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### **1000 TRADE SCHOOL APPRENTICES**

One thousand South Australian students have started a school-based apprenticeship through the Rann Government's \$29.5m Trade Schools for the Future initiative.

Education Minister Jane Lomax-Smith says it's a significant milestone that has been achieved in less than two years and reflects the ongoing success of the trade schools concept.

The 10 trade schools opened from the start of 2008 – two years ahead of schedule.

“Our target is to have 1200 school-based apprentices by the end of the 2010 school year and we are tracking well ahead of schedule,” Dr Lomax-Smith says.

“This initiative has opened up tremendous opportunities for our school students to gain valuable job skills while they complete the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

“These students are learning the skills to become electricians, welders, diesel mechanics, carpenters, plumbers, mine equipment operators, health technicians and child care workers.

“We want today's young people to stay in school for longer, to build strong skills in English, mathematics and science and to gain high-level job qualifications, all at the same time.

“This is the best possible headstart we can give our young people and supports employers by ensuring that South Australian school leavers are skilled and ready for work.

“It's terrific that employers are continuing to see the value of taking on a school-based apprentice despite the global economic downturn.

“I congratulate the 20 Apprenticeship Brokers who are working with schools and employers to match up school students with apprenticeship opportunities in their local communities.”

Dr Lomax-Smith says the Trade Schools for the Future are part of the Rann Government's 'School to Work' reform of senior secondary education in South Australia.

“In June this year, I announced an overhaul of vocational education in schools, through a new \$19m Industry Skills Program, to give students higher level vocational skills.

“As part of this, new industry-endorsed training programs in areas of strategic importance to the State, such as defence and manufacturing, will be introduced in each of the State's high schools.

“In addition, we made it a requirement for young people to be learning or earning until age of 17 from the start of 2009 and are rolling out a new \$54.5m SACE.”