

# Output from

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## Training: the Future – Manufacturing

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Industry Training forum for manufacturing

convened by:  
The Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training,  
in conjunction with:  
The Automotive, Engineering and Manufacturing Industry  
Training Board and  
The Department of State Development

Held at the Launceston International Hotel, Thursday 5 July 2001.

Facilitated by: Eric Willie

## *TRAINING: THE FUTURE – MANUFACTURING FORUM REPORT*

The Training: the Future – Manufacturing, industry skills and training forum was held on 5 July 2001.

Discussion brought out several main themes:

- the benefits of better engagement by the key stakeholders with each other,
- the need for the industry to do a better job of increasing the awareness amongst young people of the opportunities to them from working in manufacturing, and
- extending career paths beyond trade levels.

There was potentially substantial benefit from what took place during the forum as it provided participants with information to better understand and respond to the issues around manufacturing skill development.

In particular, participants will take from the forum an understanding of the benefits of RTOs having a consistently high level of consultation and interaction with industry and of manufacturing businesses actively engaging with RTOs in relation to the skilling of their workforce.

This report contains:

- A list of key skill needs, with broad priorities allocated.
- A list of issues.
- A record of the analyses provided by groups of forum participants, of skill needs and the appropriate training response.

The following is based on notes taken during the forum and ideas documented by participants. It is not a verbatim record but is close.

### **SECTION 1 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT NEEDS**

Discussion of the skills development needs for the workforce with the aim of reaching a shared understanding of what is driving the skill development requirements and a consensus on the priorities for skills development

**Note:**

Discussion in both sections expanded out into areas such as issues for employers.

## **ANALYSIS 1**

### Drivers & priorities

- Specific needs for individual businesses.
- Less generic type skills eg fitters and machinists may need generic training to Certificate II and more specific targeted training beyond that.
- Growth & attrition both drive training.
- Many experienced people are leaving.
- Personal growth & career paths are important. This means that there is a need to retain people with career paths, develop them further and encourage people to go beyond existing "ceilings". To do this will involve the full utilisation of training packages.
- There is not enough understanding of training, pre-vocational, VET in schools, TAFE, and more needs to be done for employers to understand - including more consistency and partnerships.

### Skill development requirements

- Industry needs vary – emphasis of training can be different.
- Low numbers a barrier – employers told they need numbers to get specific training.
- Need to access latest technology and equipment

### Gas project:

- Confusion at present.
- What levels, who, entry, existing – will this leave hole.
- Who will be end users – not clear yet.
  
- Marine fitout & rigging – insufficient TAFE resources for special needs.

### Huge needs for:

- Management, project management, supervision, includes people skills, team skills – people get pulled off floor to do these jobs without training.
- Frontline management needs to be more specific for industry – can be customised.
- Need for flexibility between RTOs and employers in arrangements for off-the-job training.
- More partnerships required between industry and RTOs.

## **ANALYSIS 2**

- Technology.
- Competition in domestic and global markets, and industry growth all drive the need for on-going skills development.
- Teaching staff need to be constantly updated on equipment & skills.
- Is there a responsibility to build a skills surplus – old style government large employers – gone and not replaced – so there is not a pool of skilled labour...so is there a need to look at how to maintain skills need.
- Peaks and troughs are an issue.
- There is a conflict between education and industry/training systems from push to retention rates to year 12 – should we be re-evaluating this (the retention to year 12 push). Part time apprentices doesn't seem to help.
- Ironic that we lament that kids don't have anywhere to go but at the same time the quality of people presenting for employment has reduced.
- Industry is not getting enough good quality apprenticeship applicants.
- Education –v- industry – partnerships needed.
- An action plan is necessary to encourage people from year 10 into industry.
- The manufacturing industry needs to address its perceived image.
- The manufacturing industry needs to be marketed or sold to students eg booklet on career paths, forums in schools on careers in industry.
- Cross skilling is important as well as specialised skills.
- A training focus on enterprise skills in a small market is likely to be problematic.
- Need recognition of on-the-job training.
- Manufacturing image within the community, especially young people not sufficiently high – many people who would be a success don't start.- VET in schools gives an example of this.
- How do you change the image?
- Industry needs to be sold on marketing its image.
- Work is being done in schools – perhaps it needs more younger people in promotion.

### **ANALYSIS 3**

Macro view:

- Big projects – gas, waste disposal projects.
- Need to be well managed.
- Skills need to be mapped early and skills planning needs to be done early.
- State of the economy has an impact.
- Changing work practices.
- Technology.

