



Department of  
Education and Training

## ***Media Statement***

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10 August 2009

Attention: News Editor / Chief of Staff

### **Central Perth organisations in contention for WA Training Award 2009**

Four central Perth organisations have been named as finalists in the prestigious WA Training Awards 2009.

The Department of Corrective Services, Rio Tinto Iron Ore and Macmahon Contractors /BHP Billiton Iron Ore are three of four organisations in the finals of the WA Training Initiative category sponsored by The Chamber of Minerals and Energy Western Australia; and Central TAFE is vying for WA Large Training Provider of the Year sponsored by *The Sunday Times*.

Judges praised the work of the Department of Corrective Services to improve the lives of prisoners who want to re-enter the workforce once released.

The Department's education and vocational training managing director Christine Laird said retraining prisoners was vital to their rehabilitation, and innovative training and support methods ensured the best outcome for employers and prisoners.

"It is important to provide quality training opportunities to increase the employability of our prisoners," Ms Laird said.

"We regularly bring industry representatives into the training environment and show them the high quality of training that is on offer and the high skill levels of prisoners.

"Our main aim is to provide prisoners with long term, satisfying employment opportunities and to reduce re-offending rates."

Central TAFE is one of Australia's biggest TAFE colleges and trains more than 25,000 students including 1300 WA-based international students and 2500 overseas students.

Managing director Neil Fernandes said Central TAFE was committed to providing high quality training.

"Developing partnerships with external organisations is vital to student success," Mr Fernandes said.

"We are leading the way in delivering higher level qualifications.

"Investment in our staff, infrastructure and delivery is paying off and we are seeing former students excel in their chosen fields."

Rio Tinto's Iron Ore group, the world's second largest producer of seaborne iron ore, provides quality training and employment opportunities within the international mining industry.

Rio Tinto, WA Training Initiative finalist, currently employs 190 apprentices in Western Australia.

Superintendent of mining operations – training department John Macleod said mentoring was an important part of the company's training programs, particularly for Indigenous trainees.

“Smoothing the transition into the workplace is just as important as developing practical skills, when it comes to helping trainees achieve successful and lasting employment,” he said.

The winners of last year’s WA Training Initiative category, Macmahon Contractors, have teamed up with BHP Billiton to develop a unique pre-employment course for Indigenous people wanting to enter the mining industry.

The program’s community relations manager Linda Howard said over 60 local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders participated in the program.

“We are committed to addressing issues that prevent the participants gaining successful recruitment into the mining industry,” he said.

Department of Education and Training Director General Sharyn O’Neill said the WA Training Awards recognised the very high quality and standards of the training system in Western Australia.

“A highly skilled workforce is essential for our economic and social prosperity,” she said.

“The high calibre of the finalists across all the award categories shows how flexible and innovative training delivers results for industries, employers, communities and training providers.”

Winners of the WA Training Awards 2009 will be announced on Friday 4 September.

The winners of the WA Training Initiative and WA Large Training Provider of the Year will have the chance to compete against the best in Australia at the Australian Training Awards in Canberra in November.

The WA Training Awards 2009 are a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Training and the State Training Board.

For more information visit: [trainingawards.det.wa.edu.au](http://trainingawards.det.wa.edu.au).

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