

SKILLS *Tasmania*

2007 Annual Report

including Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority



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Skills Tasmania

including
Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority

2007 Annual Report

Premier
Minister for Education and Skills
Minister for Planning and Workplace Relations

Dear Minister

It is with great pleasure and pride that I present the 2007 Annual Report on behalf of the Board of Skills Tasmania which was established as an independent, statutory authority by act of parliament in July 2007.

The Board and staff of Skills Tasmania are committed to working with our key client groups – industry, service providers and students – to provide Tasmania with a training system that is truly responsive, innovative, and of the highest quality. We want a system that is easily understood, accessible and that meets the requirements of a sustained and productive economy.

We acknowledge progress towards that vision, and the many achievements of industry, service providers, Office of Post Compulsory Education and Training staff and the Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority.

The Skills Tasmania Board will build upon those achievements as we develop a comprehensive Skills Strategy, informed by consultations with industry, service providers and students. The Skills Strategy, which we expect to include innovative approaches to training and skill development, will provide the Board with a framework to guide the government's future purchasing of training.

However, we face significant challenges in order to increase participation in the workforce. Perhaps our biggest challenge will be to engage those adults who are not in any kind of training or employment, who are defined as people with 'workforce potential'.

This may involve overcoming barriers to education and training for those adults not able or willing to participate in the workforce. We must address the fact that basic literacy and numeracy levels in our workforce are unacceptably low; that we need more people completing formal qualifications; and that we must work with industry to assist them in the retention and up-skilling of mature-age workers.

This Annual Report demonstrates that Skills Tasmania has started to meet these challenges through innovative approaches based upon the needs of client groups, and the Board is confident we will have a Skills Strategy that not only increases workforce participation but also underpins a strong, robust economy for all Tasmanians.

David Hind
Chair,
Skills Tasmania Board

Contents

Preface	4
I. Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority (TLSA)	5
2. Skills Tasmania	
2.1 Objective, Functions and Powers	6
2.2 Governance and Board Members	8
2.3 Organisational Structure	9
2.4 Establishment of Committees	9
2.5 A Skills Strategy for Tasmania	10
2.6 Highlights	12
2.7 Existing Worker Apprenticeships	13
2.8 Skilling Tasmania Industry Consultation	15
2.9 Tasmanian Training Agreements Committee (TTAC)	16
2.10 2007 Tasmanian Training Awards	17
2.11 2007 Skills Tasmania Conference	18
Appendices	
Appendix 1 <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2002</i> Compliance	20
Appendix 2 Board Membership: Biographical Information	21

Preface

Skills Tasmania was established by the Tasmanian Government as an independent, statutory authority on 1 July 2007, replacing the Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority (TSLA).

Its establishment¹ was in response to Tasmania's high level of economic growth and the government's commitment to the development of a highly skilled workforce. The link between productivity and education and training is the result of sustained, innovative training responses by government and industry.

The Minister for Education² as well as the management and staff of Skills Tasmania – formerly the Office of Post Compulsory Education and Training – are confident that Skills Tasmania's focus will lead to increased participation in the workforce through implementation of a new Skills Strategy which will guide purchasing of training.

This Annual Report will therefore include and subsume activities that had been the responsibility of the TSLA up to that time.

1 Announced by the Premier in his State of the State address to Parliament on 26 September 2006.

2 Now Minister for Education and Skills, the title adopted on 12 February 2008 following the swearing in of a new Ministry.

1. Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority (TLSA)

Until the establishment of Skills Tasmania in July 2008, the Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority was responsible for providing advice to the Minister for Education on matters pertaining to the vocational education and training, senior secondary education, adult and community education and higher education within the state.

