



**Sharon Grierson MP**  
Federal Member for Newcastle



## Media Release

17 December 2004

### NEWCASTLE HAS HIGHEST TEENAGE UNEMPLOYMENT IN NSW

New figures released yesterday show that Newcastle has the highest rate of teenage unemployment in New South Wales, with the number of teenagers out of work soaring as high as 30.6 per cent.

Results based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data for the 12 months ending November 2004 show that youth unemployment has been steadily increasing from 27.9 per cent in November 2003, hitting 30.6 per cent in November 2004 – 9 points above the NSW average.

“Almost 1 in 3 teenagers in the Newcastle region are unemployed and currently looking for full-time work. It’s disgraceful that the Howard Government continues to let so many of our young people fall through the cracks” Ms Grierson said.

Labor understands the importance of giving young people the opportunities they need to get off the unemployment queue and into training. Labor’s *Youth Guarantee* and *Link-Up* initiative, which represented at \$49.9 million investment in communities like Newcastle where youth unemployment is very high, would have meant that unemployed teenagers in Newcastle would have been given the extra support and assistance they need to get them into a good job or training.

An ABS report released earlier this year revealed that a third of Australia’s young unemployed identified the biggest obstacles standing between them and a job were insufficient work experience and the lack of skills and training.

“The Howard Government has failed young people in Newcastle. Instead of investing in our youth, they have overseen an explosion of teenage unemployment and a severe skills shortage”.

“At a time when more than 30 per cent of young Novocastrians can’t get work, the Howard government is turning tens of thousands of qualified Australians away from TAFE and university every year”, Ms Grierson concluded.

Instead of wasting millions of dollars duplicating the TAFE system, the Government should act to address urgent teenage unemployment and skill shortages now, fund our TAFE’s properly and get more young people into apprenticeships in areas of skill shortage.

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