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Graeme Harris from Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School named Rural Trade Teacher of the Year

The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence Recognises Excellence in trade skills teaching.

Graeme Harris from Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School in Tamworth has been named the Rural Trade Teacher of the Year at a ceremony in Sydney.

The Trade Teacher of the Year Awards are in their inaugural year and recognise excellence in training and teaching across the eight industry groups of focus for The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence, covering the: Automotive; Building and Construction; Electrical; Manufacturing; Metals and Engineering; Hospitality and Personal Services; Rural and Farming; and Mineral Resources.

The awards have been developed by The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence, which is funded by the Federal Government and led by three industry groups: The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; the National Farmers' Federation; and the Australian Industry Group.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for Trade Skills Excellence, Brian Wexham said that the Trade Teacher of the Year Awards were an important initiative.

“The Institute has been established to promote and advance learning, teaching and training in Australian trades education. One of our three key purposes is to foster and recognise excellent standards and teaching in trade’s education and training.”

Mr Wexham also said that the Awards enabled teachers to further develop their teaching.

“The Trade Teacher of the Year Awards are an excellent way to recognise teachers who excel in their chosen fields, amongst their peers and also provide the teacher with some funding to further develop the teaching practices in their industry, which in turn will also reward the students. This is an important initiative as this specifically recognises and awards teachers within the vocational trade training arena” said Mr. Wexham.

A total of 18 awards were presented across 18 categories in the inaugural Trade Teacher of the Year Awards, each with prizes of \$10,000 to individual teachers or teams of teachers who work in a trade area. The prize money was awarded as a \$5,000 cash prize and a \$5,000 developmental activity or program that will contribute to industry and teaching.

Graeme Harris was named Rural Trade Teacher of the Year in recognition for his management of a program that gives students the skills and knowledge desperately needed in the cotton industry.

Graeme has played a key role in developing a skills development resources matrix for implementing the Cotton Training Program courses for year ten and eleven students. Graham has achieved a great result with 100 % of students completing the course.

Graeme is also trialing a pilot called the Cotton Seeds Training Program to determine the feasibility of introducing Vocational Programs into years nine and ten.

Graeme said he will use the prize money to investigate the move towards sustainable production of cotton.

“I plan to use the prize money to investigate the move towards sustainable production of cotton through improved water efficiency in the upper Murray Darling Basin and develop it as a case study for year 11 and 12 Agriculture and Primary Industries VET students.”

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