



## **CMEIG Media Release**

### **Long-term staff shortages a real concern for CMEIG!**

CMEIG has several active working groups looking at various issues facing the survival of the industry, and one such group is Education and Training.

The construction and mining boom over the last five years has brought about a shortage of trained staff to operate and maintain equipment. With this shortage of staff it has been estimated that salaries have risen by over 20% over the last 12 months, and one would think that this would attract more young staff into the industry sector. Not so!

Government statistics indicate that the retail, business services, hospitality and transport sectors have taken up 50% of the training packages in Australia last year with general construction only 3.6%.

Has the trend for more high school students to stay on after Year 10 and complete Year 12 changed their perception of a career path with construction and mining equipment manufacturers and dealers? “It looks like that” claimed John Reid, President of CMEIG. “What we need is to work with careers advisors in high schools and parents, and show students the variety of career opportunities in the industry sector.

One strategy that is being evaluated by CMEIG is the opportunity to work with schools, similar to the approach being used by the Beacon Foundation, and support the concept of a no-dole scheme for high school students. “If we can convince students that jobs and a career path are available with many local and global companies, and encourage them to take on the training packages, we would have done our job” said Reid.

Sean Taylor of Volvo Construction Equipment notes that the shortage of skill people in this sector is world-wide and there are great opportunities to work in other countries with companies such as Volvo.

At the risk of stating the obvious construction and mining equipment has become highly sophisticated with the operations of most modern machines being managed by a number of computers that determine the desired outcome for a given task resulting in any given machines optimum productivity. Given the advancement in technology it has also become very obvious that we need highly skilled technicians to service, maintain, repair and overhaul these machines.

The realisation that we are in need of this highly skilled technicians has also highlighted the critical skill shortage the industry is now experiencing which is currently running at more than 20% and gaining due to the poor take up of apprentice places across all sectors of the mechanical repair industry.

In light of this, the CEMIG Education and Training Working Group have identified several goals that will need to be pursued if we as an industry are serious about making a difference to what is now seen as a critical skill shortage.

These objectives are as follows:

- Work with high schools and other allied associations to provide tools for careers advisors to demonstrate the breath of job opportunities.
- Liaise with the new ANTA skills councils to improve the level of training and career paths for all persons employed in the industry.
- Determine training requirements of member companies which are not currently being satisfied and influence the development of suitable training qualifications and training arrangements as required.
- Lobby government to embrace education and training as a whole of government responsibility for our industry.

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For more information about CMEIG, call (02) 9884 7236 or email: [inquiry@cmeig.com.au](mailto:inquiry@cmeig.com.au)