



Surge in females who want a trade

LUCY HOOD
EDUCATION REPORTER

THE number of female apprentices undertaking traditional trades is at its highest level in four years, figures show.

National Centre for Vocational Education Research figures obtained by *The Advertiser* reveal the number of females undergoing mechanical engineering apprenticeships has surged 42 per cent.

Female electrical apprentices have also increased by 18 per cent and automotive by 6 per cent.

Australian Technical College Adelaide South spokeswoman Darlene Voss said the state's looming skills shortage had opened young women's eyes to the many career opportunities available through trades.

Women now make

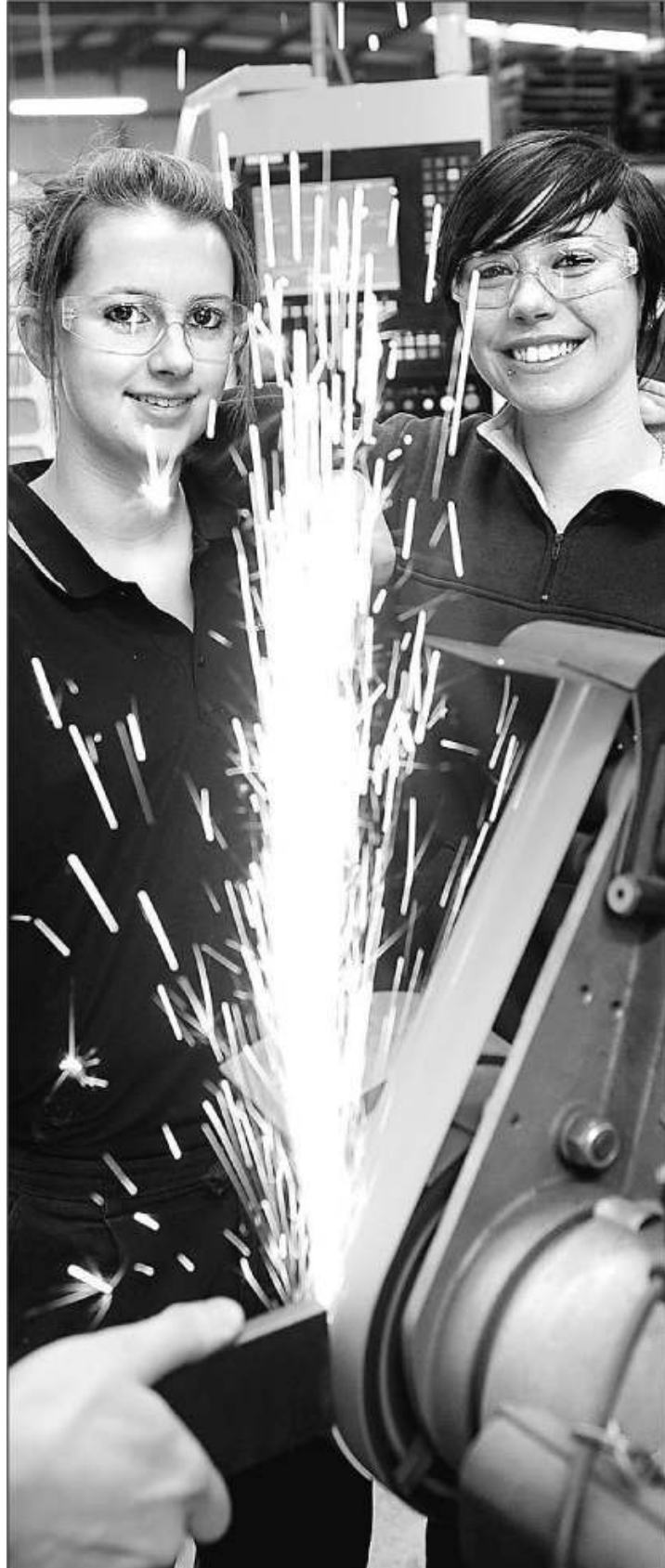
up 35.9 per cent of all South Australians in training - 2.7 per cent higher than the national average.

Among the ATC Adelaide South apprentices is aspiring light vehicle mechanic and Year 11 student Larissa Purdie, 16.

"I was a bit nervous to start (but) ... I was buddied with another female student before I even started at the college to make sure I felt comfortable."

Year 12 student Katrina McPhail, 17, started a metal and engineering school-based apprenticeship with Dinki Di Engineering this year.

"It will give (me) a real understanding of the engineering applications that can be incorporated into Computer Aided Design which I'm keen to (do) after my trade," she said.



NEW BREED: Katrina McPhail and Larissa Purdie at Dinki Di Engineering at Lonsdale yesterday.
Picture: CHRIS MANGAN