

July 17 2008

Industry's Employment Solution

Kwinana Industries Council is taking first step to achieving what it hopes will be a solution to the region's chronic high unemployment rate.

Following a recent meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard and local MP Gary Gray, KIC will continue to look at the possible establishment of an industry technology education centre.

"As a first step will make a submission to the current Bradley inquiry, which is seeking ideas to provide higher education opportunities to students throughout Australia," said KIC Director Chris Oughton.

"KIC wants an industry technology education centre in the region, which would focus school aged children on careers in industry from an early age through an interactive, high tech introduction to industry operations and careers."

The concept was presented to Ms Gillard, who encouraged KIC to put the concept forward to the Bradley Report.

Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard is urging interested parties to be part of setting the future direction of higher education in Australia and submit to the Report.

The Rudd Government is working to ensure Australia's higher education system is world class and contributing to meeting the nation's long-term skills needs.

The companies operating within the Kwinana Industrial Area (KIA) recognise there is a serious workforce shortage challenge looming as the baby boomers retire.

The 12 major companies in the KIA employ 5,000 people directly and 26,000 indirectly, of whom 65% of these are aged over 45, and 75% of these plan to retired within 10 years.

"The looming problem with retirements begins to gather momentum within about 8 years, and given that it takes 3 years for an apprentice or trainee to reach the experience level where they don't require full time supervision, time is short," said Mr Oughton.

"An industry technology education centre is part of the solution.

"It would focus school aged children on careers in industry from an early age through an interactive, high tech introduction to industry operations and careers," he said.

Caption: Brand MP Gary Gray, Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard and KIC's Chris Oughton (Director) and Chris Lee (President) after their recent meeting.