

Dear Employer,

Apprenticeships in the Latrobe Valley – an investment in the future

The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring that all Victorians have an opportunity to actively participate in a sustainable and robust economy. This is true for both metropolitan and regional Victoria and particularly true for the Latrobe Valley.

One of the foundations of our regional economy is our highly skilled workforce, able to meet the needs of industry both now and into the future.

It has come to the attention of the Latrobe Valley Ministerial Working Group as established by Peter Ryan the Minister for Regional & Rural Development that there are significant numbers of apprentices who are separating from their employers, and who may not have the opportunity to complete their trades. This is not good for the apprentices and it is not good for our future industry and workforce requirements.

The Latrobe Valley Ministerial Working Group was initiated by the Minister to assist the Latrobe Valley region in future economic and job growth. The Group is chaired by Damian Drum, Parliamentary Secretary for Regional & Rural Development and its members include Gary Blackwood, Parliamentary Secretary for Forestry & Fisheries and Member for Narracan and me as Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Member for Morwell.

The Working Group auspice part of the overall \$30 million Latrobe Valley Advantage Fund (LVAf) with \$10 million allocated for the provision of the Latrobe Valley Industry & Infrastructure Fund (LVIIF) <http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/business-and-industry-programs/latrobe-valley-industry> with the purpose of creating jobs in Latrobe Valley region. Other important aspects of the LVAf include the development of the "*Latrobe Valley Industry and Employment Roadmap*" <http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/business-and-industry-programs/latrobe-valley-industry-and-employment-roadmap> and the "*Skilling the Valley*" initiatives. These initiatives aim to support economic and industry growth through workforce development, employment growth and investment attraction.

The future of our region depends upon local industry having access to qualified tradespeople in the years to come. We encourage you to consider creating opportunities for young people and apprentices to develop the skills they need to build our future.

I thank you for consideration of this letter. If you have an interest in further discussing the creation of employment opportunities for young people in our region, please contact either: Mr **Tim McAuliffe**, Acting Senior Business Development Manager (BDM) – Gippsland, Department of Business and Innovation (DBI). Phone: 03 51 420 200, Email: tim.mcauliffe@dbi.vic.gov.au or Mr **Merv Moon**, BDM – Gippsland DBI. Phone: 03 51 167 300. Email: mervyn.moon@dbi.vic.gov.au

Regards

Russell Northe
Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business
Member for Morwell.