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BOARD OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Annual Report 2002 – 2003

The Hon Andrew Refshauge MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education and Training
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister

In accordance with the provisions of the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984*, it is my pleasure to submit to you the Annual Report of the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training for the financial year 2002-2003.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'Bert Evans'.

Bert Evans AO
Chairman

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Bert Evans, AO, Chairman

A time of change

One of the major roles of the Board of Vocational Education and Training (the Board) is to respond strategically to the growth of the New South Wales training system. Indeed, our Board believes that we have a vital role in shaping this evolving system, both by responding to the training needs of individuals, and by predicting and addressing the skill needs of emerging industries.

The year in review has been a time of considerable change in New South Wales. In 2002, Jan McClelland was appointed Director-General of the Department of Education and Training, following the resignation of Dr Ken Boston. In March 2003, Minister John Watkins, MP, took on a new role as Minister for Police with the re-election of the Carr Government. Dr Andrew Refshauge was subsequently appointed Minister for Education and Training. Dr Refshauge is also the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

In August 2002, the Board welcomed Jan McClelland as a new ex-officio member, and in January 2003 we also welcomed Leah Armstrong as a new Board member. Ms Armstrong is the General Manager of the Yarrteen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation and Managing Director of Yarrteen Commercial Enterprises.

Committed to quality and access

A passionate commitment to training quality has underpinned the Board's work during the year in review. At both a state and national level, the Board continues to emphasise the importance of quality in training. The assurance of quality in training delivery and standards safeguards the value of training credentials for individuals, industry and communities. Quality training is the key to the development of a highly-skilled workforce and a healthy economy.

The Board's strong commitment to quality is matched by an equal determination to ensure that all Australians have access to training opportunities. In 2002-2003, the Board has implemented a range of projects and strategies to address the training needs of disadvantaged groups. Projects focusing on the specific needs of Indigenous communities, people with a disability and people in rural and regional communities are detailed in this report.

While this year has been one of change, the Board's fundamental goal of ensuring that vocational education and training meets the needs of both individuals and industry remains constant. We are committed to fostering training initiatives that support this goal, and I am pleased to present the Board's annual report for 2002-2003 as a testament to this commitment.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bert Evans'.

Bert Evans, AO
Chairman, NSW Board of Vocational Education
and Training

THE ROLE OF THE BOARD



1.



2.

1. Board members pictured with apprentices at Ravensworth Operations' Narama Mine.

2. Board member Kay Sharp, AM, pictured with Roslyn Turner, who is undertaking a Certificate III in floristry at TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute, Kurri Kurri Campus.

The Board of Vocational Education and Training was established in 1994 to provide the State Government and the Minister for Education and Training with strategic advice about the NSW vocational education and training system.

The Board, which is appointed by the Minister, oversees policy and planning initiatives and fosters partnerships between key stakeholders in the NSW training system. The Board is a key source of advice to the Minister on state and national vocational education and training priorities. The Board also functions as the State Training Agency for the purposes of approving the allocation of recurrent and capital Commonwealth funding.

Charter

The Board's charter is to:

- > research and understand the marketplace and environment in which vocational education and training operates
- > plan appropriate strategic responses
- > advise on the suitable allocation of resources
- > liaise with governments, industry and community groups, and
- > inform people about and promote the value of the NSW vocational education and training system.

Aims and objectives

The NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training aims to increase public recognition of the value of vocational education. The Board's objectives, as specified in section 6 of the *NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training Act 1994*, are to:

- (a) advise the Minister on State vocational education and training policies in the context of State and national priorities and objectives
- (b) promote and develop, in collaboration with other agencies, a State vocational education and training system delivering high quality and nationally recognised programs
- (c) prepare, in collaboration with industry and vocational education and training providers, State Training Profiles based on the National Strategic Plan and agreed planning parameters, for approval by the Minister
- (d) recommend to the Minister the allocation of resources, including funding, to achieve optimal effectiveness and efficiency in the State's vocational education and training system

- (e) co-ordinate the provision of data on the performance of the State vocational education and training system to the Minister as required
- (f) prepare such plans and reports as may be required by the Minister
- (g) liaise with the Australian National Training Authority and with the State Training Agencies of other States and Territories
- (h) commission and conduct inquiries and foster research in vocational education and training
- (i) promote and develop, in consultation with the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board, a co-ordinated and effective State system for the accreditation of courses and registration of education and training providers
- (j) encourage the development of innovative programs and best practices, and the creation of new partnerships between the consumers of vocational education and training and public and private providers
- (k) collaborate with other agencies, to develop effective communication mechanisms for the dissemination of information about State and national developments in vocational education and training, and
- (l) advise and make recommendations on any matter referred to the Board by the Minister.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The Board consists of nine part-time members, eight of whom are appointed by the Minister. The Director-General of the Department of Education and Training is an ex-officio member of the Board.

During the year in review, two members of the Board completed their terms of appointment and one new member was appointed by the Minister. Professor Cliff Blake, AO, and Dr Doreen Clark, AM, both completed their terms of appointment on 31 December 2002. Leah Armstrong was appointed to the Board in January 2003.

Ex-officio Board member Dr Ken Boston announced his resignation from the position of Director-General of the Department of Education and Training in June 2002, and the new Director-General, Jan McClelland, took Dr Boston's place on the Board.

There was one vacancy on the Board in the first half of 2003, and all members of the Board are appointed until 31 December 2005.

Meetings of the Board

There were 11 meetings of the Board in 2002-2003. Two meetings were held as part of the Board's community consultation visits to the New England and Upper Hunter regions.

Table 1: Members' attendance at Board Meetings

Member	Meetings eligible to attend	Meetings attended
Bert Evans, AO	11	11
Leah Armstrong	6	6
Leslie Loble	11	10
Jan McClelland	10	7
Kevin Power	11	11
Kay Sharp, AM	11	11
Dr Paolo Totaro, AM	11	10
Bill Wooldridge	11	10
Prof Cliff Blake, AO	6	5
Dr Doreen Clark, AM	6	6



Bert Evans, AO (Chairman)

Bert Evans was appointed Chairman of the Board in 1996, following his retirement as Chief Executive of the Metal Trades Industry Association. Mr Evans is also Chairman of the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board.

In addition to his leadership roles in the training sector, Mr Evans is also Visiting Professor in the Macquarie Graduate School of Management and Visiting Professor in Industrial Relations at the University of Sydney. Until May 2003, Mr Evans was also Chairman of the Sydney law firm, Cutler, Hughes and Harris.

Mr Evans is a dedicated advocate of the social and economic benefits of quality training for all.

Kay Sharp, AM

Kay Sharp was appointed to the Board in 1998. Mrs Sharp is Executive Director of the Hunter Valley Training Company, a member of the Board of the Worldskill Australia Foundation and a member of the advisory council to TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute.

Mrs Sharp is also a member of the Board of MAI-WEL, an organisation that provides training and employment for people with intellectual disabilities. Mrs Sharp has a strong interest in vocational programs that address the special needs of people with a disability, young people and Indigenous communities.



Bill Wooldridge

Bill Wooldridge was appointed to the Board in May 2002. He retired as Assistant Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union of Australia, NSW Branch at the end of 2002, after 34 years as a full-time elected official. During this time Mr Wooldridge was Chairman of the Electro-Tech Group Training Company and Deputy Chairman of the Electro Skills centre.

Mr Wooldridge is currently a member of the Vocational Training Tribunal, a trustee of the NSW Labor Council and a member of the Local Trades Committee (Electrical).

Mr Wooldridge is a passionate advocate of the importance of quality training for workers in all industries, and has had a long history of involvement in the selection of the Apprentice of the Year for the NSW Training Awards.

Leah Armstrong

Leah Armstrong was appointed to the Board in January 2003. She is General Manager of the Yarnteen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation and Managing Director of Yarnteen Commercial Enterprises. The Yarnteen Corporation is actively involved in creating employment within the Aboriginal community and establishing commercial indigenous enterprises within the wider community. Leah strongly advocates the need for strategic thinking in vocational education and training to assist aboriginal communities and individuals to achieve economic self sufficiency.

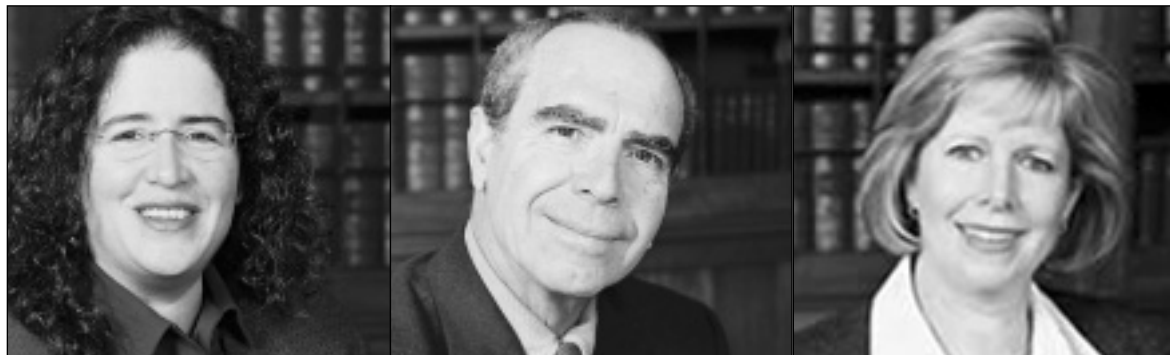
Kevin Power

Kevin Power was appointed to the Board in 1995. He is a Director of the Australian Training Company and was formerly the Executive Director of the ACTU-Lend Lease Foundation, and former Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training.

Mr Power is also a member of the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board, a Director of the Indonesian Skills Foundation and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management.

Mr Power is also Special Adviser to the National Aboriginal Sports Corporation, Australia, and is committed to enhancing education and work options for young Indigenous people.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD CONTINUED



Leslie Loble

Leslie Loble is Deputy Director-General, Strategic Planning and Regulation with the NSW Department of Education and Training. Ms Loble manages the department's policy formulation, program development, strategic planning and intergovernmental relations activities across schools, VET and higher education sectors. Ms Loble also oversees funding and regulation aspects of the NSW VET system.

Prior to joining the department, Ms Loble served the Clinton Administration as Chief of Staff to Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, and as a member of the US Department of Labor's senior management team.

Dr Paolo Totaro, AM

Paolo Totaro has been a member of the Board since July 1996. He was foundation Chairman of the Ethnic Affairs Commission from 1977 to 1989, and is a former Pro-Chancellor of the University of Technology, Sydney and former Commissioner of the Australian Law Reform Commission.

Dr Totaro is also a member of the Northern Sydney Area Health Service Board and the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board.

Dr Totaro has a passionate interest in making vocational education and training a vehicle for assisting young people at risk, Indigenous communities, and people from cultural minorities.