TLSA members were appointed in accordance with Section 6(2)³ of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1994*. Membership at 30 June 2007, when the TLSA was replaced by Skills Tasmania, comprised:

- Diane Tompson (Chair) Managing Director, Powercom Group
- Clair Andersen Director, Riawunna Faculty of Arts,
University of Tasmania
- Megan Cavanagh-Russell Director, Cradle Coast Campus,
University of Tasmania
- Kathy Mason Training Coordinator, Lifeline Hobart
- Pete Smith Principal, Rosny College (ret.)
- Greg Cooper Organiser, Finance Sector Union
- Anne Urquhart State Secretary, Australian Manufacturing
Workers Union
- Matthew Double HR Manager, Zinifex Ltd
- Tony Park Managing Director, Cosy Cabins
- John Smyth Secretary, Department of Education

Supporting the Authority were the staff of the Office of Post Compulsory Education and Training (OPCET) lead by the then Deputy Secretary, Michael Stevens.

Skills Tasmania wishes to acknowledge the contribution made by the members of the Authority. This report also acknowledges the work undertaken by the OPCET staff that has provided Skills Tasmania with a strong foundation upon which the Board can progress.

³ With the June 2007 amendment of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1994*, Section 10C outlined the Board of Directors of Skills Tasmania.

2. Skills Tasmania

2.1 Objective, Functions and Powers

Objective of Skills Tasmania

The objective of Skills Tasmania is to ensure that Tasmania has a vocational education and training system that supports a productive workforce and contributes to economic and social development in the State.

In practice, when read in conjunction with its functions, this requires that Skills Tasmania take a broad focus on workforce development issues.

Functions of Skills Tasmania

The general functions of Skills Tasmania are set out in Section 8 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1994*. They are:

- (a) to develop and implement policies, strategies and plans for the development, acquisition and recognition of vocational skills in Tasmania;
- (b) to develop and implement policies, strategies and plans for the purchase of vocational education and training;
- (c) to ensure that programs and services relating to the development, acquisition and recognition of vocational skills that meet the needs of businesses and communities in, and the people of, Tasmania are provided;
- (d) to advise the Minister on all matters, including policies, strategies and plans, relating to the development, acquisition and recognition of vocational skills in Tasmania;
- (e) to advise the Minister on national vocational education and training policies and intergovernmental agreements and to oversee the implementation of such policies and agreements;
- (f) to enter into arrangements with registered training organisations and other persons in relation to the purchase of vocational education and training and the performance by those organisations and persons of vocational education and training functions;
- (g) to oversee the administration of vocational placements and training agreements;
- (h) to liaise with representatives of industries, businesses, communities and interest groups in relation to the development, acquisition and recognition of vocational skills in Tasmania;
- (i) to monitor the effectiveness of policies, strategies and plans for the development, acquisition and recognition of vocational skills in Tasmania when implemented;

- (j) to inquire into, undertake research into and report on –
 - (i) the development, acquisition and recognition of vocational skills; and
 - (ii) the need for vocational skills of businesses and communities in, and the people of, Tasmania;
- (k) to promote and facilitate the development, acquisition and recognition of vocational skills;
- (l) to liaise with the Qualifications Authority, the Tasmania Development and Resources Board established under the *Tasmanian Development Act 1983* and other relevant government bodies of this State or elsewhere on matters relating to vocational education and training and vocational skills;
- (m) other functions imposed on Skills Tasmania by this Act;
- (n) other functions imposed on Skills Tasmania by the Minister by written notice provided to Skills Tasmania.

Powers of Skills Tasmania

The general powers of Skills Tasmania are set out in Section 9 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1994*. They are:

- (a) to acquire, hold, dispose of and otherwise deal with property;
- (b) to enter into contracts, including a contract with another person for the performance or exercise of any of its functions or powers by or jointly with that other person;
- (c) to set charges, terms and conditions relating to work done, or services, goods or information supplied, by it;
- (d) to do any other thing necessary or convenient to be done in connection with the performance or exercise of its functions or powers under this or any other Act.

The Board

The Board comprises seven members appointed by the Minister and is responsible to the Minister for:

- (a) The performance by Skills Tasmania of its functions; and
- (b) The achievement by Skills Tasmania of its objective.

The Board has the power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done in connection with the performance and exercise of its functions and powers under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1994* or any other Act.

2.2 Governance and Board Members

Skills Tasmania is an independent statutory body. The Skills Tasmania Board provides industry leadership and advice to ensure that Tasmania has the level of engagement needed to deliver the skills development that industry and the workforce require.

