

Queensland's proposed responses to the challenges of

skills for jobs and growth



**Matching the supply of skills to
rapidly changing demands:
modern>educated>responsive**

A green paper

Foreword from Premier Peter Beattie



The Smart State is about securing a better future for all Queenslanders. It is about more jobs, higher wages, better services, economic growth,

sustainability, a better standard of living and an improved quality of life for everyone.

Seven years ago we began driving Smart State and Queensland has made great gains since. New industries have been established, labour productivity has improved, exports have grown, our education system is being reformed, and unemployment is now at its lowest rate in 30 years.

We have made great progress, but we cannot ease up. Success brings new challenges—as well as new opportunities for our future. The Queensland Government recently launched the next stage of our Smart State plan. *Smart Queensland: Smart State Strategy 2005-2015* articulates our goals for Queensland over the next 10 years. It identifies skills, productivity, innovation and sound economic fundamentals as the keys to a smarter future.

One of the critical challenges facing Queensland right now is ensuring that our workforce is equipped with the right mix of skills to support our economy.

Queensland's recent economic growth and low unemployment rates have contributed to many employers experiencing difficulties finding appropriately skilled workers to fill job vacancies.

This challenge is expected to grow as our population ages and baby boomers retire. It is a challenge this government has been working to address since it came to office in 1998. In the December quarter of that year Queensland had 52 900 apprentices and trainees in training. The latest figures released by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research show that as at December 2004 we had 69 900 apprentices and trainees, an increase of more than 30 per cent.

Queensland is also the national leader in getting young people involved in earning and learning through school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. In 2004 almost half of all school-based apprenticeships and

traineeships in Australia were in Queensland with more than 6000 young people across the state undertaking this form of training.

Skills shortages are not just about training. They are also about workforce participation, approaches to recruitment, the attractiveness of industries, working conditions and our attitudes towards retirement.

We want to work with industries, employers, training providers and communities to look at Queensland's future skills needs and work out how we can meet those needs together. That's what this discussion paper, *Queensland's proposed responses to the challenge of skills for jobs and growth*, is all about.

I urge you to be involved in this important discussion, for your future and the future of our state.

Peter Beattie MP
Premier and Minister for Trade

Minister's foreword



Queensland has a vocational education and training system that every Queenslanders can be proud of. Hundreds of

thousands of Queenslanders undertake training each year, with more and more people looking to improve their skills all the time.

The training delivered by our TAFE institutes, agricultural colleges and private training providers is of a high standard. Constant innovations in training programs and delivery are helping students to get exactly what they want.

Part of being the Smart State is looking for ways to improve what we do. It is about building on the success that we have achieved, and recognising that there is room to grow.

Queensland's proposed responses to the challenges of skills for jobs and growth looks to build on the success

of our training sector and define a new role that supports the Queensland workforce to adapt to the ever-changing demands of a knowledge-based, global economy.

Training is not just about new labour market entrants—training is also for people who already have a job and skills, but who could go further in their career with a few extra skills, or get a better job with the right qualifications.

Technology has impacted on nearly every type of work. Workers across a broad range of occupations in today's labour market need high-level generic and technical skills, as well as the capacity to adapt as new technology takes hold.

Our training system must be able to meet these demands. It must also be able to support the changing circumstances of workers throughout their lives. Appropriate training must be available to support parents who are preparing to return to work once their family responsibilities demand less time. Training must also support

older workers to update their skills, change jobs, and prepare for retirement.

Queensland's industries depend on access to high-level skills to compete internationally. Employers need the best and brightest workers who can show the world how it's done, innovate and be highly productive.

Queensland's vocational education and training system must provide the best possible outcomes for Queensland workers and employers. Ultimately, it is workers and employers who will make Queensland a smarter state.

I encourage you to participate in strengthening Queensland's response to skilling for jobs and growth.

Tom Barton MP

Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations



“We will only succeed in attracting the industries we need, and in keeping them in Queensland, if there is a sophisticated workforce here to support them. And, we need that workforce in place in the regions that Queensland wants to develop.”

(Submission to *Queensland's Future – Building on the Smart State* from Griffith University)

The Government has proposed a number of possible initiatives in the discussion paper as the basis for consultation and as a preliminary indication of the type of response the Government believes may be required to meet the changing context for the delivery of VET programs.

In this regard, the suite of proposals is not to be viewed as Government policy nor is the Government necessarily committed to the full implementation of each of the initiatives included in this discussion paper.

It is expected that proposals ultimately chosen by the Government will be influenced by final costings, the relative priorities identified through the consultation process and, in particular, the input of key industry stakeholders and the community.

Smart Queensland: Smart State Strategy 2005-2015 was released by the Queensland Government in April 2005. A key element of the strategy is a training and higher education system that will create new skills for new jobs. The economy relies on a skilled and flexible workforce that can respond to the needs of business and industry both now and in the future.

