

MEDIA RELEASE

3 March 2009



Industry training support for PM's Job Summit priorities

The Industry Training Federation strongly supports the Prime Minister's commitment to increasing industry training as a key priority from last week's Job Summit.

Prime Minister John Key stated on Friday that he was determined to "keep up or increase the levels of industry training during this recession" and indicated this was one of the proposals from the Job Summit that he wanted to work through "without delay".

"In these uncertain economic times, good quality industry training is a practical and cost effective way of ensuring that our country retains and builds a highly skilled workforce," said John Meeuwsen, Industry Training Federation Chair.

"Mr Key's welcome comments acknowledge that now is not the time to cut back on industry-relevant training," Mr Meeuwsen said. "The industry training sector is ready and able to actively work with Government to ensure employers can keep their apprentices and trainees during tough times".

"Ideas discussed at the Job Summit, such as introducing a training requirement as part of government contracts, and improving current apprenticeships with a view to expanding training, are the kind of concrete actions we need to protect New Zealand's skill base", Mr Meeuwsen said.

Government and industry have both invested substantially in structured workplace training for over 15 years. The industry training system provides employers with a direct say in the development of the relevant skills and qualifications they need.

The Industry Training Federation has been working closely on these issues with Business New Zealand and the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, in partnership with Government, prior to the Summit and will continue to do so.

New Zealand has built up a strong system of industry-led workplace training over the last 15 years. There are now over 185,000 people and 35,000 businesses that take part in some form of industry training.

Contact: John Meeuwsen – 021 660 422

The Industry Training Federation is a membership-based organisation, representing New Zealand's 39 Industry Training Organisations (ITOs)