



# Women still hesitant to enter trades door



**JESSICA LEO**  
 CAREERONE EDITOR

**MORE** South Australians are entering trade training but the number of females doing so remains negligible and in some specialties it is falling.

Figures from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research, as of last September, show an estimated 13,400 South Australians in training for a trade career. The number of females in this mix is only 10 per cent.

In most trades, the number of females in training has decreased in comparison with 2007.

The only specialties to record an increase in the num-

ber of females in training are engineering, ICT, science, textile clothing and footwear. Despite the poor female representation, the state still is strong in overall trade apprenticeship commencements with 1400 South Australians beginning training in the September quarter last year.

That is 2.9 per cent higher than the national average.

To motivate more females to consider trades as a career pathway, the Australian Technical College, with the help of industry trade organisations, will run a "Girls Rock" technical trades stand at the National Careers and Employment Expo at the Adelaide Showgrounds on Friday and Saturday.

Australian Technical College Adelaide South marketing and development manager Darlene Voss said: "The Government's economic stimulus package should ensure there is still a strong demand for skilled trades people in SA. This provides an exciting opportunity for young women seeking challenging, long-term, well-paid careers."

The stand will feature young female apprentices who will provide first-hand knowledge of their trade and careers. Mechanic apprentice Larissa Purdie, 17, is the lone female in her chosen course. She said: "The industry needs more girls to show that we can do it too, we're just as capable."



**SKILLS TRAINING:** Amee Hall, Larissa Purdie and Laura Priest students at the Australian Technical College in Christie Downs.

Picture: SIMON CROSS



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**Page 2 of 2**

## WHERE WE'RE WORKING



### CHANGE: Drop in food trade students.

Commencements in technician and trade worker apprenticeships:  
 2007 v 2008

■ Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians	Males	143	.....	207
	Females	17	....	64
■ Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers	Males	1437	...	1460
	Females	29	....	26
■ Construction Trades Workers	Males	1254	...	1234
	Females	17	....	13
■ Electrotechnology and				

Telecommunications Trades Workers

Males	927	....	812
Females	13	....	10

■ Food Trades Workers

Males	470	....	370
Females	170	...	152

■ Skilled Animal and Horticultural Workers

Males	169	....	165
Females	98	....	78

■ Hairdressers

Males	36	.....	26
Females	476	...	366

■ Printing Trades Workers

Males	60	.....	57
Females	11	....	11

■ Textile, Clothing and Footwear Trades Workers

Males	8	.....	15
Females	2	....	6

■ Wood Trades Workers

Males	149	.....	138
Females	4	.....	1

Note: 2008 figures to September only.



## Pushing North even after work ends

**AFTER** five years at the helm of the region's promotions flagship, Townsville Enterprise, Glenys Schuntner clocked in for her last day on the job yesterday.

Although the outgoing CEO will no longer be the region's official advocate, Ms Schuntner said she would take pride in continuing to talk up North Queensland.

"It's just been a fantastic time in Townsville in terms of the whole North Queensland region," she said.

"Townsville Enterprise has been involved with opportunities and projects that now and in the future will come to fruition."

Ms Schuntner will leave next month for a holiday in Europe which she said would last 'at least two months', after which she hopes to find a new position in the North.

She took up one of the city's

most powerful positions in February 2004, after relocating from Sydney, where she had worked with Austrade for 11 years including as senior trade commissioner in Malaysia, trade commissioner and consul in Japan and national manager of major events.

Recently, she was an outspoken critic of the State Government's ridiculous relocation of 'Whitey' the crocodile, and fought moves to amalgamate the region's tourism resources with Cairns.

She has lobbied for alternative energy supplies for the North and to help save the Australian Technical College of North Queensland.

"When I started in 2004 we were advocating the port access corridor, and it had been on the books for quite a while — it's been good to see that get over the line," she said.

"I'm excited by the opportunities with the

Flinders St redevelopment, that's one project that I think is critical for the future of the city and the region."

Ms Schuntner will also miss upcoming events like the launch of the group's revamped logo and a regional tourism infrastructure and investment plan which she has worked hard on.

"I've been involved in the past five years in the V8 Supercars and the Reid Park redevelopment and it's unlikely I'll be back in time for that," she said.

"Some things are in process that will probably be launched within weeks of me leaving.

"We've got a lot on and I guess it's a case of seeing how they go in the future."

Her parting wish was for Townsville to be included on every weather map shown on Australian television.

— KATHLEEN SKENE  
Photo: SUZANNE LOWE

