



**Federal Member for Newcastle
Sharon Grierson MP**

21 July 2010

Embargoed 5am

Opening of new \$16.5 million facilities at Newcastle TAFE

The Minister for Education and Training, Verity Firth, and Federal Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson MP, will officially open new training facilities at Newcastle TAFE today.

“The Hunter is a major engine room in our State’s economy, and the NSW Government is continuing to invest in the region,” Ms Firth said.

“We’re focussed on doing all we can to ensure NSW is producing highly skilled and job-ready graduates, especially in skill shortage areas.

“These new facilities will help to deliver tailored training for an increasing number of students and industry clients who are searching for shorter, customised courses.”

The Commonwealth Government has made a significant contribution of \$11.6 million to this investment partnership with the State Government, ensuring the provision of quality training for the people of Newcastle and the Hunter.

Ms Grierson said that the funding from the Federal Government for these projects was indicative of the Gillard Government’s commitment to improving vocational training facilities in Newcastle.

“This funding represents a real investment in the future options of the 60,000 students enrolled at the TAFE NSW Hunter Institute,” Ms Grierson said.

Ms Firth said the new \$16.5 million facilities will play a significant part in improving the employment prospects for a large number of people in the Hunter.

“Opening these refurbished premises sends a clear message - NSW is open for business,” Ms Firth said.

“The new facilities will allow for more students to gain education and intern employment in the Hunter.

“Being able to educate and up-skill Hunter students close to home will help encourage them to stay and put their skills to work in the Hunter.”

The new state-of-the-art facilities include new learning spaces for:

- Electrical Engineering;
- Electrical Trades;
- Refrigeration and Climate Control;
- Nursing and Aged Care;
- General and Adult Education;
- Digital Arts and Media; and
- Hair and Beauty.

“Research has shown that every dollar invested in TAFE NSW generates economic benefits worth over six times that amount,” Ms Firth said.

“Having these new facilities open and ready for use is great news for the Hunter economy and students in the region.”

In the 2010/11 financial year the NSW Government is providing TAFE with a record budget of \$1.813 billion.

This project was jointly funded by the Australian and New South Wales Governments.

Media contact: Dan Doran 0407 412 269