Skills Tasmania comprises the board, general manager and staff of Skills Tasmania. The Skills Tasmania Board consists of seven directors, drawn from industry, who are supported by staff of Skills Tasmania. Board membership is broadly reflective of the business community. The board is responsible to the Minister and is accountable for meeting the objectives of Skills Tasmania.

The Skills Tasmania Board is as follows⁴:

- David Hind (chair)
- Paul Roberts-Thompson
- Sabrina Pirie
- Kay Thompson
- Mike Nermut
- Simon Cocker
- Diane Tompson
- Emma Lee (observer)

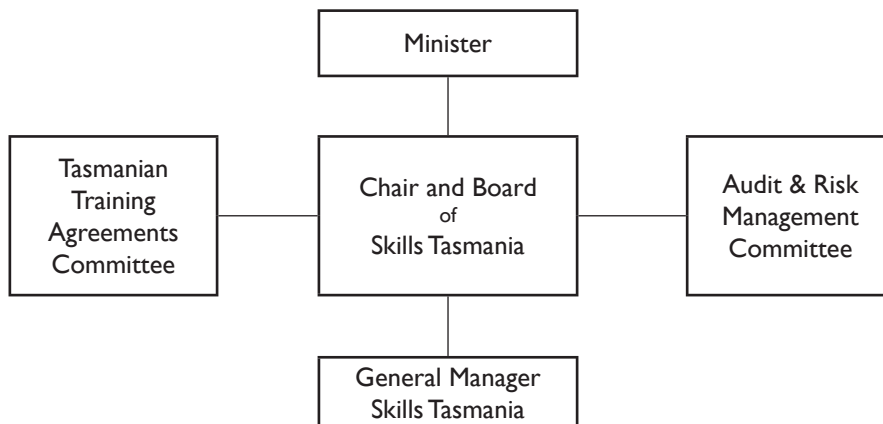
The Board is responsible for exercising the powers and functions of Skills Tasmania and for complying with ministerial directions as provided for in the Act. The Skills Tasmania general manager is responsible for the operations of Skills Tasmania and is accountable to the Board.

The Skills Tasmania Board has substantial executive powers in terms of policy development, planning and entering into purchasing and performance agreements with registered training organisations.

⁴ See appendix 2 for biographical details.

2.3 Organisational Structure

Skills Tasmania – Reporting Arrangements



2.4 Establishment of Committees

Skills Tasmania has the legislative power to establish committees to assist in the exercise or performance of its powers and functions. In accordance with Section 14(1) of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1994* two committees must be established, the Tasmanian Training Agreements Committee (TTAC), and an audit committee.

At its first meeting on 26 September 2007 the Skills Tasmania Board decided to continue, for a period of six months, the existing membership of the Tasmanian Training Agreements Committee given the effectiveness and respect that the committee enjoyed.

The Board determined that it would consider more carefully the nature and composition of TTAC at a later Board meeting, early in 2008. A full account of TTAC's activities during 2007 appears elsewhere in this annual report.

At its 8 November 2007 meeting, the Skills Tasmania Board established the Skills Tasmania Audit and Risk Management Committee. The Board agreed that the committee would comprise two Board directors, two external members, and Board observer Emma Lee.

Directors Mike Nermut and Simon Cocker, and Board observer Emma Lee, were appointed as members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee for terms not exceeding three years, with Mike Nermut appointed Chair.

By year's end, the Board directors on the committee were drafting terms of reference and considering the selection of external members. The Auditor General has been invited to nominate a member with appropriate experience.

2.5 A Skills Strategy for Tasmania

A significant priority for the Board and staff of Skills Tasmania is the development of a comprehensive Skills Strategy which will inform and guide the purchase of education and training that will provide a skilled workforce essential for strong and sustained economic growth. The Strategy is not only informed by consultations with our client groups but also by the essential elements of any economy.

Population, participation and productivity are well-recognised as the primary drivers operating in any economy. Not only can these drivers be seen as integral to the way in which an economy works, importantly these same drivers can indicate to what extent our community is diverse, inclusive and allows for people to achieve their aspirations.

