



QUEENSLAND ALUMINA LIMITED

A. B. N. 98 009 725 044

PARSONS POINT GLADSTONE QUEENSLAND 4680 AUSTRALIA

TELEPHONE: 4976 2211 (Area code 07; International dialling code 61-7).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE

Apprentices begin careers at QAL

When leaving school or choosing a new career path, some people pursue further study, some prefer a desk job and then there are those who are fortunate enough to secure an apprenticeship at QAL.

In the last fortnight 14 new apprentices began their new careers at QAL, along with one new valve bay trainee. With the new recruits now on board, there are currently an impressive 74 apprentices on site gaining their trade at one of the largest alumina refineries in the world.

The successful candidates were selected from over 200 applications to fill the roles of seven fitting and turning, five electrical/instrumentation and two boilermaking apprenticeships.

QAL Managing Director Phil Campbell said apprenticeships at QAL represented a tradition of providing young people with vital life skills and the chance to learn a craft, to build expertise and to excel in a particular vocation.

"Apprenticeships at QAL provide our people with not just skills and a trade, it also provides an environment in which to grow and develop both personally and professionally. To be an apprentice is to be mentored, to learn over time through real life experience and to build relationships with those who have something to pass on."

"QAL is proud of our long tradition of providing apprenticeships and since Denis Potts commenced as our first apprentice in October 1967, we have continued to support the strong mentorship values of what an apprenticeship should be." Mr Campbell said.

The tradition also extends much further than inside the gates, with Darcy and younger brother Zeb Thompson following same the career path as their older brothers and uncle with an apprenticeship at QAL. The new apprentices' brothers Bart and Jake are currently completing apprenticeships at QAL, and their uncle Greg started his career at QAL with an apprenticeship and is now an apprentice trainer.

Darcy is conducting a dual trade in electrical and instrumentation and said he was eager to get started.

"I've always wanted to be an electrician and tailored my school subjects to help me get there. I did work experience at three large industries and thought QAL would be the best place to work and receive good training," he said.

Chelsea Smith is the second person to undertake a Valve Bay Traineeship at QAL. The two-year program will give her specialist skills, plus there is an opportunity to follow it with two more years of training to obtain a trade in fitting and turning.

After completing three years of an auto-electrician apprenticeship and then her employer not having enough work for her to continue, Chelsea had to weigh up her options.

"I had an interest in this area and wanted to do something different so I thought this traineeship would be a good place to start. The heavy machinery environment and field work will also be a good change," she said.

According to statistics, the Thompsons not the only ones enjoying the family culture at QAL, with the 2010 apprentice intake including nine apprentices with immediate family already working on site. \

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QAL's 14 new apprentices and one valve bay trainee



Electrical/Instrumentation Apprentice Darcy Thompson and Valve Bay Trainee Chelsea Smith are looking forward to starting their new careers at QAL

About Queensland Alumina Limited's Apprentice Program:

QAL is one of the largest employers of apprentices in central Queensland, currently with an impressive 74 apprentices on site. Since the program began in 1968, over 740 apprentices have signed apprenticeship training agreements with QAL. In recent years QAL has been able to deliver the majority of first-year TAFE training modules on site, freeing up places at TAFE for other local apprentices.

About Queensland Alumina Limited:

Queensland Alumina Limited (QAL) commenced operation in March 1967 with an annual production rate of 600 000 tonnes of alumina. Today QAL is one of the world's largest alumina refineries, producing 3.95 million tonnes of the world's best smelter grade alumina per year. With an average workforce of 1050 employees, QAL is one of the region's largest employers and annually contributes approximately \$400 million directly to the local economy.

For further information contact:

Melissa Case,
Community Relations and Media Specialist
Queensland Alumina Limited
Ph: +61 7 4976 2448
Email: casem@qal.com.au
www.qal.com.au