



MEDIA RELEASE

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PEAK BODY CALLS ON ALL NSW POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO PARLIAMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS ON APPRENTICE WHS AHEAD OF 2027 ELECTION

SYDNEY, NSW — The Apprentice Employment Network NSW & ACT (AEN NSW ACT), the peak body representing non-profit Group Training Organisations (GTOs), has welcomed the findings of the NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice's ***Report 89: 2026 Review of the Work Health and Safety Scheme***.

AEN NSW ACT is calling on both the NSW Government and the Coalition Opposition to formally adopt the report's core recommendations into their election policy platforms ahead of the 2027 State Election.

The Parliamentary Report strongly validates the GTO employment model, acknowledging that registered GTOs provide essential workplace health and safety (WHS) oversight, field officer monitoring, and host employer vetting to protect vulnerable young workers.

Mr. Tom Emeleus, Chairperson of AEN NSW ACT, said the report provides a clear blueprint for raising safety standards across the state while removing financial penalties that currently constrain the growth of apprentice employment.

"This report confirms what our sector has long advocated: registered GTOs provide a critical safety net for apprentices and trainees. However, the current workers' compensation premium structure penalises safety-focused GTOs, while non-registered entities operate without the same rigorous safety oversight. This inquiry lays down a clear challenge to all sides of politics to fix these systemic flaws."

Key Recommendations Supported by AEN NSW ACT Include:

- **Workers' Compensation Insurance Reform (Recommendation 1):** Reviewing premium calculation methods so GTO safety investments are recognised, and injury data is contextualised without constraining apprentice employment growth.
- **Mandatory Registration Standards (Recommendation 2):** Extending regulatory oversight by considering mandatory GTO registration for any labour-hire or non-

registered organisation hiring apprentices to ensure uniform safety across the market.

- **Mandatory Supervisor Training (Recommendation 5):** Requiring formal WHS training for supervisors of apprentices in businesses with more than 20 workers.
- **Improved Incident Notification (Recommendation 6):** Disaggregating WHS incident data and ensuring GTOs are immediately notified of workplace incidents involving apprentices.
- **Dedicated Industry Governance (Recommendation 7):** Establishing a dedicated *Apprentices and Trainees Work Health and Safety Advisory Committee* with direct GTO representation.

Mr. Jason Sultana, Executive Officer of AEN NSW ACT, urged candidates from all parties to commit to swift action following the election.

"Apprentice safety should transcend party politics. As candidates prepare their platforms for the 2027 State Election, we are asking all parties to commit to implementing Recommendations 1 through 7 of Report 89 within the first 100 days of the next Parliament. Implementing these recommendations will level the playing field, protect our youngest workers, and ensure NSW has a sustainable skilled workforce for the future."

About the Apprentice Employment Network NSW & ACT

The Apprentice Employment Network NSW & ACT is a peak body for employers in vocational education and training in NSW and ACT. Our members have placed over 100 000 apprentices and trainees over the last 30 years. Group Training Organisations (GTOs) employ apprentices and trainees, then place them with a host, providing workplace coaching and support until the apprenticeship or traineeship has been completed. GTOs provide skilled young people to diverse industries in NSW and ACT including plumbing, mining, construction, engineering, hospitality, electrical, automotive and aged care.

Jason Sultana, Executive Officer - Apprentice Employment Network NSW & ACT is available for interview.

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