



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Removing payroll tax exemption for apprentices and trainees could damage the WA workforce**

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) CEO Rod Camm has called for the Western Australian Government to review its decision to scrap the payroll tax exemption for existing employees undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships.

The McGowan Government announced its decision on 30 November for immediate effect on 1 December 2017 for new trainees, without any consultation with Industry, dashing the hopes of many to upgrade their skills and career in the hope of achieving their job aspirations and improving quality of life.

The decision deals a serious blow to employers who are already struggling in a transitioning economy needing to diversify and to upskill their workforce to meet the demands of a highly competitive and rapidly advancing digital era.

The numbers of apprenticeships and traineeships have been in steep decline for the past 5 years, at a time when workforce development is vital for lifting the WA economy out of the doldrums and into a period of innovation and technological renewal.

“It’s difficult to see how the WA government can upskill the workforce, introduce innovation and transition its economy, with such restrictive approaches to education and training,” Rod Camm said.

“This is a huge blow for those trying to make their way in the world and for employers who want to expand and build the capacity of their workforce. Upskilling existing workers should be of the highest priority and apprenticeships and traineeships are a proven vehicle to achieve both enhanced skills and productivity in the workplace.”

“Unfortunately, unskilled workers are the losers because of this decision,” CEO Rod Camm said, “by losing the opportunity to advance themselves through an apprenticeship or traineeship.”

“The WA government needs to reconsider this decision so that strategies to renew the economy and upskill the workforce are not impeded. “

Ends.

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Rod Camm, CEO ACPET is available for interview.