Jan McClelland

Jan McClelland is the Director-General of Education and Training and Managing Director of TAFE NSW.

As Director-General of Education and Training and Managing Director of TAFE NSW, Jan McClelland is responsible for directing, leading and managing the NSW public education and training system, which is the largest in Australia.

Jan McClelland is a member of a number of statutory boards and committees including: the Public Education Council, the NSW TAFE Commission Board, and the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board. She chairs MCEETYA's Schools Resourcing Taskforce. She is also a member of the Council of the University of New England and the Committee for the Economic Development of Australia.

The Board's 2002-2003 annual report records activities and achievements against the objectives outlined in the charter, namely:

- > responding to training needs and advising on resource allocation
- > understanding the vocational education and training environment, and
- > consulting the community and promoting the value of vocational education and training.

RESPONDING TO TRAINING NEEDS AND ADVISING ON RESOURCE ALLOCATION

One of the Board's key responsibilities is to provide the Minister with strategic advice about the future needs of the NSW training system. The Board also advises the Minister on the allocation of funds.

The Board operates within a complex policy environment. It is guided by the priorities of governments at both the national and state level, and by the diverse needs of industry, enterprises and individuals within the NSW training system.

National Policy Framework

In 1992, the Commonwealth established a partnership with the states to guide reform of vocational education and training in Australia. In return for Commonwealth funding for growth in training provision, the states agreed to implement nationally consistent strategic directions and annual priorities for training.

In 1994, the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training was established by an Act of Parliament to provide the NSW Government with policy and resource advice to support the state's involvement in the national training partnership.

The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) manages the partnership at the national level and guides training reform within a framework of nationally agreed priorities. ANTA operates under the authority and direction of the ANTA Ministerial Council, which is comprised of all Commonwealth and state and territory ministers responsible for vocational education and training.

The broad national vision and strategic directions under which the Board operated during the year in review were outlined in *A Bridge to the Future: Australia's National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training, 1998-2003*.

The strategy sets out the objectives for the national system. The five objectives are:

- > equipping Australians for the world of work
- > achieving mobility in the labour market
- > achieving equitable outcomes in vocational education and training
- > increasing investment in training, and
- > maximising the value of public vocational education and training expenditure.

During the year in review, ANTA has been working with states and territories to develop the next national strategy for vocational education and training. *Shaping our Future*, which is the theme of the strategy for 2004 – 2010, was developed following a national consultation process. At the end of the year in review, education and training ministers endorsed the strategy in principle. The vision of the strategy is based on the important role of training in supporting Australian businesses, people and communities.

Vocational education and training plans

A key requirement of the national training partnership is the preparation of annual vocational education and training plans by the states.

The plans require formal approval by the ANTA Ministerial Council and they report on state achievements in the previous year and priorities for the coming year. The plans also include training activity data and a capital development plan.

ANTA Agreement 2001-2003

In June 2001, the ANTA Ministerial Council endorsed an agreement for 2001 – 2003. The key national objectives of the agreement are to:

- > build a leadership role for industry in vocational education and training
- > enhance national recognition of qualifications and training providers
- > develop a skilled Australian community by expanding vocational education and training opportunities in schools, improving pathways with the higher education sector, and expanding apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities
- > increase opportunities and employment outcomes for individuals
- > develop a competitive training market with an appropriate framework of competency standards, recognition and qualifications
- > encourage a training culture in Australian enterprises, and
- > improve the efficiency of the provision of vocational education and training.

Under the ANTA Agreement 2001-2003, states are required to:

- > match Commonwealth growth funding with additional state funds
- > prepare specific state innovation strategies, and
- > increase the number of trainees and apprentices.

During the year in review, the Commonwealth released its proposal for a new ANTA Agreement 2004 – 2006. The proposal outlines the requirements that states and territories must meet in order to receive their share of Commonwealth funding.

At the end of the year in review, state and territory ministers agreed to develop a new agreement that reflects national priorities, draws upon the new national strategy for vocational education and training and seeks to improve outcomes for employers, individuals and communities.

Strategic Planning Advice

One of the Board's key responsibilities is to provide the Minister with strategic advice about the future needs of the NSW training system. In fulfilling this role, the Board develops planning documents, which detail the strategies, priority areas and specific initiatives that will guide the future of the State training system.

The Board's main planning documents are the *Annual NSW VET Plan*, which incorporates a NSW Innovation Strategy, and the *NSW Strategic Plan for Vocational Education and Training, 2002 - 2004*.

NSW VET Plan 2003

Under the ANTA Agreement, New South Wales is required to provide the Commonwealth with an annual VET plan.

The Board's *NSW VET Plan 2003* reported:

- > New South Wales' progress towards fulfilling the nationally-agreed annual training priorities for 2002
- > training activity data for 2002
- > planned vocational educational and training initiatives for 2003, and
- > projected training activity for 2003.

The 2003 plan was prepared with input from the Department of Education and Training, TAFE NSW, the Board of Adult and Community Education, the NSW Board of Studies and Industry Training Advisory Bodies.

The Annual NSW VET Plan incorporates a State Innovation Strategy. The innovation strategy for 2003 ensures that New South Wales has a training system which assists the development of an innovative business culture, promotes the application of new technologies, and supports the economic development of rural and regional communities.

Industries targeted by the *NSW Innovation Strategy 2003* include tourism and viticulture, the health and education sector, construction and the manufacturing sector including furniture, engineering, plastics and the textile industries.

NSW Strategic Plan for Vocational Education and Training 2002-2004

In order to improve planning for future skill needs, the Board has developed the *NSW Strategic Plan for Vocational Education and Training 2002 – 2004*.

The three-year strategic plan provides a long-term vision for future training directions and priorities in New South Wales. The Board is guided by the strategic plan in positioning vocational education and training as a key mechanism for economic and regional development in New South Wales.

The strategic plan has been developed to shape a training system that lifts the level of innovation, enterprise and productivity across all industries and occupations. The strategic plan focuses on three key areas in addressing the demand for new skills. The plan emphasises the development of:

- > skills for the new economy – assisting emerging and existing industries
- > skills for regions and communities, and
- > skills for participation – ensuring equitable access to education and training for all groups within the community.

Resource Allocation

Each year in New South Wales, more than half a million people participate in publicly funded training. Total public expenditure on vocational education and training has reached almost \$1.4 billion. Nationally recognised training is delivered through 130 TAFE NSW colleges. More than 800 registered private and community-based training providers operate in the state and most Government and non-Government high schools throughout New South Wales deliver VET courses.

The Board is responsible for providing the Minister with advice on the allocation of resources, including the strategic distribution of Commonwealth recurrent funding, which is provided to New South Wales under the ANTA Agreement.

The Board also advises on priorities for the state's investment in vocational education and training and on special purpose programs, such as the ANTA literacy funds.

Commonwealth Recurrent Funds

During 2002-2003, New South Wales received almost \$294.8 million in Commonwealth funding.

The Board recommended distribution of these funds to meet priorities in TAFE NSW, Adult and Community Education, VET in Schools, including structured workplace learning, apprenticeships and traineeships, the Contracted Training Provision program and NSW Agriculture.

ANTA Literacy Funds

Each year the Commonwealth also provides funding for adult literacy initiatives. The Board recommended a special allocation of \$2.6 million to TAFE NSW and the Adult and Community Education sector. These funds were provided under the Commonwealth's literacy program to assist people from a language background other than English, Indigenous people, the unemployed and people who live in rural and remote areas.

Australians Working Together

Under the Commonwealth's Australians Working Together initiative, New South Wales received funding of \$1.4 million to help improve the participation and training outcomes for people with a disability and \$2.8 million to assist mature age and parental job seekers.

During the year in review, the Board allocated \$1.4 million to the Disability Services Directorate of the NSW Department of Education and Training for the continuation of a program that will:

- > establish a sustainable process to increase the number of students with disabilities in Indigenous communities participating in vocational programs
- > establish a sustainable process to increase the number of students with disabilities undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships
- > implement strategies to increase the number of women with disabilities in information technology studies
- > provide mentoring for young people with intellectual disabilities in TAFE NSW to improve completion rates, and
- > implement strategies to improve the link between training and employment for people with disabilities.

During the year in review, the Board divided the \$2.8 million in funding from the Australians Working Together Fund between TAFE NSW, the Mature Workers Program and the Board of Adult and Community Education to assist mature age and parental jobseekers.

Skills Centre Infrastructure

Another key responsibility of the Board is to oversee and endorse proposals for the establishment of new skills centres funded under the Commonwealth's Skills Centres program. The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) provides capital infrastructure grants to build training facilities for industry-based ventures and for school students undertaking vocational programs.

Skills centres help to increase participation in vocational programs, expand industry and community involvement in training provision and provide industry-standard, off-the-job training facilities for young people. In making recommendations on skills centre funding, the Board gives priority to getting the best value for public funds, expanding local training places, securing local partnerships, enhancing access in rural and regional areas, and meeting state priorities for training.

During the year in review, the Board supported four skills centre for school students proposals including funding of \$320,515 to establish an Entertainment Industry Skills Centre at Blackwattle Bay Campus of the Sydney Secondary College, \$234,267 to a build skills centre at Ku-ring-gai Creative Arts High School, \$253,000 for an Information Technology Skills Centres at Cardiff High School and \$436,742 for a joint skills centre at Marrickville and Dulwich High Schools.

VET Infrastructure for Indigenous People

The ANTA VET Infrastructure for Indigenous People Program is part of a broad national strategy for the delivery of VET to Indigenous people. The program provides Commonwealth capital funding to the states and territories for the vocational education and training (VET) sector for major capital works.

During the year in review, the Board considered 29 submissions and endorsed seven project proposals to the value of \$1.55 million. The ANTA National Selection Committee endorsed three of the proposals, including \$75,000 for the Ngurrala Arts and Training Facility at Macksville, \$150,000 for the Thankakali Vocational Learning Complex at Broken Hill and \$171,710 for a Royal Life Saving Mobile Indigenous Training Unit in far western New South Wales.

Improving VET in schools

A key priority of the Board is the expansion of vocational education and training programs in NSW high schools. Over the last decade there has been a rapid expansion of vocational education and training in NSW schools. During the year in review, there were more than 64,000 Year 11 and 12 students enrolled in VET in schools courses.

The Board supports the expansion of quality vocational Higher School Certificate (HSC) programs in schools through the allocation of funding for delivery and coordination. In 2002-2003, the Board continued to manage the development of vocational education and training in schools through the NSW Schools Consortium, chaired by Board member Leslie Loble. The consortium is a formal partnership between the Government and non-Government schools sectors that pursues strategies to expand and improve vocational programs in NSW schools.

