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For immediate release

### Creating new educational choices for North West youth

With educational attainment rates in the North West the lowest in Tasmania, it was very encouraging to see strong government and business support for the launch of a new youth employment initiative in Burnie last night.

Around 50 guests from the civil construction industry, education, government and local businesses attended the *School to Work Apprenticeship Scheme* launch.

Parliamentary Speaker and guest speaker on the night, Roger Jaensch MP, praised the initiative from Stornoway as a way of helping replenish Tasmania's civil construction workforce.

*"The Government is dedicated to improving education standards to build a job-ready generation, to equip our young people with the skills to undertake these jobs," he said.*

*"This program will help provide skilled workers for the future to support Tasmania's growing infrastructure requirements."*

Stornoway has joined with TasTAFE, the Department of Education and Beacon Foundation to develop the *School to Work Apprenticeship Scheme*.

Year 11 students will undertake an apprenticeship in civil construction, and spend two days a week in a workplace, gaining hands-on experience in the field while obtaining their Year 11 and 12 TCE (Tasmanian Certificate of Education).

Stornoway recognised a lack of opportunities for entry into the civil construction industry, an ageing workforce, skills gaps and shortages, together with community need, and responded in developing this program.

*"Educational attainment rates in the North West region are the lowest in the state,"* said General Manager, Business Services, Camille O'Meara. *"Plus, Tasmania has an ageing population, increasing unemployment generally and a significant predicted skills shortage for plant operators over the coming decade."*

*"This is about presenting a long-term solution for our youth and our industry. It is about creating pathways for youth to gain meaningful employment, combining ongoing education with hands-on skill development,"* Ms O'Meara said.

CEO of CCF Tasmania, Tanya Denison, is excited by the scheme. *"The civil construction industry in Tasmania has an ageing workforce and will have significant skills shortages in years to come. Stornoway is to be commended for taking the lead in such an exciting initiative."*

Beacon Foundation State Manager, Nick Probert, added his support, saying that Beacon was delighted to be partnering with Stornoway to provide opportunities for young Tasmanians.

*"We urge other employers to show similar leadership as Stornoway to prioritise the creation of entry level pathways for our young people."*

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