



At the announcement (from left): Liberal candidate for Brand Phil Edman, Rockingham Mayor Barry Sammels and Senator Mathias Cormann. Picture: Neil Mulligan

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# Temporary plan for ATC

By **YVONNE THOMPSON**

THE Federal Government has moved towards establishing an Australian Technical College in Brand ahead of this weekend's Federal election.

Labor is opposed to ATCs and signalled it would merge them into the State's TAFE system if it won office.

This week WA Senator Mathias Cormann announced temporary premises for the college in 2008.

He said the Rockingham ATC would start operations early in

2008 at the council's Community Projects Centre in Hurrell Way, Rockingham.

The cities of Rockingham and Mandurah, the Town of Kwinana and the Kwinana Industries Council have lobbied for the college over the past two years. It would give Year 11 and 12 students an opportunity to learn a trade while still at school.

"During the first year, 45 students will have access to trade courses in metal and engineering and building and construction," Senator Cormann said.

"The council's Community Projects Centre became available

when demand for work-for-the-dole projects operating on the site had diminished sharply after significant reductions in local unemployment in recent years.

"The unemployment rate for Brand in March 1996 was 11.9 per cent; it now stands at 4.6 per cent."

The announcement of temporary premises followed the receipt of a \$50,000 grant from the Federal Government to Rockingham for the development of the formal budget and implementation plan for the college.

"It is important that the Rockingham ATC is up and running as soon as possible and I am ex-

pecting the first intake of students to start in the first half of next year," Senator Cormann said.

Brand Liberal candidate Phil Edman said whoever won government this weekend should not take away the ATC facility from Brand.

"Rockingham City Council has spent so much time and money on trying to get this up and running," he said.

Permanent facilities are expected to be built at the Dixon Road Education Precinct next to Murdoch University and Challenger TAFE campuses.