The consortium made significant progress in 2002 – 2003 towards increasing the range, quality and status of vocational programs for school students. It expanded student choice, aligned programs with the wider NSW Strategic VET Plan and further developed VET in schools infrastructure, teaching resources, partnerships and professional development for teachers. An additional vocational course, the Entertainment Industry Curriculum Framework, was added to the HSC VET curriculum in 2003.

The consortium's activities are positioning VET in schools as an integral part of the NSW and national training system.

Workplacement Coordination

Students undertaking vocational education and training subjects as part of their HSC are required to undertake workplacement. The Board supports workplacement as an essential element of all HSC framework courses. During the year in review, the Board recommended the allocation of \$3 million to fund 60 cross-sectoral workplacement coordination services.

The program enables students from metropolitan and regional areas to experience high-quality work placements with employers. During 2002, more than 900 students were allocated work placements in hospitality, tourism, business services, construction, retail and the information technology sector.

During the year in review, the Board also reached an agreement with the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECECF) regarding the coordinated management of workplacement coordination funds. The agreement has allowed the Department of Education and Training to manage the ECECF and BVET workplacement coordination funds as a single \$6.3 million program during 2003. The agreement has simplified the allocation and reporting arrangements for Local Community Partnerships throughout New South Wales.

At the end of the year in review, the Commonwealth announced its intention to terminate the operations of the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation. The functions of the ECECF will be undertaken by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). The Board and the NSW Department of Education and Training are working with the Commonwealth to renegotiate the agreement for the coordination of workplacement funds beyond 2003.

Quality In Group Training

During the year in review, the Board considered strategies to improve the effective operation of group training companies. Group training companies employ apprentices and trainees and manage the provision of their on-the-job training through the use of host employers.

During 2002 – 2003, joint funding of \$3.2 million by the Commonwealth and New South Wales for group training increased total trainee and apprentice numbers, expanded the range of industries where they are employed and provided equitable training opportunities.

Since 1995, the number of apprentices and trainees employed by Group Training Companies has more than doubled. In 2002 - 2003 there were 8,994 apprentices and trainees employed by 29 group training companies in New South Wales.

In 2001, the Board oversaw the development of new quality arrangements for group training in New South Wales incorporated under the new *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001*. The Board endorsed a new registration system under the Act for group training companies receiving public funds. The system, which came into effect in June 2003, sets the minimum quality standards for the operation of group training companies.

The Board also provided advice about changes to performance agreements with group training companies. These changes include a shift away from targeting selected apprenticeship areas to encouraging apprenticeships across all industry areas.



Board member Paolo Totaro pictured with 4th year electrical apprentice, Nathan Saunders at Ravensworth Operations' Narama Mine.

Board member, Leah Armstrong at TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute's wine making facilities at Kurri Kurri campus.

New State Industry Advisory Arrangements

Industry participation is fundamental to the operation of the vocational education and training system if it is to effectively support the economic and social development of New South Wales.

In its 2002 budget, the Commonwealth announced an end to support for state Industry Training Advisory bodies (ITABs). Commonwealth funding was reduced by two-thirds in the 2002-2003 financial year and will cease in 2003-2004.

Following an extensive consultation process, the former NSW Minister for Education and Training, the Honourable John Watkins, MP, determined to maintain the ITABs with a revised role, using available state resources. State resources are being used to provide advice on apprenticeship and traineeship arrangements, vocational education and training in schools, the development, review and implementation of training packages, and accreditation and registration processes.

The former Minister also asked the Board's Chairman, Bert Evans, AO, to convene a high level tripartite industry forum established under section 9(1) of the *Board of Vocational Education and Training Act 1994*.

The purpose of the Industry Skills Forum is to provide high level and strategic advice to the Minister, through the Board of Vocational Education and Training, on labour market trends, industry skills needs and strategies for gaining detailed industry advice to enhance the relevance and responsiveness of the vocational education and training system in New South Wales.

The forum provides a focal point for industry advice on training and skill needs. The forum's role is to:

- > assist with the development of state-wide strategies to address skill gaps
- > assist with the skill development needs of new and emerging industries
- > meet the current and future skills needs of industry and regions, and
- > lift the level of innovation, enterprise and productivity across all industries and occupations.

Review of the traineeship system

Between 1998 and 2002, approvals of new entrant trainees grew by 121 per cent. Demand is exceeding available resources and limiting the state's capacity to meet other training priorities. The rapid growth in traineeships has also increased concerns about the quality of training.

During the year in review, the Board proposed a comprehensive review of the traineeship system in NSW to address areas of risk to quality and establish a stronger basis to allocate training resources. The aim of the review is to establish a funding model for traineeships that will enable New South Wales to target areas of strategic importance and to improve quality.

The review will examine the scope of the state's current traineeship investment, including the industries, qualifications and pathways being funded and the quality of outcomes achieved. The review will make recommendations on alternative funding and incentive models that set priorities for allocating the available funds and managing growth in demand.

UNDERSTANDING THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

An important aspect of the Board's role is to understand the environment in which vocational education and training operates. As an advisory body, it is vital that the Board is well-informed about current and evolving trends by commissioning and supporting research into workforce policy and skills development. The Board's projects aim to:

- > identify and track trends within the NSW labour market
- > test or demonstrate the role that training can play in meeting industry, community or regional needs, and
- > meet specific training needs within a community or a region.

NSW Labour Market Trends

In 2000, the Board commissioned the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) to provide five-year employment forecasts for New South Wales. The projections were used to support the development of the *NSW Strategic Plan for Vocational Education and Training, 2002 – 2004*, and underpin many of the Board's demonstration projects.

During the year in review, the NIEIR was commissioned to update the Board's existing employment data and to provide new projections for the period 2005-2008. The preliminary data highlights areas of industry growth and decline, employment growth, occupational forecasts and areas of future skill need.

The projections will be used to inform the planning, purchase and delivery of training throughout New South Wales. The updated data will be published on the Board's web site in the second half of 2003.

Demonstrating models of vocational education and training

The Board's work includes a number of projects that are designed to demonstrate the value of vocational education and training for individuals, industry and communities. In fulfilling this role, the Board ensures that the projects it commissions inform its understanding of the forces that are shaping our society. The Board also ensures that projects support its commitment to improving the NSW vocational education and training system's responsiveness to industry needs, and equip individuals and communities to respond to workplace change.

Current Board projects are addressing the specific training needs of many groups across the community, including young people, people with disabilities and people in regional communities.

The Regional Demonstration Project: Bringing Vocational Education and Training to Cellulose Valley

During the year in review, significant progress has been made towards achieving the goals of the Board's Lismore-based project, *Bringing Vocational Education and Training to Cellulose Valley*. The project, which commenced in September 2001, is being managed by Invest Northern Rivers, which promotes local regional investment and development.

The focus of the project is to demonstrate the role that vocational education and training can play in encouraging industry and community partnerships to increase skills development in regional communities. The project is implementing strategies to position the training sector as a leader in regional development, by attracting new business to the region and assisting local businesses to expand. The project is particularly focused on young people and Indigenous communities, and has created new training and job opportunities for local people in several enterprises.

During the year in review the project has successfully:

- > piloted a transition from school to work initiative for young people
- > established an Indigenous Small Business Skills and Mentoring network to assist Indigenous people to develop business and entrepreneurial skills
- > encouraged local Job Network agencies to work collaboratively and to develop integrated training and recruitment services using a one-stop-shop model, and
- > stimulated partnerships between TAFE NSW and local employers to provide targeted and specialised training in spatial information services, aged care and health services, horticulture, furniture finishing and research and laboratory operations in the medicinal plant industry.

Towards the end of the year in review, the Board agreed to use the approaches that were trialled in Lismore in a number of other regions in New South Wales. The Board is working with TAFE Institutes in rural and regional areas to provide mentoring in the development of initiatives to encourage social and economic development.

Pathways for Indigenous People in Vocational Education, Training, Employment and Business

The Board's other major regional demonstration project, *Pathways for Indigenous People in Vocational Education, Training, Employment and Business*, also made significant progress during 2002 – 2003.

The project, which is focusing on the training and employment needs of the Indigenous community in the New England region, is managed by Regional Extended Family Services (REFS), a Registered Training Organisation that specialises in community services.

The project is linking communities across the New England region and trialling new ways of integrating training for Indigenous people with employment opportunities in local business, government and community organisations.

The main elements of the project are the creation of a new nationally recognised management course, an Indigenous Business Enterprise and a sponsorship and mentoring program for Pathways course participants.

Integrated into all Pathways courses are units in cultural and community awareness and Indigenous therapies. These units, called the Bookoola modules, provide an Indigenous cultural framework in which all learning takes place. Articulation into diploma and degree courses offered by three regional universities has been negotiated and the Department of Education and Training has agreed to use several modules in senior high schools across the New England region.

An Indigenous Business Enterprise has also been established as part of the Pathways project to improve links between training and employment for course participants. It will provide direct employment and structured workplacement for participants, as well as pathways to employment and business opportunities.

Addressing the needs of young people

Addressing the needs of young people, particularly those who are at risk of disengaging from education, training and employment, was a particular focus for the Board during the year in review. The Board recognises the need to ensure that all young people have the opportunity to participate in skills and training that will lead to employment. During the year in review, three of the Board's initiatives focused on addressing the needs of young people through vocational education and training.

The Murray Youth Employment and Training Strategy

The Murray Youth Employment and Training Strategy is assisting young people in the Albury-Wodonga region to gain meaningful employment through a whole-of-community approach to improving education, training and employment outcomes.

The strategy is being managed by the Murray Industry Education Advisory Committee, which comprises local industry bodies, individual enterprises, government agencies, community groups and education and training providers. The advisory committee is developing a wide range of practical responses to the job and training needs of local young people.

A key goal of the strategy is strengthening cross-border partnerships with the neighbouring Victorian community in Wodonga. The advisory committee is working with the Local Learning and Employment Network for North East Victoria to ensure that the training and employment needs of young people in the Albury-Wodonga region are comprehensively addressed.

During the year in review, the *Murray Youth Employment and Training Strategy* has:

- > completed an environmental scan, which is being used to highlight priorities such as career education initiatives, improving school to work transition arrangements and improving the flexibility of education planning across the state education systems
- > negotiated with five local employment services agencies in the Albury-Wodonga area to distribute promotional material on employment pathways in the area, and

> established and launched initiatives that are addressing the needs of the region's young people including:

- *Job Pathways for Indigenous Young People*, which is advising Indigenous youth and their principal carers about the employment, training and further education options that are available locally
- *Changing Choices - IT and Me*, which is a training and support program that is assisting young women to gain entry to the information technology industry
- *Bikes Alive*, which is assisting early school leavers to develop skills in bicycle mechanics, and
- mentoring programs for young people in industries that are experiencing skills shortages including the manufacturing, financial services and health industries.