For these reasons, the themes of population, participation and productivity have been used as a framework to formulate a skills strategy for Tasmania. In developing the strategy, consideration has been given to how skill factors are affected by each of these three drivers.

In this exercise, strategy is seen as the approach taken to identify and maximise opportunities and diminish threats to skill development in Tasmania, seen through the lens of population, participation and productivity.

Overlaying this approach, particular emphasis has been taken to look at trends in these drivers, and how they might affect regional communities. So in this sense, the skills strategy for Tasmania prepares the state for the future, and also considers specific implications at a local level.

Population

Population is driven by three factors: births, deaths and migration.

The nation is experiencing an ageing population, and in Tasmania this process is occurring at a faster rate than all other states and territories. There are two new, imminent sets of population-related conditions that have not previously occurred in this state: within two years more people are expected to leave the labour market than enter it; and within seven years there will be more people over the age of 65 years than those between the ages of 0–14 years.

Whilst births and deaths are not factors that can be duly influenced by a skills strategy, these two drivers have created a unique environment where a strategic approach to skill development is critical.

It is clear that compared to the past, there will be a greater proportion of the community in the older age groups. Increasingly, there will be more people aged over 45 years than under, which is a new experience for the labour market. Inevitably, the result of this shift in the age profile of the Tasmanian community is there will be a greater proportion of the population who will be seeking goods and services, and who are no longer in the labour market.

In formulating a skills strategy for Tasmania against population trends, identifying the means to encourage people to remain longer in the labour market is an important area of focus. In tandem with this approach, and also as a result of population trends, skill development will be considered in supporting the delivery of goods and services to older people, and the consequential growth of service sectors.

Participation

Participation in the labour market is the proportion of the working age population, in work or registered as seeking work.

At just over 60% of the working age population participating in the labour market, Tasmania has the lowest participation rate of all states and territories. Around 150,000 Tasmanians over the age of 15 years do not participate in the labour market.

This large number of Tasmanians includes around 50,000 over the age of 70 years, around 45,000 providing domestic duties, 20,000 who are students, and around 24,000 Tasmanians marginally attached to the labour market. Marginally attached to the labour market is defined as those people not working or registered as unemployed, but have indicated they would like to work within 1-4 weeks.

Connection to a workplace is often the strongest link individuals have to their community. Of course, large numbers of Tasmanians currently not in the labour market may wish to be, and given the proportion of the community in the older age groups and unlikely to be in employment again, it becomes imperative to identify the means to attract more people into seeking or securing work.

In formulating a skills strategy for Tasmania to increase participation, an important response is to identify and engage with those not in work or registered as a jobseeker, and attract and assist them into the labour market. Those marginally attached to the labour market will be a target group.

In tandem with this approach, and because of population ageing, volunteerism needs to also be considered as an input to participation in the labour market, and how that effort can be garnered to most effectively benefit the individual and community.

Productivity

There are three primary drivers of productivity: capital deepening (increasing investment); raising the skill level of the workforce; and the take-up of technology and adoption of innovation.

If our population trends and capacity to attract people to participate in the labour market are seen as diminishing inputs, then increased productivity lies at the heart of the economic and skills equation. Rather than see these three drivers of productivity operating independently of each other, it is important to understand the relationship between them.

The level and type of skills needed by a relatively smaller labour market compared to current requirements, can be directly related to the take-up of technology and adoption of innovation, and can lead to increasing investment in plant and machinery.

In a sense, if increasing productivity is ultimately deriving more from less, Tasmania's scenario involving population and participation provides an ideal environment for this to occur. However, a skills strategy for Tasmania must do more than target only those in the labour market, and instead consider the aspirations of the wider community.

In formulating a skills strategy for Tasmania to increase productivity, an orthodox approach provides limitations as the population of the community continues to increase, but a smaller proportion participate in the labour market. In this context, productivity should be seen as growing wealth and well-being across the community, and in the process, use strategy to include as many people from the broad community as possible.

2.6 Highlights

Participation in Vocational Education and Training

The proportion of people of working age undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship in Tasmania is higher than in other states and territories. In Tasmania 4% of the working age population is in an apprenticeship or traineeship. Nationally, the figure is 2.9%.

