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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Apprentice employment network welcomes new federal employment and skills minister

Australia's group training sector today welcomed the appointment of the Hon Stuart Robert as the new Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business.

The National Apprenticeship Employment Network (NAEN) congratulated Minister Robert on the appointment and looks forward to working with him to help create more opportunities for apprentices and trainees.

The Chief Executive Officer of NAEN Dianne Dayhew said apprentice and trainee numbers are beginning to recover across many areas of the economy after one of the most challenging periods in memory.

"The apprentice employment sector has been most grateful for the financial support that has been delivered by governments at the Commonwealth, state and territory level.

"Many of the apprentices and trainees that were laid off during the COVID-induced recession have been re-engaged and have resumed their careers.

"We look forward to working with Minister Robert to ensure that these opportunities continue to expand and that apprenticeships remain a pillar of skills development," Ms Dayhew said.

NAEN also extends its sincere appreciation to Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash for her support during the unprecedented crisis that hit the sector over the past year.

In particular, the financial assistance that was rendered through the Supporting Apprentices and Trainees and the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements schemes proved a lifeline for thousands of apprentices, trainees and their employers, including group training organisations.

"We are most grateful for the Minister's support during a most challenging period and wish her all the very best in her new role," Ms Dayhew said.

**Media Contact:** Bob Bowden, Foresight Communications Ph 0412 753 298  
bbowden@bowmac.com.au

The National Apprenticeship Employment Network is the national peak body representing the network of over 100 Group Training Organisations (GTOs) employing more than 20,000 apprentices and trainees throughout Australia. [www.naen.com.au](http://www.naen.com.au)