Improved participation in traineeships by Arabic-speaking young people and Arabic-speaking employers

In 2002, the NSW Government established the *Youth Partnership with Arabic Speaking Communities Project*. The purpose of the project is to:

- > promote the wellbeing of young people from an Arabic-speaking background
- > increase parent support and education to help reduce risk taking behaviour, and
- > provide children and young people with better learning opportunities and recreational activities for long-term personal development.

As part of the partnership, the Board is supporting an initiative that is trialling a range of strategies to increase participation in traineeship programs by Sydney's Arabic-speaking community.

UNDERSTANDING THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED

One of the project's key goals is to improve access for Arabic-speaking young people to post-school education, training and employment opportunities. In line with this goal, the project is targeting the training needs of young people in the Bankstown and Granville areas. The project is also working with small business owners to strengthen links between Arabic-speaking employers, community groups and students.

The Board hopes to develop a portable, systematic and sustainable model which can be applied to other culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Vocational opportunities for Indigenous students in Years 7 – 10

The Board is committed to improving the training participation rates and outcomes for Indigenous students. Through its consultation program, the Board has received a number of requests to use vocational programs as a strategy to motivate young Indigenous people to remain at school beyond Year 8. The Board is examining options for using vocational programs as a means of addressing poor retention rates amongst Indigenous students.

During 2002-2003, the Board worked towards the development of an appropriate model. At the end of the year in review, the Board was finalising a discussion paper to guide a consultation process with relevant stakeholders.

As part of this approach, the Board sponsored a pilot program to improve retention rates, traineeship participation and employment outcomes for Indigenous students in the Lismore region. The Jirhun Mibiyn project offered Indigenous students in Years 9 and 10 the opportunity to undertake a vocational course in a concentrated 4-week block. The pilot provided 80 hours of a traineeship qualification, giving students an advantage in promoting themselves to employers as potential trainees in Years 11 and 12.

The pilot also trained 15 Indigenous mentors to support students, families and employers through the course and associated work experience. Mentors assisted with the delivery of modules, tutoring and work placement support.

Innovation Projects

In November 2001, the Board developed four projects as part of an innovation strategy for the vocational education and training sector. The projects are piloting new ways for training providers to train people in the skills that they need to live and work in the new economy. The projects address the skill needs of selected industries in different regions of New South Wales.

Innovative Learning for Australia's Tourism Industries

The project is developing and piloting new ways of using teaching and learning approaches to meet the tourism industry's skill needs. It is focused on developing new ways for training providers to work with small to medium enterprises and start-up companies to ensure that the skill needs of a knowledge-driven, innovative tourism industry are met.

TAFE NSW – Northern Sydney Institute is managing the project, and is working with the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism (CRC) and the TAFE Industry Partnership Centre to develop a training program for a web-based research product, Decipher.

The role of the Commonwealth-funded CRC is assisting businesses, communities and governments to enhance the environmental, economic and social sustainability of tourism. The 'Decipher' product is designed to support small and medium tourism enterprises in making decisions regarding planning, marketing and business development.

The project team is using TAFE NSW's extensive network of regional training facilities and services to work with tourism businesses throughout rural and regional areas to ensure their long-term viability. The two key aims of the project are to develop training programs and services based on Decipher, and to pilot the programs and services in ten tourism enterprises throughout New South Wales.

A Sustainable Future – Innovation in Training for the Agricultural Sector

The project is canvassing the training needs of rural producers and communities in the Central West region and developing training solutions to meet these needs.

The research project is being conducted by Orange's Central West Community College, in partnership with the Western College of Adult Education and the Professional Services Unit of Sydney University's Orange Campus.

The project team is collecting information on the vocational education and training needs of rural producers and the barriers they face in accessing training. The research is being used to assist training providers and the agricultural industry to develop flexible training programs that best meet the needs of producers.

Innovation: "It's in the AIR"

The project is demonstrating new ways in which training providers can co-operate more closely with their local community to drive economic outcomes.

The project, which is being managed by Nowra's Southern Adult Education College (SAEC), is developing new ways for businesses in the avionics and defence support industries to collaborate in identifying their training needs, and to develop flexible and innovative ways of delivering training to existing workers and job seekers.

SAEC became aware of the skill and employment needs of the Nowra region through its contacts in the local community, who were looking to benefit from the Department of Defence's outsourcing of activities previously undertaken by Department personnel. The project's activities will result in more employment opportunities within the industry and will increase training in higher level skills.

During the year in review the project has successfully:

- > expanded a network of employers, local government and training providers in the avionics and defence support industries
- > identified skills shortages and developed training plans
- > surveyed IT training needs in the avionics and defence industries, and
- > conducted workshops with defence support industry contractors to identify appropriate methods of training delivery.

During the second half of the year the program will pilot initiatives to train existing workers and job seekers for career paths in the defence support industries, and promote long term local employment opportunities in the region by better matching industry needs to job seeker skills.

Using the principles of knowledge management for community based economic development

The project is encouraging North Coast training providers to become involved in business and regional development.

The Adult Community Education (ACE) Training Network, which comprises ACE Mullumbimby, ACE North Coast and the Alstonville Adult Learning Association, is managing the project, and is assisting local businesses to establish a framework for knowledge management.

Knowledge management means capturing the knowledge, information or ideas within an organisation in such a way that it can be used to improve the organisation. The project is assisting Byron Shire businesses to implement knowledge management practices, with a view to fostering business growth and creating more job opportunities for local people.

The ACE Training Network is training small and medium enterprises in knowledge management practices. Project partners include local government representatives as well as representatives from industries including hospitality, adventure tourism, property development, bush foods production and fashion production.

As well as running a series of seminars to introduce Byron Shire businesses to knowledge management practices, the network has appointed knowledge managers in five industry sectors to share techniques with other like businesses and develop expertise in their specific industries.

Meeting specific training needs in communities and regions

A number of the Board's initiatives are focused on meeting the specific training needs of a particular community or group within the community. Priorities include assisting people from disadvantaged groups in the community to improve their participation in education, training and employment.

Whole of Life Vocational Rehabilitation Project for People with Recent Spinal Cord Injury

An important aspect of the Board's work is the development of initiatives which can improve the participation of people with a disability in vocational education, training and employment. The vocational rehabilitation project is demonstrating a unique approach to rehabilitating spinal injury patients. Industry, health and training providers are working together to assist spinal injury patients to undertake training or return to the workforce.

Between 2000 and 2002 the project delivered information technology training to 32 people in the spinal injury units of three Sydney hospitals. Some participants in the project's first phase have rejoined the workforce, while others are undertaking further education and training. The first phase of the project highlighted the need to link education and training with other support services and the importance of an individual approach to meeting the needs of spinal injury patients.

The second phase of the vocational rehabilitation project is building on this success, and is focusing on tailoring training for individuals. Project participants will have more opportunities to gain credentials and greater access to computers outside teaching hours. A comprehensive case management approach is being taken to follow up participants' needs after they leave rehabilitation care. The second phase of the project is also working with other agencies including the Motor Accidents Authority, the Paraplegic Association and Paraquad to ensure that the project is integrated with other government initiatives that are looking at the transitional needs of spinal cord patients.

Traineeships for people with a disability program

The Board's commitment to ensuring the benefits of training are made available to all people is reflected in its contribution towards the *Traineeships for People with a Disability* program.

The program provides on-the-job training opportunities in NSW public sector agencies for people with a disability. It fully funds trainees' wages, wage-related costs and allowances. Trainees undertake training leading to a nationally recognised qualification.

UNDERSTANDING THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED

A unique feature of the program is that the participants are offered permanent employment with their host employer upon successful completion of their traineeship.

In its first year of operation, the program placed 37 people with a disability in traineeships with twenty NSW public sector employers. During the year in review, the Board provided funding of \$100,000 to support the placement of a further 37 people with a disability into traineeships.

The second phase of the program is addressing a number of administrative issues that were identified during the first phase of the program. For example, funding is being used to support the development and distribution of a support kit providing specialised assistance and training for host employers.

Basic Information Technology Computer Skills Program

A key goal for the Government and the Board has been to make training in basic computer skills accessible to all people in the community. During the year in review, the Board continued to make basic computer skills training available through the International Computer Driving Licence program.

The program was delivered through TAFE NSW, the Adult and Community Education sector and the open training market, and targeted mature aged workers, people seeking to re-enter the workforce, people from traditionally disadvantaged groups in the community and people in rural and remote areas.

During the year in review, more than 4000 people successfully completed the ICDL program and qualified for an International Computer Driving Licence, which is an internationally recognised standard of computer literacy.

Support for drought-affected farmers

In 2002, the Board contributed to the Government's package of emergency measures to meet the needs of the drought-affected rural sector.

As part of the government's state-wide strategy, the Board allocated \$1.02 million to TAFE NSW – Western Institute to develop and manage a project to assist rural communities to retain their skilled workers. The project is working to retain and enhance the pool of skills in rural communities through the provision of training for people who provide labour to farms. The program is working with rural communities to:

- > develop business and technical skills in farm employees
- > enhance farm safety through the provision of training
- > improve farm productivity by developing a better understanding of farm production skills and techniques
- > involve farm employees in activities relating to environmental sustainability, and
- > reduce social welfare costs associated with unemployment.

To ensure that the areas of greatest need are targeted, the project is focusing on locations that have been most severely affected by the drought, in particular Bourke, Brewarrina, the Macquarie Valley, Moree and the Western Riverina.

TAFE NSW delivery of Indigenous Organisation Training for Community Development Employment Program participants

The project is addressing the training needs of Indigenous people involved in Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) throughout New South Wales.

The CDEP scheme is administered by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and has been operating in Aboriginal communities for 27 years. The primary objective of the scheme is to provide work for unemployed Indigenous people in community-managed activities which assist individuals to acquire skills which benefit the community, develop business enterprises and lead to unsubsidised employment.

The Indigenous Organisation Training program is assisting the capacity building of CDEPs throughout NSW. Training will enable Aboriginal communities to plan for and manage the skills training they need to ensure the success of CDEP activities to improve the education and training outcomes of Aboriginal communities. The delivery of the training will result in a greater level of self determination through an improved capacity to manage projects and develop business opportunities.

TAFE NSW Institutes through the Aboriginal Education Training Units are planning to deliver the Certificate IV and Diploma in Business (Governance) to NSW CDEP organisations. Culturally sensitive teaching and learning resources have been specifically developed to support the flexible delivery of the training program to Indigenous communities.

During the year in review a skills analysis of local CDEPs was conducted. The outcomes of the skills analysis is being used to plan courses and to ensure the delivery of appropriate and effective training. Program delivery will begin in September 2003 with pilots being run initially in Western and North Coast Institutes. Delivery will commence in other Institutes in the first half of 2004.

