

OPTIONS OPEN FOR TRADESWOMEN

YOUNG women who are interested in pursuing a construction trade are urged to give it a go and join the increasing number of females taking up an apprenticeship in South Australia.

The 2018 CITB Apprentice Report finds a surge in the number of female construction apprentices occurred between 2016 and 2017, driven by an increase in electrical-related apprenticeships.

Between 2006-07 and 2015-16, the proportion of female construction apprentices in training grew from 1 per cent to 1.3 per cent of all apprentices, but in the year to 2016-17, increased to 1.7 per cent.

While the statistics may still seem low, the industry believes it is an encouraging sign to record such an increase in a 12-month period.

The report reveals across all apprenticeships and traineeships in SA that 27.2 per cent are being undertaken by females.

National Centre for Vocational Education Research figures estimate 50 women are in electrotechnology and telecommunications trades, making it more popular than other vocational training areas such as veterinary nursing (40 females in training), motor mechanics (35 in training) and floristry (five in training).

PEER chief executive Peter Nolan says it is trying to encourage even more young women

into an apprenticeship by bringing the career option on to their radar while they are at school.

"Young women aren't applying for apprenticeships because they often don't know this career option even exists," he says. "There is a general lack of awareness of the opportunities and career paths available within trades.

"Young women aren't reached early enough to encourage them down the trade career path.

"The bias starts at school with career decisions reinforced by the educational choices made during school and post-secondary education."

AGL spokeswoman Catherine Mooney says it is working in collaboration with PEER and Inspiring Futures for Young Women Australia to promote apprenticeship options for women in non-traditional roles.

"Students from secondary schools across South Australia will participate in a 'Girls Try a Trade'," she says.

"This will provide them real experience and insight into the trades offered by PEER.

"Students will spend the day together discussing, exploring and trying trade-related activities that they might not have thought was a viable career option."

GROWING: PEER apprentice Amelia O'Donald is among the growing number of females in trades.

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