- Between 1998 and 2006, the total number of students in the public VET system increased by one third (from 29,000 to 41,800). Total training effort is at record levels at 8.2 million hours.
- Approximately one in every eight people of working age participated in public system training in 2007. Participation has been increasing each year and is well above the national average.

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

- Training enrolments are now at record levels particularly for traditional trades apprentices. Between September 1998 and June 2007, the number of apprentices and trainees in training increased from 5600 to 13,000⁵. The majority of this training is funded by the State Government through Skills Tasmania.
- In 2007, Skills Tasmania piloted school-based apprenticeships and traineeships for year 10 students. The pilot was so successful that at the end of 2007 the program was opened to all year 10 students.
- The 65% completion rate for apprenticeships and traineeships is the highest in the nation, and significantly higher than the national average of 50%.

⁵ The number of traditional apprenticeships has more than doubled since 2002 (from 2100 to 4800).

2.7 Existing Worker Apprenticeships

Tasmania's apprenticeship system has traditionally focussed on providing opportunities for young people entering employment for the first time to undertake training leading to a trade qualification.

Funding arrangements have accordingly focussed on young people entering the labour market. Tasmanians who are already employed have generally been ineligible to undertake publicly-funded apprenticeships.

In November 2007, the Skills Tasmania Board agreed that existing workers wishing to undertake an apprenticeship in a traditional trade should be eligible to have their training funded by the Government.

This decision was made to assist in addressing skill shortages that are evident across a range of industries and occupations. Shortages are particularly evident in a range of traditional trade occupations, including the construction and metal trades. These shortages will be exacerbated with the advent of large construction and infrastructure projects, such as the proposed pulp mill.

Many existing workers work in trade-related occupations such as trades assistant and labourer and already possess a range of trade skills. The Board noted that provision of credit for the skills they already hold and development of suitable training programs to fill the gaps would enable many existing workers to qualify as tradesmen and women in relatively short duration.

Access and Equity

In 2007, Skills Tasmania funded a very successful multi-media learning resource for Aboriginal TAFE students to explore issues around the mutton birding season and its cultural significance in their community, as well as developing their research and writing skills.

- Skills Tasmania's Equity Unit supported the production and distribution of a 30 minute promotional DVD featuring Tasmanian employers in eight different industries sharing their experiences and gains to their businesses on employing people with disabilities. The DVD encourages other employers to take on people with a disability to meet their skill/labour shortages.
- As one of the successful Equity Grants Programs, AMES (Adult Migrant English Service) developed an innovative "Work it Out" work experience program for humanitarian entrants and migrants new to the state with little or no previous work experience. Completing work experience while learning English improves their language acquisition, targets the type of English relevant to their future employment, and gives them confidence to step out in a new life in Tasmania.
- Skills Tasmania initiated and funded a VET program delivering skill sets meeting real skill shortages and employment opportunities, in order to build our workforce and reintegrate inmates leaving Risdon Prison back into the community.

Other Highlights

- Over 57,000 hours of additional pre-employment training was delivered to over 170 participants through Trades Express through funding of just under \$625,000. Pre-apprenticeship programs now include refrigeration, air conditioning and plumbing.
- A total of 150 VET practitioners took part in LearnScope projects in 2007 to increase their capability in the use of new technologies in teaching and in learning.
- In 2007, a commitment was made with the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to jointly produce a Workforce Development Plan that would encourage businesses to take leadership and ownership of skill formation, particularly in relation to upskilling their existing workforce and the attraction and retention of skilled labour.
- As part of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agenda on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Skills Tasmania implemented the Tasmanian RPL Community of Practice which aims to increase the uptake and improvement of RPL practice. A Registered Training Organisation (RTO) network has been established to provide an opportunity for RTOs to find out about RPL tools and practices from around Australia.
- Whilst industry advisory arrangements are continually supported through the Industry Liaison Officer (ILO) functions, and the purchase of industry advice, producing a total investment of \$470,000 in 2007, a more targeted, regional approach has developed. Analysis of skill needs was commenced on a regional basis, with the development of Regional Profiles for the West coast and Huon Valley regions. Initial development stages of the North West Coast and East Coast Regional Profiles also began. These profiles give an overview of the demographics and skills requirements of regions and signify a new workforce development approach to skills and training.
- The Skills Tasmania Board, at its first meeting in September, agreed to collaborate with the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to deliver a joint Workforce Development Plan for the state. The Workforce Development Plan gives priority to:
 - encouraging businesses to take leadership and ownership of skill formation, particularly in relation to up-skilling their existing workforce;
 - promoting the link between productivity and skill formation;
 - promoting the link between higher skills and innovation in process and product development;
 - increasing workforce participation by people with workforce potential and reducing underemployment;
 - assisting Tasmanian businesses attract and retain skilled labour; and
 - the integration of workforce and business planning.