The Smart State strategy is transforming Queensland's economy. The economy is diversifying rapidly, beyond the traditional resource-based industries into new areas such as aviation and a range of technology and knowledge-based industries.

The success of the Smart State strategy is evidenced by the state's recent remarkable employment growth. This has seen Queensland create over a third of all full-time jobs growth nationally since 2000, and almost half of the nation's full-time jobs growth in 2004—even though Queensland has only one-fifth of Australia's population.

Unemployment, which was until recently much higher than the national average, has fallen dramatically over the past couple of years. In February 2005, it reached the nation's lowest levels at just 4.6%. We now have the tightest labour market in 30 years.

This jobs growth is attracting large numbers of people to Queensland from

other parts of Australia. These workers have the same skills development needs as people who already live in Queensland.

The buoyant state economy has led to some significant skills shortages in recent times. This is despite the fact that Queensland has outstripped national growth in trade apprenticeships over the past year. There are now more apprentices in training per 1000 employees in Queensland than in any other state.

This paper outlines a number of proposals for the Queensland vocational education and training (VET) sector aimed at securing the skills needed to underpin the state's economic growth over the coming years. It builds on the *SmartVET* strategy that commenced in 2004. *SmartVET* involves investment of more than \$1 billion over three years to meet the skills needs of industries that are critical to Queensland's economy.

The package of proposed reforms

This proposed package of reforms and initiatives provides for the most comprehensive review in 40 years of Queensland's TAFE institutes and VET system. It aims to achieve a better match between the supply of skills and the rapidly changing demands of the economy.

It focuses in particular on improving our VET services across both the public and private training sectors to be more responsive to industry needs. The package also contains proposals for modernising the roles of, and relationships between, universities, industry groups, businesses, employers, and public and private training providers.

The Queensland Government's proposed reform package is shaped by six priorities:

- > **Tackling the urgent shortage of trades skills now** by reforming and modernising the trades apprenticeship system.
 - > **Strengthening Queensland's skills base for the future** by:
 - increasing the state's VET qualifications profile in general
 - reforming and modernising the role of Queensland's 15 TAFE institutes to develop a world-leading and highly-skilled professional and associate professional workforce.
 - > **Developing a more responsive and flexible VET system** by:
 - developing a more customised approach to providing skills to people
 - forming new partnerships with private registered training providers
 - providing information and advice to people about jobs and skills.
 - > **Initiating a new engagement with employers to tackle skills shortages** by working more closely with industry to develop a shared future skills agenda in Queensland's major industries.
- > **Developing a workforce and skills response to the ageing population** by:
 - encouraging older Queenslanders to gain new skills to enable them to continue participating in the workforce if they wish to do so
 - encouraging employers to develop age-friendly workplaces to encourage older people, particularly those with skills in shortage, to remain in the workforce longer
 - encouraging older people to combine work with partial retirement rather than retiring early.
 - > **Increasing labour force participation through new skilling strategies for the under-skilled** so that those people who are most likely to be marginally attached to the labour market can access better opportunities to gain new skills that will help them gain more secure employment in the future.

A separate Queensland Government research paper *Skills for Jobs and Growth* has been prepared to provide more detailed information about the nature and importance of skills shortages in Queensland. *Skills for jobs and growth* is available at www.trainandemploy.qld.gov.au Some of the key findings are presented here to set the context for Queensland's proposed responses to the challenges of skilling for jobs and growth outlined in this paper.

The need for reform

The central importance of skills

There is a growing body of evidence that identifies the link between economic growth and investment in human capital. Skills are now widely recognised as a key driver of economic growth, with a substantial role in increasing labour force participation and labour productivity.

The workforce required to ensure the global competitiveness of Queensland's economy in the future will increasingly need to adapt and innovate. It is innovation and the availability of a skilled workforce that will be the key determinants of Queensland's ability to maintain its current levels of economic growth.

Qualifications, particularly at the higher level, also determine access to jobs. They are increasingly becoming the 'currency' through which skills or sets of skills are recognised in the labour market. Employers are basing their recruitment decisions on the recognised skills people have, through the possession of a qualification.

Currently only 58.5% of Queenslanders aged 15 to 64 years who left school before completing year 12, and do not have a tertiary qualification (either university or VET), are employed. In contrast, over 80% of Queenslanders aged 15 to 64 years with a tertiary qualification at certificate III level or higher are employed.

There is now little difference between university qualifications and higher-

level VET qualifications in terms of securing employment.

Although the best employment outcomes are achieved by people who have a PhD or masters degree (with 86.4% being employed), certificate III and IV level training¹ also offer excellent pathways to jobs. Some 82.2% of people with a certificate III or IV qualification are employed, slightly above the employment levels for those with bachelor degrees from university at 81.6%.

Diplomas and advanced diplomas, which are offered by both VET providers and universities (although most are VET qualifications), are also excellent pathways to jobs. Around 80.6% of Queenslanders with these qualifications are employed. In comparison, just over 70% of Queenslanders who have completed a VET certificate I or II or a senior school certificate as their highest qualification are employed.

