the facility and members were impressed by what they saw. Contact ATC Principal David Perry for more details on 6299 2077.

Queanbeyan Business Council is keen to foster cooperation between these important training facilities and is doing its bit by offering scholarships to two students each at both the Trade School and the ATC. In addition, QBC is offering similar scholarships to two Queanbeyan based hospitality students at CIT's Tourism & Hotel Management Centre. Contact Simon Mitchell-Taverner on 6299 7152 or email admin@queanbeyanbusinesscouncil.com.au for more information about the scholarship program.

NRMA Travel Habits Survey - The rising price of petrol is causing holiday makers to think more carefully about how and where they will take their vacations with regional NSW centres such as Queanbeyan benefiting from the trend. The *NRMA Travel Habits* survey of 1,300 motorists in NSW and the ACT found that almost two-thirds (61 per cent) were changing their destination closer to home and 60 per cent cutting back on holiday spending. To see the NRMA report in full, visit <http://www.mynrma.com.au/cps/rde/xchg/mynrma/hs.xsl/7037.htm>.