2.8 Skilling Tasmania Industry Consultation

In late 2007, Skills Tasmania began Phase 1 of a comprehensive statewide consultation process with a series of industry forums designed to elicit views on the efficiency and effectiveness of our current education and training system. The consultations focussed upon the following:

- The uptake of accredited training by industry in Tasmania
- The products of the current training system
- Communication with industry
- The private training market
- Investment in skills development – can it be made easier?
- Restricting public funding for apprentice training in most trades to TAFE Tasmania (TAFE quarantines)
- Current and alternative funding mechanisms
- Training existing workers

Phases 2 and 3 of this process will continue in 2008. It is expected that these consultations will provide an informed and highly relevant basis for the creation of policy for industry on skills development and workforce planning. The Skills Tasmania Board is expected to release this policy in June 2008.

It is important to note that this industry policy will inform the development of the Skills Strategy. The Board of Skills Tasmania expects that the Strategy will be launched late in 2008 and that the Strategy is translated quickly into actions that meet industry's immediate and short-term skill needs.

The Board intends working closely with industry to ensure investment in skills development contributes to increased workforce participation and productivity and aligns with future economic growth in Tasmania.

2.9 Tasmanian Training Agreements Committee (TTAC)

Membership

At the start of 2007 TTAC comprised the six members who constituted the committee as at 31 December 2006. The appointments were made under Section 14 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1994* and were:

- a person nominated by the Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority (Nicky Reed)
- a person from selections nominated by the Secretary of the Department of Education (Kim Barker)
- two persons selected from nominations by organisations representing employers (David Dilger and Jim Andrews).
- two persons selected from nominations by organisations representing employees (Paul Griffin and Kevin Harkins).

The VET Act was amended mid-year, with Section 14(1)(b) requiring the Skills Tasmania Board to 'establish a committee as the Tasmanian Training Agreements Committee'.

Under the amended Act's transitional arrangements, existing TTAC members were reappointed till 30 September 2007. At its September 2007 meeting, the Board extended those appointments for a further six months (ie to 31 March 2008).

At 31 December 2007, TTAC membership comprised:

- Kim Barker (Chair)
- Jim Andrews
- David Dilger
- Paul Griffin
- Kevin Harkins
- Nicky Reed

Policy Matters Considered

TTAC considers matters of policy as a result of either routine reviews or to address issues arising in the course of ongoing business.

In 2007 The following policies were revised:

- School Based Traineeships and Apprenticeships
- Fully Competency Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

No new policies were adopted, though policy 29, *Fully Competency Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships*, approved in October 2006, did not come into effect until 1 January 2007.

Group Training Organisations

TTAC is responsible for the registration of bodies as Group Training Organisations (GTOs).

In 2007, TTAC registered two new organisations as GTOs:

- High Professional Productions Pty Ltd (trading as Hi-Vis Labour Hire)
- AFL SportsReady Pty Ltd.

During 2007, the Health Industry Group Training Company ceased trading in Tasmania, though it is registered as a GTO till September 2008. Integrated Group Employment relinquished its registrations as a GTO, with effect from 31 July 2007.

School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

During 2007 all industrial and other significant barriers to the take-up of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships were removed.

In the second half of 2007, TTAC approved the offering of SBTs to year 10 students. The committee also discontinued the requirement for individual employers to be assessed and approved as employers of school-based trainees.