CONSULTING THE COMMUNITY AND PROMOTING THE VALUE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Board's planning and research activities are supported by a comprehensive consultation program. To ensure that its advice to the Minister is well-informed and consistent with industry and community needs, the Board consults widely with industry organisations, education and training providers, unions, small business and community representatives.

The Board also has a responsibility to promote the value of vocational education and training, which it does through its community consultation program; its written and electronic communications and by sponsoring events and activities that promote quality and excellence in vocational education and training.

Consultation

In 2002-2003, the Board's consultation program included several visits to regional communities, facilitation and leadership of two industry forums, and participation in a number of high-level, cross-sectoral conferences.

The Board also consults with adult learners studying at TAFE, community colleges and private training institutions; apprentices and trainees in a range of workplaces and learning environments, and school students undertaking vocational education and training.

Regional visits

Northern Rivers

In July 2002, the Chairman and a number of Board members travelled to Lismore and Casino to visit businesses, schools and community organisations involved in the *Regional Development Project: Bringing Vocational Education and Training to Cellulose Valley*.

Board members met with a number of organisations involved in the project, which has focused on training people in the skills required by emerging industries in the Northern Rivers region.

Members visited Lismore's Kadina High School, which has achieved a 100 per cent retention rate of Indigenous students moving from Year 10 to 11 through a combination of VET initiatives and an outstanding mentoring program. The visit also included a meeting with Indigenous students in a prevocational class in the Assistant-in-Nursing Certificate III course. The program is designed to attract Indigenous people into the health care professions.

The Board's visit to the region also included discussions with existing worker trainees from the Northern Rivers Area Health Service and visits to new and existing local businesses that are using vocational education and training to develop and expand their workforces.

New England

In August 2002, the Board spent three days visiting the New England region, consulting with communities in Tenterfield, Guyra and Armidale. The visit was very successful, both in terms of the learning opportunity it provided for Board members and the positive feedback from industry, education and community representatives.

In Tenterfield, Board members met with members of the town's workplace industry trainers group, who have been successful in securing ANTA funding to build a skills centre for use by students and the community. The Board was impressed by the strength of community partnerships that support education and training throughout the New England region, including the school-industry partnership in the small community of Guyra, which is playing an important role in planning for emerging local skill needs.

As part of their visit, Board members met with a large group of students and business leaders from Guyra, where they discussed Guyra Central School's VET program and its response to the needs of major growth industries in and around the town. These industries include a large flower bulb industry, a rabbitry, and a growing aquaculture industry, with many farmers converting dams to fish farms.

The Board hosts a community forum as part of each major regional consultation, and the New England forum, which was held in Armidale, was attended by more than 40 representatives of industry, education, training and the community. The forum provided Board members with valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities facing the New England region.

A highlight of the Board's visit to Armidale was a presentation ceremony for participants in the Board-sponsored Pathways project. Pathways has offered Indigenous people access to a unique Certificate IV course in Planning and Management, which includes Indigenous therapies subjects. The Board's Chairman, Bert Evans, officially launched the course during the Board's visit, and recognised the achievements of participants who have completed a number of course modules.

Central West

In March 2003, BVET Chairman Bert Evans and Board members Kay Sharp and Bill Wooldridge visited Orange. The visit included meetings at disability service Wangarang Industries, Central West Community College and TAFE NSW – Western Institute.

CONSULTING THE COMMUNITY AND PROMOTING THE VALUE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CONTINUED

Wangarang Industries was the winner of the NSW Training Initiative Award for 2002, and Board members spent time at Pinnacle Industries, one of Wangarang's eight worksites, where sub-assembly work is done for Electrolux Limited. Board members met staff involved in Wangarang's award-winning Enterprise Training Program, which has resulted in 11 employees gaining a Certificate I in Engineering. The program involved the development of specialised resources by Wangarang's training team to assist employees with a disability to gain an accredited qualification. Many of the employees on the shop floor at Pinnacle Industries now have access to new training and skills development opportunities.

Board members also visited the Orange campus of TAFE NSW – Western Institute, where they met with representatives of the Institute's Aboriginal Development Unit (ADU). In partnership with the Department of Education and Training's Aboriginal Programs Unit, the ADU has developed a Cultural Awareness course for teachers. The Institute's team of Aboriginal Development coordinators are taking a holistic approach to retaining Aboriginal students by adapting course curricula to meet student's cultural backgrounds. The success of the unit's approach was evident during the Board's meeting with Indigenous students in the Institute's Diploma of Indigenous Health class. Nine students are taking a team approach to the Diploma course in 2003, having all completed Certificates I-III in 2002.

The students have forged links with Indigenous mentors in health organisations throughout the Orange community, and all are demonstrating a commitment to making a difference to the health and livelihood of Indigenous people. The adaptation of the course curriculum to suit students' cultural backgrounds is exemplified by the students' team approach to planning a community health screening day.

As part of the Central West visit, Board members also met with Central West Community College (CWCC) and other members of the steering committee for the BVET-sponsored project: *A Sustainable Future – Innovation in Training for the Agricultural Sector*. The project is canvassing the training needs of rural producers and communities throughout the Central West region.

Upper Hunter

Board members visited the Upper Hunter region on 12-13 May, 2003. The visit included a meeting with management, apprentices and trainees at Macquarie Generation's Bayswater Power Station and a discussion of mining industry skill needs at Singleton's Narama Mine – part of Xstrata Coal's Ravensworth Operations.

The Board's community consultation forum in Muswellbrook attracted more than 50 people, some travelling from Newcastle for the event. The forum highlighted the strength of community partnerships in the region and the important role of vocational education and training in meeting skill needs in both traditional and emerging industries in the Hunter.

In the Lower Hunter, the Board visited Aboriginal education and training enterprise Yamuloong Inc. in Garden Suburb, Newcastle, as well as Kurri Kurri High School's call centre facility and TAFE's wine-making centre at Hunter Institute's Kurri Kurri campus.

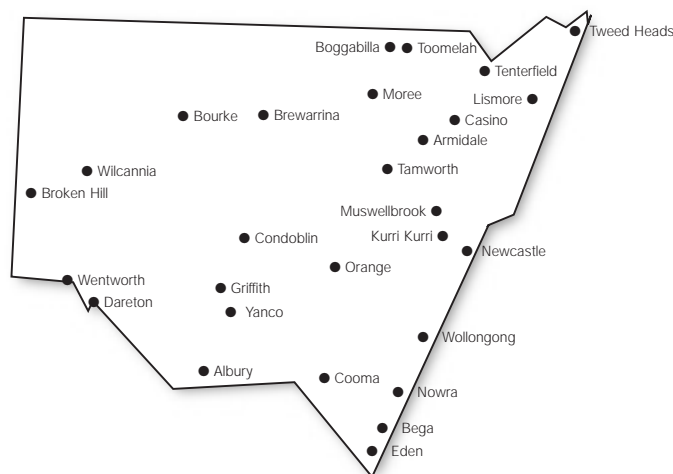
Yamuloong's innovative training programs are achieving considerable success in keeping young Indigenous students at school. The School to Work Orientation Program (SWOP) is operating at a number of local high schools, and has reduced the student drop out rate from 23 per cent in Term 3, 2001 to around 2 per cent in Term 4, 2002. Yamuloong has had similar success with its Enterprise Education Program, which aims to increase education and employment options for Indigenous young people in Years 7-9 in Newcastle. The program involves the design, development and marketing of a bush tucker business, with students learning skills in planting and propagation, horticulture and tour guiding, information technology, marketing, retail and hospitality.

The Board was equally impressed by Kurri Kurri High School's focus on providing vocational education and training opportunities for students and community members through its industry-standard call centre. Senior students at the school have a unique opportunity to undertake a Certificate II in Telecommunications through the school's call centre, which was established in 2002, through the Board's Skills Centres for School Students program. The centre was officially opened by the Director-General in July 2002.

The call centre was the brainchild of school staff, some of whom work part-time in the call centre industry. Supporters of the call centre concept believed that the establishment of a call centre at Kurri Kurri High School would benefit students and the community in a number of ways, including by:

- > addressing the employment and skill needs of a fast-growing industry and a number of call centres in the Newcastle and Lower Hunter areas
- > creating training opportunities for people in high unemployment areas throughout the Hunter Valley coalfields
- > training people in customer services and sales support skills required in the Lower Hunter's hospitality and tourism industries, and
- > training people in generic skills transferable to other occupations.

The call centre produced its first graduates in 2002, and 29 Years 11 and 12 students are currently working towards obtaining a Certificate II in Telecommunications through the centre. The centre's facilities are open for use by the Kurri Kurri community, and it is hoped that TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute and local ACE providers will use the centre's facilities in the future. There has been considerable interest in the call centre from local businesses, including support from the Lower Hunter Business Enterprise Centre, and technical advice, sponsorship and training from Telstra Countrywide. The Australian Telecommunications Association (ATA) has also provided advice on running the centre, while Optus has assisted with training teaching staff. Call centre students have undertaken some commercial work for local businesses at a cost of 50 cents per call. Profits from commercial work have been reinvested in the centre to meet its operating and capital replacement costs.



BVET consultation locations 1997-2003

As well as working with local businesses, the school is developing a partnership with Kurri Kurri's 'Towns with Heart' project. The project was developed as part of the Small Towns Program funded by the Department of State and Regional Development, and is developing strategies for addressing unemployment in the area and attracting investment in local enterprises.

The Board has visited more than 28 communities since 1997. In addition to visits to regional and metropolitan communities, the Board's consultation program includes regular meetings with industry groups, government agencies and community organisations about their stakeholders' training needs.

Industry consultation

NSW Industry Skills Forum

The NSW Industry Skills Forum is one formal channel used by the Board to consult with NSW industry. The forum provides strategic advice to the Minister, through the Board, on labour market trends, industry skill needs, and strategies to increase industry involvement in the NSW training system. The forum is led by BVET Chairman Bert Evans, AO and includes representatives of both industry and employee organisations.

During the year in review, members had frequent, informal meetings with industry representatives and business owners as part of the Board's community consultation program.

National Automotive Industry Skills Forum

The Board continued to support the specific training needs of the automotive industry in 2002-2003 through the National Automotive Industry Skills Forum. The forum is a partnership of leading automotive manufacturers working to attract young people to careers in the industry. The forum is supported by two working groups, namely the T3 Working Group and the Industry Promotion Working Group.

Leading manufacturers Toyota, Ford, Holden and Mitsubishi are participating in the national school-based traineeship program (T3) in 2003. Part-time traineeships have been offered to NSW schools students in Vehicle Servicing and Business Services, and Toyota is also trialling traineeships in Sales Parts – Replacement and Sales. One hundred and seventy-eight traineeship applicants were assessed as eligible for the 2003 program by a joint panel of industry, TAFE NSW and school representatives.