Skills challenges:

- Retaining skills within Tasmania & within industry.
- Attracting skills to Tasmania.
- Developing skills.
- Image problem in relation to young people – perception of limited career path.
- Management skills are important - collaborative arrangements, change management.
- Multi-skilling is essential and will attract people to industry.
- VET in Schools positive for employers and employees.
- The Training Package is working well.
- Need some generic skills training in year 10 so people are better educated & attractive to employers.
- Who should coordinate issues for skill transfers during peaks and troughs?
- More collaborative training and partnerships are required.

### **OTHER ANALYSIS**

- The industry needs to demonstrate that apprentices can do well financially in comparison to alternatives.
- Also needs to demonstrate that there can be career paths beyond trades and that a trade can be an option to waiting to go to University.
- Does the message have to get to kids – or parents and teachers.
- Need to get to teachers – too much emphasis on retention to year 12.
- Too many kids lost between years 10 and 12 – need to get them back into the trade.
- Image of manufacturing is wrong with respect to both its future and economic significance.
- Need to sell the career path.
- Literacy and numeracy is a big issue.

As a result of the skill needs analysis, a list of key needs was developed and this was subsequently prioritised using broad priority groupings.

This is the list in broad priority order of needs that emerged from workshopping skill needs

***Skill need***

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Literacy & numeracy

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Multi-skilling

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Communication skills

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People skills (team skills)

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Post trade training

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Supervisory skills

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Business management

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IT skills especially information & communication

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Project management

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Middle management

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Change management skills

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Fitout

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Rigging

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More business specific skills beyond Cert II, Generic skills up to Cert II

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Industry networking skills**The list of issues that emerged from workshopping skill needs*****Issues***

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Industry needs to promote career paths and image

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Industry needs are more specific than training provides

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Market size limits specific training

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Pressure from new technology on training resources

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No large employers to create skills pool

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Year 12 retention targets are in conflict with industry recruitment, training and youth needs

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Cross skilling and multi skilling is important

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Drop in quality in apprentice applicants

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Manufacturing has a bad and wrong image

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Community doesn't recognise size and future of manufacturing industry

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Problem of maintaining skills during peaks and troughs

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School teachers and parents not promoting career in manufacturing

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Who should manage skilling in peaks and troughs

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Multi skilling will attract young people to the industry

## **SECTION 2 TRAINING SYSTEM RESPONSE**

Discussion of how the training system can appropriately respond to skills development needs with a view to reaching a consensus on what is appropriate and what is potentially feasible both short and long term in matching training provision with industry demand.

### **ANALYSIS 1**

- Training systems should respond energetically to client needs.
- The system is confusing/complex, need information on cost competencies.
- Traditional ways not necessarily right – relying on minimum class size etc.
- TAFE needs to be able to respond to small numbers through new training models starting with client needs not system needs.
- Flexibility & portability could be taken more advantage of - many skills are generic – so this could be used to get viable numbers for training.
- RTOs need empathy with industry and issues for industry.
- Industry needs to build a stronger working arrangement with their RTO. There should be a close relationship including the capacity to negotiate. Both should understand broad visions.
- Flexibility not tradition is required – all stakeholders need to understand each other's needs.
- Need to build collaborative arrangements for VET in Schools & TAFE – need mix of hard and soft skills - doesn't seem to be working – too many vested interests – too much separation.
- Need to keep post year 10 students engaged in education or training - need to keep pushing options to do this.
- Image building for industry will increase the number of applicants and therefore increase the quality

### **ANALYSIS 2**

- Communication between industry & RTOs.
- Flexibility now available in TAFE needs to be better communicated.
- Businesses needs to do regular skills analysis.
- More skills assessment on site.
- More training in the workplace.
- Partnerships.
- Need an industry fund (funded by employers and employees) to draw on in downtime to support training.
- Employment subsidies – mixed view.
- Apprentice ratios in contracts were useful.
- Industry needs to get the message to train more people.

### **ANALYSIS 3**

- RTO people need to go on professional development industry placement programs to ensure currency of skills and equipment.
- Flexibility in delivery is essential.
- Collaboration between RTOs and industry necessary.
- More communication on what training, who, how, costs, context, flexibility.
- Need flexibility of funding when training cant be provided locally.
- Training and assessment skills in industry allowing for team/peer skill development.
- Greater awareness of VET in Schools needed.
- Reintroduce grade 9 & 10 students to work placement.
- Need funding at higher levels (eg Cert IV) for specific areas.
- Subsidies are very important.
- More recognition of skills learnt on the job.
- Information to prospective students is misdirected – needs to be at grade 9 & 10 not 11 and 12.
- Information needs to go beyond career advisors – needs to target teachers in high schools, who are providing guidance.
- This process needs funding & to be put through formal education systems.