



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

Media Release

24 October 2006

HOCKEY LABELS A QUARTER OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE 'JOB SNOBS'

Today's comments by the Minister for Human Services that the majority of unemployed people are 'job snobs' are an insult, Federal Member for Newcastle Sharon Grierson says.

Coming on the day that teenage unemployment in Newcastle rose for the sixth consecutive month to 26%, the Minister's claim that most people receiving Newstart were 'refusing to take jobs' is arrogant and ignorant.

"Unemployed people in Newcastle don't need this kind of abuse from the Minister," Ms Grierson said. "They need training, skills and encouragement."

"Businesses are crying out for skilled workers. The Australian Industry Group says two thirds of our jobs need a vocational education, but only one third of the working population has a trade or vocational qualification."

"The Government has turned 300,000 young people away from TAFE in the past ten years."

"It has reduced public investment in tertiary education by 7 per cent, while other OECD countries increased theirs by an average of 48 per cent."

"And it has shipped in an extra 270,000 skilled migrants from overseas."

"The Government has let down jobseekers by failing to invest in skills and education, and in typical fashion has found an easy target to blame - the jobseekers themselves."

"Name calling and threats are no substitute for assistance for the unemployed in our region."

"Real assistance means a mix of services, including education and training, integrated with job search requirements."

"Labor has released a Skills Blueprint outlining its plans for real investment to tackle the skills crisis in our nation."

Labor's *Skills Blueprint* is available from www.sharongrierson.com.au

Canberra
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Ph: 02 6277 4221
Fax: 02 6277 8461



Newcastle
427 Hunter Street
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300
Ph: 02 4926 1555
Fax: 02 4926 1895
www.sharongrierson.com