CONSULTING THE COMMUNITY AND PROMOTING THE VALUE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CONTINUED

The industry's T3 program in 2001-2002 was a resounding success. Of the 51 NSW school students who commenced an automotive traineeship in 2001, 49 completed their vocational qualification and Higher School Certificate in 2002. Two students left to pursue alternative pathways in the automotive field.

In 2002-2003, the forum's Industry Promotion Group worked on strategies for liaising with other key automotive organisations to develop career marketing products and activities across the industry. Members also participated in a NSW Automotive Training Board conference in late 2002 focusing on automotive skills shortages and ways of improving staff recruitment and retention.

Conferences

Transition from work to retirement forum

In November 2002, the Board hosted a discussion forum on issues relating to the changing profile of the workforce, the transition from work to retirement and support mechanisms for the aging workforce.

More than 20 people attended the Transition from Work to Retirement forum, including academics and representatives from government agencies, community organisations and industry. Papers included a presentation from Board member Leslie Loble, followed by discussion of the policy challenges associated with an ageing workforce.

The discussion covered a range of themes relating to mature age workers, including the reasons for a perceived reluctance by employers to employ older people; international trends and examples of mature workers programs; the notion of portfolio employment, and the need to address the radical shift that is occurring across the life course.

The forum was one aspect of a national research and policy development program called Towards a New Social Settlement: Rethinking Social Policy across the Life Course, a joint initiative of researchers from the University of Melbourne, Deakin University, Monash University, the Centre for Economic Development and the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

The forum was an important aspect of the Board's consultation program during the year review, given its keen interest in training and skills development for all sections of the workforce, include mature age workers.

Premier's Department conference: People, Place, Partnerships 2

In line with its commitment to the strengthening of communities through vocational education and training, the Board supported a Premier's Department conference focused on the economic and social strengthening of communities during the year in review. The *People, Place, Partnerships 2* conference was held in Sydney in April 2003, and explored ways of building and sustaining capacity in communities, as well as community renewal policy and practices in NSW, Australia and overseas.

The Board provided \$10,000 for the conference, and showcased the achievements of *The Regional Development Project: Bringing Vocational Education and Training to Cellulose Valley* at a conference session. The conference brought together hundreds of people from the public, private and community sectors to workshop ideas for addressing the diverse needs of communities throughout the state.

BVET Chairman Bert Evans, AO, chaired a conference session on education and training for capacity building by communities, which included a presentation on the Board-sponsored regional development project. Board member Leslie Loble also spoke at the conference about the contribution that education and training can make to developing stronger communities.

Promotion

During the year in review, the Board supported a number of events and initiatives to promote the value the vocational education and training. The Board also communicated the value of VET to a wide range of audiences using its website and the mainstream and specialist media.

WorldSkills – Quest for Gold

WorldSkills Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes excellence in vocational training and job skills. Its mission is to challenge young people, their teachers, trainers and employers to achieve world-class standards in all industries.

In November 2001, the Board endorsed the allocation of funds to support training for NSW competitors in the lead up to the 2003 international WorldSkills competition in St Gallen, Switzerland. TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute was selected to manage the WorldSkills Quest for Gold Strategy.

The Quest for Gold project team did some preparatory work with outstanding NSW competitors in the lead up to the national competition in Newcastle in October 2002. Regional winners from across New South Wales were prepared for the national competition through a combination of practice competition experience, skill enhancement initiatives and training workshops with ex-competitors and coaches.

The Australian team, which included 16 NSW representatives, performed well at the international competition, which took place in June 2003.

The Board's support for WorldSkills Australia reflects its commitment to promoting the strengths of the New South Wales training system, and its interest in providing an opportunity for talented young people to showcase the skills they have developed through quality training.

New-look web site

The Board's web site was redesigned during the year in review to improve its usefulness as a communication tool and its effectiveness as a source of information on vocational education and training for a wide range of audiences.

The Board's website was launched in February 1999, and was the first website with a VET focus to be launched by the Department of Education and Training. The new-look site was launched in June 2003. It has a new structure, revised content and links, new navigation features - including a site map and search engine, as well as a news section to provide users with updates about Board consultation visits, events and projects. The web site also includes a query feature, which allows visitors to ask questions and seek detailed information about the Board's activities and the NSW training system.

There was a substantial increase in the number of visitors to the site following its re-launch in early June. There were 2979 visitors to the site's home page in June 2003, compared with 377 visitors in May 2003.

Media interest in Board projects and research

The Board promotes success in the NSW VET system and current training issues through mainstream and VET media channels.

During the year in review, the Board's knowledge-based economy research project was cited by the Australian Financial Review's BOSS magazine, in a July 2003 article titled *Changing skills in the knowledge economy*. The article discussed the findings of the Board's published project working paper *The Knowledge-based Economy: A review of the literature*.

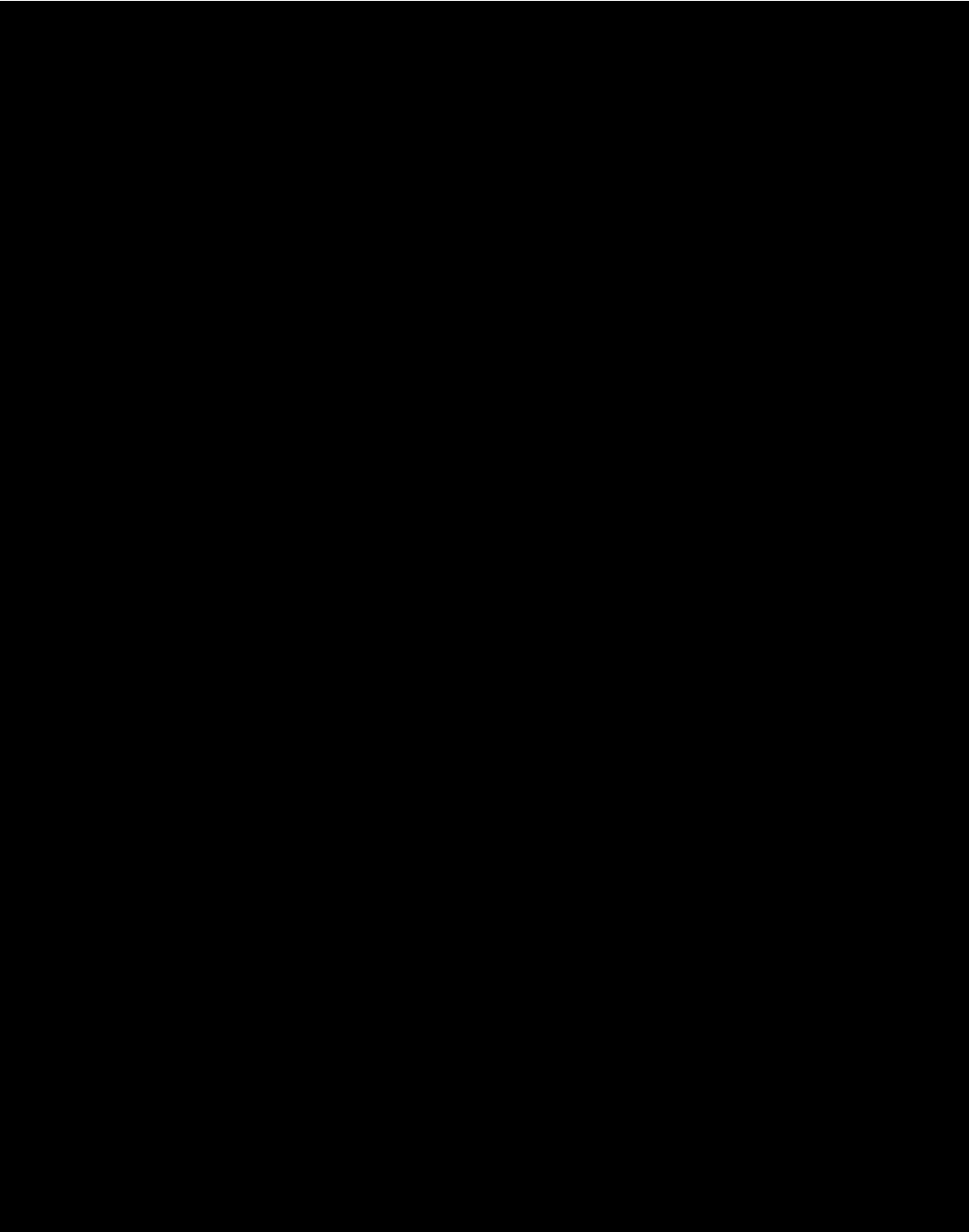
The national education publication *Campus Review* also reported on the Board's research, publishing a series of reviews of the papers arising from the knowledge-based economy project in the second half of 2002.

In November 2002, *The Sydney Morning Herald (the Herald)* featured an article on VET in schools, which referred to the Board-sponsored *Jiruhn Mibiyn* project. The project is piloting VET programs for Indigenous students in Years 9 and 10 at schools in the Northern Rivers region with a view to encouraging students to stay at school.

In an interview for the article, Board Chairman Bert Evans spoke to the Herald's Linda Doherty about the project and its potential for increasing retention rates among Indigenous students. Ms Doherty wrote about the project in the context of the recently-released National Report to Parliament on Indigenous Education and Training 2001, which showed that Indigenous students are dropping out of school at a much higher rate than other students.

The article highlighted the benefits of vocational education and training for all school students and referred to vocational education subjects as "the success story of the HSC". The article also highlighted the national push for greater university recognition of vocational subjects, and acknowledged New South Wales' key role in the national project and the leadership of Board member Leslie Loble on this issue.

The Board's 2002-2003 community consultation visits to regional areas received considerable coverage in regional media, who were interested in the Board's role in fostering local VET initiatives.





GPO BOX 12
SYDNEY NSW 2001

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

NSW BOARD OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

To Members of the New South Wales Parliament

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report of the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training:

- (a) presents fairly the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training's financial position as at 30 June 2003 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended on that date, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, and
- (b) complies with section 41B of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* (the Act).

The opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

The Board's Role

The financial report is the responsibility of the members of the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training. It consists of the statement of financial position, the statement of financial performance, the statement of cash flows and the accompanying notes.

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The Auditor's Role and the Audit Scope

As required by the Act, I carried out an independent audit to enable me to express an opinion on the financial report. My audit provides *reasonable assurance* to Members of the New South Wales Parliament that the financial report is free of *material* misstatement.

My audit accorded with Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards and statutory requirements, and I:

- evaluated the accounting policies and significant accounting estimates used by the Board in preparing the financial report, and
- examined a sample of the evidence that supports the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report.