2.10 2007 Tasmanian Training Awards

The Tasmanian Training Awards are conducted annually by Skills Tasmania. The Board has a firm commitment to the development of a high quality, efficient and effective system of vocational education and training, a commitment that represents a major contribution to the development of competitive advantage for Tasmanian industry. The training awards are held to raise the profile of vocational education and training in Tasmania.

The Awards recognise, reward and honour the achievements of apprentices, trainees and vocational students for their endeavours in gaining the highest standards of knowledge and skills within their industry. They also recognise and honour the achievements of employers, small businesses and training organisations for their dedication to providing the highest quality training and enhancing the skills of the workforce in this state.

In 2007 fourteen awards were presented:

Business Awards:

- Employer of the Year DJ Motors
- Training Initiative Award The Federal Group
- Registered Training Organisation
of the Year TAFE Tasmania and Industrylink Training
- VET in Schools Excellence Award Rosny College

Student Awards:

- Apprentice of the Year Michael Wickham
- Trainee of the Year Evan Brett
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year Wayne Lowery
- Vocational Student of the Year Natasha Johnstone
- VET in Schools Student of the Year Emma Ismawi
- School-based Apprentice of the Year Warwick Johnstone
- School-based Trainee of the Year Jamin Hibbs

Equity Awards:

- Equity Award for an Employer Fuchsia Fantasy and Tamar Valley Dairy
- Equity Award for an Individual
 - Apprentice or Trainee John O'Keefe
 - Vocational Student Heath Mollineaux

2007 Australian Training Awards

The 2007 Australian Training Awards were held in Hobart on 8 November. Two Tasmanian students achieved national honours: Evan Brett was named Australian Trainee of the Year and Warwick Johnstone was named Australian School-based Apprentice of the Year. DJ Motors won the Services Industry award.

WorldSkills Australia Tasmania Region

2007 was the first year of the two-year WorldSkills Australia competition cycle. Regional competitions were held at TAFE campuses in Devonport, Launceston and Hobart.

Sixteen categories were conducted in trades as diverse as welding, automotive mechanics, pastry cooking and cabinet making. Team Tasmania will compete in the WorldSkills National Competition in Sydney in July 2008.

2.11 2007 Skills Tasmania Conference

The 2007 Skills Tasmania Conference, focussing on the role of the enterprise in developing their workforce and retaining skilled employees, was held in Hobart on 30 and 31 August. Two hundred delegates attended the two day conference which offered keynote speakers, workshops and panel discussions.

The conference was held in conjunction with the Tasmanian Training Awards Presentation Dinner which attracted 600 guests.



Michael Wickham
2007 Apprentice of the Year



Evan Brett
2007 Trainee of the Year



Emma Ismawi
2007 VET in Schools
Student of the Year



Natasha Johnstone
2007 Vocational
Student of the Year



Wayne Lowery
2007 Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Student of the Year



Warwick Johnstone
2007 School-based
Apprentice of the Year



Jamin Hibbs
2007 School-based
Trainee of the Year



John O'Keefe
2007 Equity Award
Apprentice or Trainee



Heath Mollineux
2007 Equity Award
Vocational Student

Appendices

Appendix 1 *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2002* Compliance

Section 86 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2002* (the Act) stipulates that public bodies required by an Act of Parliament 'to prepare a report of operations or an annual report on its activities during a year' must meet certain conditions.

The main objective of the Act is to encourage and facilitate the making of disclosures of improper conduct (or detrimental action) by public officers and public bodies.

In compliance of this legislation, Skills Tasmania advises:

1. Skills Tasmania has not yet established formal procedures with regards to disclosures of improper conduct.
Section 86(a) of the Act refers.
2. No disclosures of improper conduct were made during the year ending 31 December 2007.
Sections 86(b) to (h) of the Act refer.
3. No recommendations of the Ombudsman under this Act that relate to Skills Tasmania were received during the year ending 31 December 2006.
Section 86(i) of the Act refers.

Appendix 2 Board Membership: Biographical Information



David Hind (Chair)

David has been President of the Business Higher Education Round Table (B-HERT) since 2006 and was the final Chair of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) until 2005.

