

Media release



FROM THE MINISTER FOR SKILLS AND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

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ALLAN: TRAINING THE KEY TO GROWING VICTORIA'S TEXTILES AND FIBRE INDUSTRY

Skills and Workforce Participation Minister Jacinta Allan today unveiled a new funding plan for training to boost Victoria's textiles and fibre industry.

Ms Allan said investing in skills development and training was essential to the future of the industry, which contributes \$1.2 billion annually to the Victorian economy.

"This Brumby Government is taking action to help Victoria's key industries become more globally competitive," Ms Allan said.

"Under today's announcement, it will be easier for companies to access the \$8 million the Brumby Government has provided for training programs."

The funding is distributed through the Geelong-based International Fibre Centre (IFC), the only organisation in Australia that provides funding for skills development for the textile industry.

Ms Allan said the new funding strategy was the result of findings from an independent research report to identify the sector's key advantages and opportunities.

"Like other sectors, the Victorian textiles and fibre industry is increasingly focused on making the most of emerging technologies and innovative approaches to training," she said.

"Innovations in the industry offer the opportunity to break into new markets, with potential for textile applications in industries as diverse as medicine and healthcare, through to defence, mining and agriculture.

"On top of this, improvements in more traditional parts of the industry are providing Victorian firms with a competitive edge in established areas such as high-quality fashion apparel, wool and carpets."

IFC Chairperson Peter Loney said the Victorian textile and fibre manufacturers and training bodies have already developed an enormous amount of knowledge and skills.

"The ingenuity is already out there and capturing knowledge and skills will help our industry to realise untapped growth opportunities between textiles and fibre businesses and other industries seeking new and emerging applications for textile and fibres," Mr Loney said.

Since 1999, the Brumby Government has invested an additional \$1.2 billion in training and skills development.