An audit does *not* guarantee that every amount and disclosure in the financial report is error free. The terms 'reasonable assurance' and 'material' recognise that an audit does not examine all evidence and transactions. However, the audit procedures used should identify errors or omissions significant enough to adversely affect decisions made by users of the financial report or indicate that Board had failed in their reporting obligations.

My opinion does *not* provide assurance:

- about the future viability of the Board,
- that it has carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically, or
- about the effectiveness of its internal controls.

Audit Independence

The Audit Office complies with all applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements. The Act further promotes independence by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General, and
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of public sector agencies but precluding the provision of non-audit services, thus ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office are not compromised in their role by the possibility of losing clients or income.

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Eric Lumley FCPA
Assistant Auditor-General

SYDNEY
20 October 2003

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Start of Audited Financial Statements

NEW SOUTH WALES BOARD OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2003

Pursuant to Section 41C(1B) and (1C) of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, and in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the New South Wales Board of Vocational Education and Training, we declare on behalf of the Board that in our opinion:

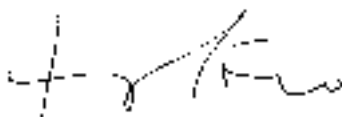
- (i) the accompanying financial statements exhibit a true and fair view of the financial position of the New South Wales Board of Vocational Education and Training as at 30 June 2003 and transactions for the year then ended;
- (ii) the statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, the *Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2000*, the Treasurer's Directions and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

Further, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements misleading or inaccurate.

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Bert Evans, AO
Chairman



Paolo Totaro, AM
Member

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2003

	Note	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Revenue from ordinary activities			
Operating revenue	3(a)	753	746
Project revenue		984	786
Total revenue from ordinary activities		1,737	1,532
Expenses from ordinary activities			
Operating expenses		742	746
Project expenses		816	1,030
Total expenses from ordinary activities	3(b)	1,558	1,776
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities		179	(244)
Total changes in equity other than those resulting from transactions with owners as owners			
	8	179	(244)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2003

	Note	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Current assets			
Cash	4	1,784	1,577
Receivables	5	12	8
Total current assets		1,796	1,585
TOTAL ASSETS		1,796	1,585
Current liabilities			
Payables	6	85	36
Provisions	7	-	17
Total current liabilities		85	53
TOTAL LIABILITIES		85	53
NET ASSETS		1,711	1,532
Equity			
Accumulated funds		1,711	1,532
TOTAL EQUITY	8	1,711	1,532

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2003

	Note	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
<i>Payments</i>			
Operating payments		(782)	(850)
Project payments		(765)	(1,030)
Total Payments		(1,547)	(1,880)
<i>Receipts</i>			
Interest received		85	-
Cash flows from government:			
Operating receipts		685	875
Project receipts		984	786
Total Receipts		1,754	1,661
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	10	207	(219)
Cash flows from investing activities		-	-
Cash flows from financing activities		-	-
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held		207	(219)
Cash at the beginning of the reporting period		1,577	1,796
Cash at the end of the reporting period	4	1,784	1,577

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. The Reporting Entity

The New South Wales Board of Vocational Education and Training ("the Board") is the Government's principal advisory body on vocational education and training. The Board also liaises with the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) over the provision and distribution of Commonwealth training funds in NSW and on national training policy.

The Board was constituted by the *Board of Vocational Education and Training Act 1994* on 1 July 1994. The Board is the body nominated as the State training agency for the purposes of the *Australian National Training Authority Act 1992*.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The Board's financial report is a general purpose financial report which has been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with applicable Australian Accounting Standards, the requirements of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, the *Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2000*, the Treasurer's Directions, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB).

The financial report is prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention. All amounts are rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars and are expressed in Australian currency.

(a) Going concern

The Board's financial report has been prepared on a going concern basis. The Board has received a guarantee from the Department of Education and Training of continued financial support in the event of any shortfall. This financial support has been made available until October 2004.

(b) Classification by function

In the statement of financial performance, all revenue and expenses from ordinary activities have been classified by function rather than nature. The Board administers funds for research projects. It is considered that classifying project and operating expenses separately provides the most relevant information about the Board's financial performance. Revenue and expenses have been classified by nature in note 3.

(c) Employee related expenses

Employee related expenses relate to Board member's fees, superannuation, workers' compensation and payroll tax. Board members are not entitled to annual leave or long service leave. The Board's liability for superannuation is assumed by the Crown.

(d) Non-current assets (property, plant & equipment)

The cost method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets controlled by the Board. Cost is determined as the fair value of the assets given up at the date of acquisition plus costs incidental to the acquisition. Assets are determined to be any item with a useful life exceeding twelve months and with a cost in excess of \$5,000. The Board does not currently have any non-current assets under its control.

(e) Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash at bank as at 30 June 2003.

(f) Comparatives

Where required, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

(g) Revenue recognition

Project funds represent income received from the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth funds are allocated by the Minister for Education and Training to the Board for vocational education and training projects. These funds are recognised when they are received.

(h) Corporate service support charge

Historically, corporate service support charge was provided to the Board free of charge by the Department of Education and Training. From the 2002 financial year, a charge for this support equal to 9% of forecasted recurrent expenditure (exclusive of property management) has been brought to account. This charge is an estimate based on studies of corporate services made by the Council on the Quality and Cost of Government. The estimate is meant to cover the costs associated with normal operations. Based on support provided to the Board in the current year, the 9% charge remains unchanged.

(i) Secretariat and operational support

Commencing 1 July 2002, expenditure incurred in relation to secretariat and operational support provided to the Board by the Department of Education and Training has been classified as other operating expenditure rather than employee related expenditure. This change was implemented to accurately reflect the nature of the expenditure and is in accordance with the guidelines provided by accounting standard AASB 1028 *Employee Benefits*.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED

3. Revenue and Expenditure from Ordinary Activities

(a) Classification of operating revenue by nature

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
State contribution	645	746
Acceptance by the Crown of employee benefits (see note below)	23	–
Interest income	85	–
	753	746

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Acceptance by the Crown of employee benefits comprises the following specific items:		
Superannuation	22	–
Payroll tax on superannuation	1	–
	23	–

(b) Classification of expenses by nature

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Employee related expenses (see note below)	286	242
Fees and charges	467	890
Secretariat and operational support	358	314
Traineeship subsidies	225	–
Corporate service support charge	58	66
Agency staff	19	–
Accommodation	23	27
Audit fee	13	13
Travel and motor vehicles	18	47
Printing and freight	19	143
Stores	16	34
Advertising	56	–
	1,558	1,776

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Employee related expenses comprises the following specific items:		
Board member fees	244	228
Workers' compensation insurance	4	–
Superannuation contributions	22	–
Payroll tax	16	14
	286	242

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED

4. Current Assets – Cash

Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the statement of financial position as follows:

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Cash at bank		
Operating funds	33	45
Project funds	1,751	1,532
Closing cash (as per statement of cash flows)	1,784	1,577

5. Current Assets – Receivables

Receivables of \$12,000 (\$8,000 in 2001-2002) represents the receivables affect of goods and services tax (GST) paid or payable to suppliers that will be claimed back in the next reporting period from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) as input tax credits in the Board's monthly business activity statement (BAS).

6. Current Liabilities – Payables

Payables of \$85,000 (\$36,000 in 2001-2002) represents liabilities for goods and services received prior to the end of the financial year which are unpaid

7. Current Liabilities – Provision

Provision for employee recreation leave and oncosts:

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Balance 1 July	17	12
Increase (decrease) in provision	(17)	5
Balance 30 June	-	17

As stated in note 2(i), expenditure incurred in relation to secretariat and operational support provided to the Board by the Department of Education and Training has been classified as other operating expenditure rather than employee related expenditure. Consistent with this change in accounting practice, the provision for employee recreation leave and oncosts was reduced to zero to reflect that the Board is not liable for recreation leave entitlements.

8. Changes in Equity

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Total equity at the beginning of the reporting period	1,532	1,776
Total changes in equity recognised in the statement of financial performance	179	(244)
Total equity at the reporting date	1,711	1,532

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED

9. Audit Fee

An audit fee of \$13,700 excluding GST has been charged to the Board for the 2003 financial year (\$13,550 in 2002). The auditors received no other benefits.

10. Note to Statement of Cash Flows

Reconciliation of net cash used in operating activities with the result from ordinary activities:

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Result from ordinary activities	179	(244)
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	(17)	5
Increase / (decrease) in payables	49	22
(Increase) / decrease in receivables	(4)	(2)
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	207	(219)

11. Contingent Liabilities

At the time of completion of the Board's financial report, the Board is not aware of any contingent liabilities in existence as at 30 June 2003.

12. Financial Instruments

Financial instruments give rise to positions that are a financial asset of the Board and a financial liability to another party. For the Board these instruments include cash, receivables and accounts payable. All financial instruments are shown at net fair value unless stated otherwise.

Significant terms and conditions of financial instruments are as follows:

(1) Cash

Cash comprises the bank balance within the Treasury banking system. Interest is earned on daily bank balances at the monthly average NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) 11am unofficial cash rate, adjusted for a management fee to Treasury.

(2) Receivables

Receivables represents the receivables affect of GST paid or payable to suppliers that will be claimed back in the next reporting period from the ATO as input tax credits in the Board's monthly business activity statement (BAS). These amounts are generally received in the following month and do not accrue interest.

(3) Payables

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services (including GST) provided prior to the end of the financial year which are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within the terms of credit. Generally these amounts do not incur interest.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of the financial instruments will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. The Board's exposure to interest rate risk and the effective interest rates of financial assets is as follows:

	Floating interest rate		Non-interest bearing		Total carrying amount as per statement of financial position	
	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Financial assets						
Cash	1,784	1,577	–	–	1,784	1,577
Receivables	–	–	12	8	12	8
Total financial assets	1,784	1,577	12	8	1,796	1,585
Financial liabilities						
Payables	–	–	85	36	85	36
Total financial liabilities		–	85	36	85	36
Net financial asset/(liability)	1,784	1,577	(73)	(28)	1,711	1,549

Credit risk

The amounts shown as receivables are GST paid or payable to suppliers that will be claimed back from the ATO as input tax credits in the Board's monthly business activity statement (BAS). There is no credit risk (risk of financial loss arising from the failure of another party to discharge a financial obligation) to the Board as the ATO will discharge this obligation.

13. After Balance Date Events

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of this report any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature likely to affect significantly the operations of the Board, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Board in subsequent financial years.

End of Audited Financial Statements

The Board's work is informed by the principles for equity in education and training outlined in the *NSW Charter for Education and Training*. The charter articulates the NSW Government's commitment to building a high quality and fair education and training system.

The charter's first principle recognises that everyone is entitled to participate in high quality education and training programs. Language and cultural differences are recognised as barriers to participation in education and training for people of all ages, and the Board fosters a range of initiatives aimed at breaking down these barriers.

