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ONLINE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERS

By TERRY MARTIN

THE Society of Automotive Engineers - Australasia (SAE-A) has launched an online career development program designed to keep automotive engineers employed in Australia.

Dubbed CareerDrive, the program is backed by the Victorian government and aims to provide a "complete career transitioning program" for automotive engineers, from helping graduates gain a foothold in the industry to assisting experienced professionals move into new areas of employment.

According to SAE-A executive director Max Chanter, who launched the initiative at the 2010 Change by Design Active Safety Conference in Melbourne last week, CareerDrive is a progressive plan that meets the specific needs of Australian

automotive engineers.

"In the challenging automotive engineering field, the SAE-A wanted to take a stand for its members in securing and maintaining satisfying and productive employment," said Mr Chanter.

"The SAE-A does not employ engineers. But we did design a program to help Australian automotive engineers remain in this exciting industry, or at least transition into secure roles in related industries, such as aerospace, intelligent transport systems technology, rail and other forms of mobility engineering."

Accessed at www.careerdrive.com.au, the online program is free for SAE-A members and assists them in gaining exposure to prospective employers (through posting their resume, for example, and enabling it to be updated as required) and preparing for career

moves with coaching, training and mentoring.

Mr Chanter said the program was designed with "plenty of human interface".

"CareerDrive takes users through a series of key steps, which can be revisited at any time," he said. "The user can load their resume on the system and change it at any time, they are interviewed about their need for careers coaching or skills training, we offer coaching, training and mentoring, and they can participate in online forums.

"The individual user controls their privacy and progress. They also gain access to positions advertised by relevant industry organisations."



Max Chanter



AGENCY TARGETS AUTO TECHNICIAN SKILLS SHORTAGE

By TERRY MARTIN

AN INTERNATIONAL recruitment agency specialising in motor vehicle technicians has been established in Australia, importing skilled personnel from the UK and Europe to meet demand in the automotive service and repair industry.

As federal and state governments, administrative bodies and industry representatives continue to work on strategies that address the skills shortage in this area, Sydney-based Techs-on-the-Move is capitalising on the immediate needs of dealerships and workshops across Australia.

"Our aim is to reduce the national

shortage of skilled automotive technicians," said Techs-on-the-Move director Gavin Stocks. "We have very good links to a large pool of technicians in Europe, primarily in the United Kingdom. Our job is to match technicians with job openings in Australia."

A former area manager with BMW Group Australia, Mr Stocks said overseas professionals could provide an immediate solution for the skills shortage as dealers and workshops worked on longer-term solutions such as training their own technicians through apprenticeship schemes.

"Finding someone with the right training, knowledge and experience can be difficult," he said.

"Most workshop managers don't have the time to search overseas for technicians and don't know how to evaluate them long-distance. It can be a costly mistake to bring someone in who is either not correctly qualified or just a bad fit for the job."

As well as specialising in the automotive

industry, Techs-On-The-Move describes itself as a "one stop shop" that can assist with all relevant sponsorship and visa application requirements.

In its 2008 public policy manual, the Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) included the promotion of the wider use of skilled migrants among the strategies that could be adopted to address the skills shortages in the retail motor trades.

It also recommended better promoting career paths in the wider community and encouraging the shortening of apprenticeships (subject to the attainment of appropriate competencies) and the development of more flexible training options.



Gavin Stocks



If you have any car industry personnel announcements, please email them to Terry Martin at tmartin@melbourn

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