The Australian Brick & Blocklaying Training Foundation Ltd (ABBTF) represents clay brick manufacturers and was created to address the critical shortage of skilled bricklayers. The purpose is to ensure there is an adequate and competent bricklaying and blocklaying workforce to support the demand for bricks and blocks as a construction material and improve the standing of bricklayers and blocklayers within the building industry.

To address these issues the ABBTF have implemented an apprenticeship scheme in VIC, which is jointly funded by an industry contribution of $2 per thousand bricks and a matching contribution from the brick & block manufacturers of VIC (Austral Bricks, Boral Bricks & Boral Masonry, ADBRI Masonry, Selkirk, Daniel Robertson, CSR/PGH). The scheme also applies across the following states and territories: New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Tasmania.

The scheme has been approved by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

The strategies implemented to increase the number of trade qualified bricklayers include:

- Promotion of the trade and career development through schools, businesses and the community by presentations and newsletter distribution.
- Sponsorship of industry trade awards (MBA/HIA/Registered Training Providers) and skill development programs such as World Skills and Golden Trowel.
- Direct promotional and resource support for RTO’s to enhance quality of training.
- Provision of bricklaying Try a Trades at various Career and Community events.
- Provide funding for Step Out Programs to secondary school students. This program provides students with hands on experience in bricklaying to enable young people to make an informed choice to commence an apprenticeship.
- Support for pre-apprenticeships by providing a $400 for successful students completing the program followed by a minimum of 3 months employment as an apprentice bricklayer.
- Direct Employment Subsidy up to $6,000 to employers (over 3 years) for employing an apprentice.
- Group Training Company Employment Subsidy up to $10,800 to Host Employer (over 3 years) for employing an apprentice.
- Mature age bonus of $2,000 to apprentice 23 and over (paid during the 1st year of apprenticeship).
- Support up skilling in the form of Trade Skills Recognition. $400 available for bricklayers or trowel hands obtaining trade qualifications via recognition of prior learning assessment.
- Support for apprentices required to travel further than 100kms to attend a TAFE. Up to $2,000 per annum or $50 per training day. ARTS-Apprentice Regional Travel Support.
- Support for skilled bricklayers migrating to Australia under General Skilled Migration Visas. Up to $2,000 available for successful applicants.
- Assisting builders, contractors group training companies, hosts, direct employers and apprentices in relation to achieving successful apprenticeship employment outcomes (apprenticeship placement).

By providing support in these key areas, it is anticipated that we will assist the industry to prepare for current and future demands of quality bricklaying tradesman and thus reduce construction timeframes and cost.

All ABBTF benefits are provided in addition to any State and Federal Government initiatives.

For further information in relation to the above support (as conditions do apply) please contact Jane Alexander
Development & Administration Manager