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**LABOR TO INTRODUCE AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIP ADVOCATE**

A Shorten Labor government will appoint an Apprenticeship Advocate to improve the quality of apprenticeships, address exploitation and improve apprentice safety.

The Advocate will also facilitate partnerships to increase the uptake of quality apprenticeships and traineeships.

The Apprentice Advocate program will cost \$5.4 million over three years.

There are 140,000 fewer Australian apprenticeships since the Coalition were elected.

Women have been impacted disproportionately by the Coalition's inaction with a 41 per cent decline in women taking up apprenticeships since 2013, compared to a drop of 24 per cent for men.

The last time trade training rates were this low was 20 years ago under John Howard's Coalition government.

The appointment of the Advocate will immediately address the unacceptable decline in apprenticeships and enhance Labor's other apprenticeship policies including:

- That one in 10 jobs on Commonwealth priority projects goes to an Australian apprentice
- Creating 10,000 pre-apprenticeships for young people wanting to learn a trade
- Establishing 20,000 advanced entry adult apprenticeships for older workers who want to or need to retrain.

The Advocate will coordinate state and territory apprenticeship regulation to eliminate inconsistencies that inhibit uptake and portability of quality skills training and jobs.

The Advocate will also monitor and report on international best practice so apprentices have the skills the Australian economy needs.

The Coalition has cut \$3 billion from vocational education since being elected, TAFE enrolments have plummeted by 24.5 per cent, thousands of students have accrued bad debts and dodgy private training providers flourished.

It cut a further \$270 million from apprenticeships in the last Budget and have wasted \$24 million on the failed Australian Apprenticeship Management System.

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Authorised by Noah Carroll, ALP, Canberra.