



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **AUSTRALIA'S YOUNG TRADIES CONQUER THE KIWIS**

Australia's most talented young apprentices and trainees are now poised to take on the world after conquering the Kiwis in a 'battle of the trades' in Newcastle last weekend.

The Australian WorldSkills team had the measure of their New Zealand competitors in an exhibition style match-up in preparation for the 2009 International WorldSkills Competition to be held in Calgary, Canada, in September this year.

The Australian team, known as the 'Skillaroos', are the best and brightest young apprentices and trainees from across Australia who have qualified to represent their country in the field of their chosen trade; anything from Beauty Therapy and Bricklaying to Web Design and Welding.

Amongst the competing Skillaroos was Queenslander, Daniel Karanges from the field of Sheetmetal Technology.

"The team from New Zealand really put the pressure on this week, but that just brought out the best in us. It has been a great experience and has helped us all to get a feel for what the competition conditions will be like when we go to Canada. I think we are all a little more confident in our abilities in the lead up to our performance on an international stage," Daniel said.

The Skillaroos' winning form comes at an opportune time with the International WorldSkills Competition, or 'Trade Olympics', less than 100 days away.

The Skillaroos will be joining over 900 competitors from 50 competing countries at the 40<sup>th</sup> International WorldSkills Competition in Canada later this year, looking to improve on their 5<sup>th</sup> ranking and add to the haul of five medals they brought home from the last International Competition in 2007.

CEO of WorldSkills Australia, Mark Callaghan, is happy with the form of the Australian WorldSkills team.

"In all cases we have been able to keep our New Zealand counterparts at bay but perhaps the most pleasing aspect to come out of the Mock Competition is that it has highlighted areas across all categories that require improvement if we are to be competitive on the world stage. To that end then,



the Mock Competition has been a huge success as it has provided an ideal platform for all competitors to now concentrate on honing the skills that will be required to compete with the best in the world in the final lead up to the International Competition in Calgary," Mr Callaghan said.

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*WorldSkills Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that has been supporting youth in trade for over 27 years. WorldSkills Australia aims to raise the profile of skill-based vocations through a series of regional, national and international competitions, engaging industry, government and vocational education and training authorities to promote the benefits of skill development as a pathway to a career in trade.*

**For more information please contact:**

Michael Bernard – The PR Edge  
P 03 8416 6821  
M 0421 988 797  
E michael.bernard@che.com.au

Sarah Tulloch – WorldSkills Australia  
P 03 9249 1000  
M 0409 514 271  
E stulloch@worldskills.org.au