

ISOLATED CHILDREN'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



2023 FEDERAL CONFERENCE TRAINING PORTFOLIO MOTIONS

A55. Queensland State Council

CARRIED

“That ICPA (Aust) lobbies the Federal Government to extend the TAP (Tertiary Access Payment) to include rural and remote Australian Apprentices.”

Explanation:

Australian Apprentices relocating to undertake training face similar relocation and set up costs (travel, bond/rent, uniforms) as students relocating to undertake study. They are generally school leavers, moving from the family home for the first time with very little financial security. To make apprenticeships more attractive and increase retention rates, it is imperative that apprentices are well supported financially, particularly in the initial stages, of their apprenticeship.

A56. Queensland State Council

CARRIED

“That ICPA (Aust) lobbies the Australian Government and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) to conduct more comprehensive and timely audits of Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks (AASNs) to ensure that the delivery and support intended by the Australian Government is actually received by rural and remote apprentices/trainees.”

Explanation:

With a nationwide skill shortage, it is imperative that apprentices/trainees are well supported during their apprenticeship. With national completion rates alarmingly low (55%), it is timely for the Federal Government to focus on all stakeholders and review their procedures. Retention needs to be seen as a collective responsibility of all stakeholders. AASNs are integral to ensuring that the sign up, administration and management of apprenticeships occurs. The Qld Government website clearly states that one of the key roles of the AASN is “*to provide advice and support during the apprenticeship*”. To ensure this support is ongoing and comprehensive, it is essential that the Australian Government and DEWR conduct more rigorous and timely audits of all AASNs which include gathering feedback from apprentices/trainees and their guardians (those under 18), and face to face follow up within three months after sign up occurs.

A57. Bourke Branch (NSW)

CARRIED

“That ICPA (Aust) requests the Minister for Skills and Training and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, to mandate specialist support structures for regional and rural apprentices/trainees, from within the federally funded Australia Apprenticeship Support Networks (AASNs).”

Explanation:

Within our branch there are many examples of little support, contact or follow-up for apprentices, trainees and their employers once they commence a training contract. It is requested that there be trained rural and remote specialist support staff within the AASNs. These staff must be contactable

by employers, trainers and apprentices/trainees in rural and remote areas, and for those who have had to relocate to undertake their on and off the job training.

Assistance for the rural and remote apprentice/trainees requires mandatory actions from the AASNs including (but not limited to) visits to the workplace and/or training facility to check that the apprentice/trainees are being suitably trained, educated and supported; documented semester reviews on all parties involved; knowledge and assistance with state and federal support programs; and follow-up contact and interviews should the apprentice/trainee or employer terminate the contract prior to its completion.

The data collected during and after a traineeship can inform the ongoing improvement of AASN services and the practices of those working with apprentices and trainees. This will assist the growth in completion rates of apprenticeships and traineeships in and from rural and remote areas.

A58. Queensland State Council

CARRIED

"That ICPA (Aust) lobbies the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to add criteria to the Trade Support Loan scheme recognising rural and remote-based apprentices, as being eligible to get a 30% discount after completion of the trade."

Explanation:

The Trade Support Loan scheme offers a loan to Australian Apprentices that helps meet everyday costs while undertaking training. These loans are a great source of support for apprentices. However, rural and remote based apprentices face additional travel and freight costs when completing their apprenticeships due to distance and isolation. In recognition of completing a trade, listed on the priority list, in a rural or remote area, a further incentive could be added to the trade support loan criteria. Similar guidelines could be adopted from the Queensland Department of Education teacher incentives scheme that recognises rural and remote services. This adjustment to the criteria could not only be of benefit to apprentices but also assist in the attraction and retention of apprentices in rural and remote areas thus boosting local economies. The addition of this higher incentive could also be linked to the existing regional area's postcodes as listed in the Trade Support Loans Rules 2014 legislation.