Part of the Board's role is to promote the value of vocational education and training, as well as the results of successful training initiatives throughout New South Wales. During the Board's consultation visits to schools and TAFE NSW campuses, members have seen a range of learning environments and teaching styles where the needs of all students from the most disparate backgrounds are successfully addressed. The Board encourages the removal of language and cultural barriers to learning by promoting the achievements of teachers and training providers who foster an inclusive learning culture.

During the year in review, a number of Board initiatives have targeted the special needs of people from culturally diverse backgrounds and language backgrounds other than English. The Board's achievements in this area are underpinned by another principle of the charter for education and training, which recognises the diversity of the population, and values inclusive approaches to the development, conduct and evaluation of programs.

Board initiatives and future plans for addressing the training needs of people from culturally diverse backgrounds are reported against the goals established by the Board's charter.

Understanding the vocational education and training environment

Achievements

Part of the Board's role is to recommend funding for projects that meet specific training needs within a community or a region. More than 4,000 people – including a large percentage from language backgrounds other than English – have participated in the Board's *Basic Information Technology Skills Development Program*. The program, which was first implemented in 2001, continued to provide free tuition in basic computer skills to people in metropolitan and regional areas in 2002-2003.

Program participants were given the opportunity to obtain an International Computer Drivers Licence (ICDL) through the program, which was run by TAFE NSW and private training providers. In 2002, BVET approved funds of \$1,359m to support TAFE institutes to achieve or exceed their program enrolment targets. A large proportion of the 4,038 students enrolled in 2002 were from language backgrounds other than English.

Another Board initiative addressing the needs of young people from a language background other than English is the traineeship project for Arabic-speaking youth. The project is trialling a range of strategies to increase the participation of Arabic-speaking young people and business owners in traineeship programs in Sydney's Bankstown and Granville areas.

The project's main goal is to improve access for Arabic-speaking young people to post-school opportunities in further education and training and employment. The project is being implemented during 2003 by a steering committee comprising representatives from the Department of Education and Training, TAFE NSW – Southern Sydney and South Western Sydney Institutes, the Premier's Department Arabic Youth Partnership Project and community organisations.

Plans

The Board will continue to focus on the specific training needs of people from language backgrounds other than English in 2003-2004. These needs will be addressed through continuing Board projects – including the traineeship project for Arabic-speaking youth – and through aspects of the *NSW VET Plan 2004*.

Responding to training needs and advising on resource allocation

Achievements

The NSW VET Plan, which outlines strategies and initiatives responding to the annual national VET priorities agreed by States and Territories, is developed under the auspices of the Board. The Board has ensured that there are strategies addressing the special needs of the ethnic communities.

The *NSW VET Plan 2003* included a set of initiatives focused on implementing more effective skills recognition processes for older workers from language backgrounds other than English. These included plans to:

- > implement the National Quality Assurance Framework for Assessment and Recognition of Overseas Skills and Educational Qualifications via a devolved regionally-focused customer service structure

APPENDIX 1: ETHNIC AFFAIRS PRIORITY STATEMENT CONTINUED

- > develop a new policy and support materials for the recognition of overseas qualifications in TAFE NSW targeting older workers, and to
- > produce new brochures on trade skills recognition in English and four community languages.

The 2003 Plan also included initiatives to overcome language barriers experienced by people from culturally diverse backgrounds. These initiatives included the Productive Diversity project, which provided materials about skills recognition and self-assessment methods in plain English, as well as training materials in Khmer, Vietnamese and Arabic. During the year in review, a guide was also developed for TAFE NSW staff to improve information services for people from language backgrounds other than English, and client access to interpreters and translated materials was also improved.

Plans

The Board will continue to encourage the implementation of effective skill recognition processes within the NSW training system, which will benefit older workers and migrants, as well as measures that overcome language barriers.

Related initiatives in the *NSW VET Plan 2004* include:

- > continuation of Productive Diversity project investigating recognition of prior learning for vegetable growers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The project examines the special needs of this group in the Sydney Basin so that the recognition process can be customised to achieve improved outcomes

- > building on existing arrangements in TAFE NSW Institutes to enhance the customer service aspect of the granting of recognition. Services will be expanded to enterprises assisting the development of individual training plans which include recognition of the skills of existing workers, and
- > rewriting training materials for clients of the *Education and Training Plan for Sustainable Agriculture in the Sydney Region* in plain English. The materials will also be translated into five community languages, namely Arabic, Khmer, Chinese, Vietnamese and Italian.

Consulting the community and promoting the value of vocational education and training

Achievements and plans

An important part of the Board's role is to inform people about and promote the value of the NSW vocational education and training system. In line with its commitment to ensuring that all people in NSW have equal access to quality training, the Board regularly consults with people from language backgrounds other than English.

Consultation takes place in metropolitan and regional areas as part of the Board's community consultation program. Organisations and government agencies representing the interests of people from culturally diverse backgrounds (including Regional Advisory Council representatives) attend the Board's open forums on vocational education and training.

As part of the Board's consultation program, members also meet with TAFE NSW and other training providers regarding the implementation of initiatives that address the specific training needs of people from people from language backgrounds other than English.

The Board also supports the exchange of ideas across the VET sector by publicising news of events that focus on skills policy development and the promotion of VET achievements, including those that focus on initiatives for people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

APPENDIX 2: CODE OF CONDUCT & APPENDIX 3: REPORT OF OPERATIONS

The code of conduct applying to Board members is specified in Schedule 1 of the *NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training Act 1994*. The code states that:

(1) If:

- (a) a member of the Board has an interest in a matter being considered or about to be considered at a meeting of the Board; and
- (b) the interest appears to raise a conflict with the proper performance of the member's duties in relation to the consideration of the matter, the member must, as soon as possible after the relevant facts have come to the member's knowledge, disclose the nature of the interest at a meeting of the Board.

(2) A disclosure by a member at a meeting of the Board that the member:

- (a) is a member, or is in the employment, of a specified company or other body; or
- (b) is a partner, or is in the employment of a specified person; or
- (c) has some other specified interest relating to a specified company or other body or to a specified person,

is a sufficient disclosure of the nature of the interest in any matter relating to that company or other body or to that person which may arise after the date of the disclosure and which is required to be disclosed under subclause (1).

(3) Particulars of any disclosure made under this clause must be recorded by the Board in a book kept for the purpose and that book must be open at all reasonable hours to inspection by any person.

(4) After a member of the Board has disclosed the nature of an interest in any matter, the member must not, unless the Board otherwise determines:

- (a) be present during any deliberation of the Board with respect to the matter, or
- (b) take any part in the decision of the Board with respect to the matter.

(5) For the purpose of the making of a determination by the Board under subclause (4), a member of the Board who has an interest in the matter to which the disclosure relates must not:

- (a) be present during any deliberation of the Board for the purpose of making the determination; or
- (b) take part in the making by the Board of the determination.

(6) A contravention of this clause does not invalidate any decision of the Board.

The Department of Education and Training's Code of Conduct applies to staff providing assistance to the Board, and is referred to in the Department's Annual Report.

Appendix 3: Report of Operations

The report of operations is provided in accordance with the requirements of the Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act, 1984.

Aims and objectives

Refer to page 3.

Access

Correspondence to the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training should be addressed to the Board at:

Level 3
35 Bridge Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: 02 9561 1500
Facsimile: 02 9561 1499
www.bvet.nsw.gov.au

Summary of operations

Refer to The Year in Review, pages 7-11.

Funds granted to non-government community organisations

Refer to table of consultants, page 36.

Legal change

No legal changes have taken place during the year in review that affect the Board or its operations.

Economic or other factors

There have been no economic factors that have affected the Board's operational objectives during the year in review.

Management and activities

See the membership of the Board, page 4-6.

Research and development

Refer to The Year in Review, pages 12-16.

Human Resources

The Board's personnel and industrial relations practices are in accordance with the Department of Education and Training's policies and Public Employment Office guidelines.

APPENDIX 3: REPORT OF OPERATIONS

Consultant	Project Title	Amount Paid
Northern Rivers Regional Development	The Regional Development Project: Bringing Vocational Education and Training to Cellulose Valley	\$60,000
Regional Extended Family Service	Pathways for Indigenous People in Vocational Education, Training, Employment and Business	\$145,000
Central West Community College	A Sustainable Future - Innovation in Training for the Agriculture Sector	\$20,000
ACE Training Network	Using the Principles of Knowledge Management for Community Based Economic Development	\$30,000
National Institute for Economic and Industry Research	National Institute for Economic and Industry Research	\$11,000
Southern Adult Education College	Innovation - "It's in the Air"	\$13,304
Monash University	Reviewing the Case for a Contribution Scheme in Vocational Education and Training	\$16,500
University of Western Sydney	The Changing Nature of Work and The Emergence of Knowledge Based Economy - Implications for Vocational Education & Training at the Demands of the Emerging Knowledge Based Economy	\$33,000
Northern Rivers Regional Development	Jiruhn Mibiyn Pilot Project for Indigenous Students in Years 9 and 10.	\$39,100
Total		\$367,904

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Equal Employment Opportunity

The Board adheres to the Department of Education and Training's EEO policies and practices. The Department's EEO initiatives are highlighted in its annual report.

Disability plans

The Board adheres to the Department of Education and Training's *Disability Action Plan 2000-2002*, developed as part of the NSW Disability Policy Framework.

Promotion

Refer to The Year in Review, page 20

Guarantee of service

The Board is covered by the Department of Education and Training's Guarantee of Service. Service performance is highlighted in the Department's Annual Report.

Payment of accounts

The Board's accounts are paid centrally by the Department of Education and Training.

Risk management and insurance

Risk management and insurance policies covering Board members and clients are the responsibility of the Department of Education and Training's corporate services division and are reported through the Department's Annual Report.

Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement

Refer Appendix 1.

NSW Government Action Plan for Women

The Board adheres to the Department's *NSW Action Plan for Women 2000-2002, Education and Training, 2001 Update and Action Plan*, developed with reference to the *NSW Government Action Plan for Women*.

Occupational Health and Safety

The occupational health and safety of Board members and staff is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Training's corporate services division. Details of Occupational Health and Safety initiatives are reported in the Department's Annual Report.

APPENDIX 3: REPORT OF OPERATIONS CONTINUED

Waste reduction

Implementation of the Government's Waste Reduction and Purchasing Policy is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Training's corporate services division. Waste reduction initiatives are reported through the Department's Annual Report.

Records management

The Board's record management procedures are in accord with those used by the Department of Education and Training.

Annual report costs

The Board's annual report is available in hard copy form, on CD ROM, and on the Board's website. The report can be accessed at www.bvet.nsw.gov.au

Total external costs incurred in the production of the report was \$11,557.70 including GST.

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