



Rural-metro opportunity gap widens

WHEN it comes to on-the-job opportunities and training, the chasm between rural and metropolitan Australians is still wide and ever-widening, according to a study released this week.

A poll interviewing 1000 Australians revealed 87 per cent of the nation believed rural Australians were disadvantaged compared to their metropolitan counterparts.

The report, commissioned by Upskilled, one of Australia's leading RTOs (registered training organisations), also revealed one in two rural Australians felt their relationships, health or general wellbeing were suffering due to dissatisfaction and frustration in their career—a figure that rises to 62 per cent among 18- to 29-year-olds.

Rural communities are right to

be concerned about the rate at which young people are leaving home never to return – this trend shows no sign of slowing, with 22 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds planning to up sticks and move to major cities in search of better training and workplace opportunities.

“So many people in rural Australia feel that they are missing out when it comes to opportunities to grow in their profession and develop new skills,” Upskilled managing director Joel Gage said.

“What’s worrying is how many people see moving to a metropolitan area as the only solution.

“With our new initiative, Upskilling Australia, we’ll be offering residents in 50 different locations across Australia the chance to boost their career

prospects and skill base by providing free professional training courses.”

The research revealed that:

- The battle of the sexes breaks even, with 51 per cent of both men and women being unhappy with their on-the-job training opportunities;

- Tasmania is the state most on the move, with one in four planning a career-based relocation;

- Rural Victorians are the most optimistic about their workplace opportunities, with 23 per cent claiming regional opportunities match those of metro areas; and

- Northern Territory citizens are the most damning of opportunities to upskill rurally, with 100 per cent asserting that metro work opportunities outweigh regional.



OPPORTUNITIES: Greg Poetschka says it's no longer necessary to leave the country for a job. 020311RCD02