He is also a member of the Manufacturing Industry Reference Group of the Institute for Trade Skills Excellence (ITSE) and is on the Education Forum of the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE). He is a board member of the childhood cancer charity Redkite. In 2005, David retired as Managing Director of BOC South Pacific and was a member of the Business Council of Australia from 1998 to 2005.

David has an honours degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Sydney and is a Fellow of ATSE and a Fellow of the Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE).



Paul Roberts-Thomson

Paul holds a Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Hons) degree and is a joint owner/manager of Van Diemen Quality Bulbs. The business includes domestic and export production.

He has been active in local community activities in the north-west of Tasmania, including Rostrum, the Wynyard Scout Association, the Wynyard Tulip Festival Committee and Marist Regional College P&F.

Paul has spent three years on the Board of TAFE Tasmania, including six months as acting Chairman. He is also currently a Board member of the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research and President of the Flower Industry Association – Tasmania.



Mike Nermut

Mike is joint Chief Executive Officer of Dytech Solutions Pty Ltd, a leading software consultancy company. His technical expertise has been engaged by the Department of State Development, the National Office of the Information Economy and the University of Tasmania's Computer Science Department.

Mike also has provided strategic input to Intelligent Island Centre of Excellence, been appointed as a director of the NetAlert Board and undertaken the role of Chair of the Industry Council.



Sabrina Pirie

Sabrina's career includes the development of Pipers Brook Wines with the establishment of the Strathlynn Wine Centre and restaurant. Sabrina later worked with the Department of State Development and in the Department of Tourism, Parks, Heritage and the Arts. She was subsequently Senior Private Secretary, Launceston, to the Premier.

Sabrina was a Board member and Deputy Chairperson of Ten Days On The Island, from 2002 till 2006. She has also held positions with various bodies including Service Tasmania, Hobart Theatre Royal, Brand Tasmania Council, Tasmanian Development Board and the Tasmanian Regional Development Board.



Kay Thompson

Kay is General Manager of Family Based Care (Northern Region) Inc. and the Tasmanian representative of the national Veteran Home Care Reference Group. She is also a Board member of TasCOSS and sits on the Joint Advisory Committee of General Practice North/FBC (North).

Kay has also held positions with Equity Into Work (including Chair), Government/Community Changing Relations Project, Wise Employment Advisory Committee and Joint Working Party of Competition Policy.

Kay holds a Bachelor of Arts and Post Graduate Diploma of Social Science.



Simon Cocker

Simon has been State Secretary of Unions Tasmania since 2005, having previously held various positions with the Community and Public Sector Union, including that of Training Officer.

He is also a member of the Workcover Tasmania Board and Tasplan Ltd. Past board positions include Trustee CPSU Staff Superannuation Fund, Hockey South Board and Commonwealth Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission.

Simon gained an Associate Diploma of Business Studies (Accounting) and a Bachelor of Labour Studies.



Diane Tompson

Diane was Chair of the Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority when it was abolished in 2007 and a member of the Tasmanian Training Agreements Committee from 2003 till 2006.

She is Managing Director of The Powercom Group, director of five companies including Novaris Pty Ltd and President of the Tasmanian Division of Women Chief of Enterprises.

Diane holds several industry qualifications as well as a Bachelor of Education, a Tasmanian Teaching Certificate and a Diploma of Music.



Emma Lee

Emma holds a Joint Honours degree in Prehistory and Biological Anthropology and commenced Masters of Arts studies before starting an archaeology consultancy business in Sydney.

Her career includes work for the Olympic Co-Ordination Authority where she was instrumental in having the first Indigenous “Welcome to Country” performed at an Olympic Games Opening Ceremony.

She has published a book on Aboriginal history, lectured on Aboriginal Studies at Macquarie University and sat on several NSW State Advisory Councils. Emma also worked with Anangu Traditional Owners as the Natural and Cultural Resources Manager for the Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park.

Emma currently works in the metals industry with Skilled Engineering.

Emma is Tasmanian Aboriginal (Pukana) and is a fully participating observer on the Skills Tasmania Board, representing the interests of Tasmania’s Indigenous population.



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