



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Literacy program to increase participation in accredited training**

Barkuma Incorporated this month begins a targeted literacy and numeracy program which will equip supported employees with the skills they need to participate in accredited training.

Over the past two years, Barkuma has worked in partnership with TAFE SA to provide accredited training for supported employees who have an intellectual disability. However, literacy and numeracy skills have been identified as a barrier to participating in this training.

Justin Farr, General Manager of Barkuma Commercial Services, said initially up to eight Barkuma staff will be trained to deliver literacy and numeracy training.

“Then in the first half of 2009 they will train approximately 30 employees at our Elizabeth and Campbelltown sites,” said Justin. “Our trainers will also develop materials and tools that can be used to continue providing training after the completion of the initial program in August next year.”

The 12-month program has been funded by a grant from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

“This program is unique because not only does it seek to develop literacy and numeracy skills, but it aims to do so in a way that is specifically targeted towards improving our employees’ ability to actively participate in accredited training and achieve enhanced work outcomes,” Justin explained.

“As well as directly supporting our employees to participate in TAFE training, we will also take the opportunity to build the capacity within Barkuma to continue this training as needed in the future. Initially we will focus on delivering the project to employees in our Commercial Services, but we would also like to provide this important training in other divisions of Barkuma.”

The program will be steered by a project management group that will include Barkuma staff and supported employees.

#### **About Barkuma**

Barkuma Incorporated delivers a range of services that assist people with disabilities to live and work in the community. In its 40-year history, Barkuma has grown to employ 140 staff and support more than 1000 people, making it one of the largest disability service providers in South Australia.

#### **For more information:**

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