Qualifications are also the key determinant of earnings. There are now only small differences between the earnings of university graduates and graduates of higher-level VET programs² working in the same general occupational areas³ of the labour market.

A rapidly changing economy

High-skill jobs, including professionals, associate professionals, skilled trades and managers, make up around half of all jobs in the economy. High-skill jobs in Queensland have experienced strong growth in recent times:

- > Jobs in professional occupations have grown strongly at 3% per year since the mid 1990s, with an

enormous increase of almost 7% per year in the past two years.

- > Employment in associate professional jobs has also experienced very strong growth, averaging almost 4% each year for the past decade.
- > Employment growth in the skilled trades has been modest for more than a decade, but has grown at unprecedented levels of nearly 6% per year over the last two years.

Growth in lower-skilled occupations has been less consistent. Retail and sales occupations have shown significant growth. However, many clerical occupations are experiencing low or even negative growth as new technology replaces the need for many transactional clerical functions.

Production process work has been in decline over the last decade because work has been moving offshore to lower cost economies such as China, India and South East Asia. There has, however, been a resurgence in production process employment in Queensland over the last two years.

Employment in labouring occupations is in decline despite the strength of the current labour market.

The employment trend is not simply a shift from lower skills to higher skills. Some lower-skilled jobs, especially those required in the domestic economy, are on the rise while others are declining as a result of globalisation and technological change.

This situation reflects a major transformation in the state's economy. The nature of employment is changing more rapidly than ever before. New skills are being demanded all the time, and many skills are becoming

obsolete. The nature of work and the skills required by it are now changing as rapidly as they ever have in history—and the pace of change is not expected to slow down.

The emergence of skills shortages

Not surprisingly, the intense employment growth in the Queensland economy has seen the emergence of skills shortages. This is also reflected in other parts of Australia and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries.

However, beyond specific skills shortages in some industries, there are long-term skills deficits in occupational categories of the labour market. The two major skills challenges for the Queensland labour market are:

- > Addressing an urgent current shortage of trades skills that is partly cyclical and partly structural. Key factors include the impacts of the major building boom over the past two years and trade apprenticeship intakes that have been too low to meet projected growth and turnover. Even more pressing is the need to modernise trade skills training to ensure that the trades workforce is equipped with the leading edge skills that VET can provide. Around two-thirds of tradespersons currently have a VET qualification gained through the trades apprenticeship system. In the future all tradespersons should hold a VET qualification.

1. Such as trade qualifications or technician certificates
2. certificate IV or higher
3. professional or associate professional

> Developing more high-level skills in the associate professional workforce. Only half of the people employed in some of the highest-skill jobs in the labour market currently have a VET or university qualification. It is estimated that most associate professionals in the future will need tertiary qualifications, mostly high-level VET qualifications, to maximise labour productivity. A high priority is to provide technicians with the latest skills to ensure that Queensland has a fully qualified associate professional workforce. This is the largest long-term skills deficit in the Queensland and national economies.

What causes skills shortages?

Most people assume skills shortages are simply caused by a failure to train enough people to fill the jobs available. Although skills shortages do arise because of a mismatch between the skills of available workers and the skills needed by employers, the reasons for this mismatch are complex and varied. They include:

- > incomplete training
- > emerging skill demands as a result of new technology
- > economic and demographic change
- > cyclical fluctuations in labour demand
- > qualified workers not working in the occupation for which they are qualified and/or experienced.

In recent times, the VET system has experienced difficulties in supplying the skilled workers needed by Queensland industries. Yet current skills shortages do not appear to have

been primarily caused by a lack of overall training effort. Queensland has experienced strong growth in the number of students undertaking VET. Publicly-funded students in the Queensland VET sector grew from around 255 000 in 1996 to nearly 300 000 by 2003. This represents almost 10% of all people aged 15 to 64 years in Queensland.

The key problems are:

- > not enough of the training undertaken results in recognition of skills outcomes in the form of qualifications. Although over 65 000 students graduate with a VET qualification each year, approximately 77% of the almost two million people who have accessed Queensland's publicly-funded VET system since 1996 have not completed a full VET qualification. The majority of these people did, however, successfully complete every subject (module or unit of competence) that they started.
- > too much of the training effort is at the certificate I and II level or in service industry certificate III. Although a lot of training is being delivered, not enough of it has been in the more expensive high-skill programs, particularly those training programs that are important for the associate professional, technician and trades workforces. In fact, enrolments in diplomas and advanced diplomas have declined.

Current skills shortages are also the result of significant changes in the nature of work over the last decade. The most critical changes affecting the supply of skilled labour are:

- > **a very tight labour market.** Australia and Queensland in particular are experiencing the tightest labour markets in 30 years, evidenced by a national unemployment rate of 5.1% and a Queensland rate of 4.6%. The tight labour market has seen increased employer competition for labour and led to skills shortages across a range of industries.
- > **the sudden and dramatic change in demand for workers in occupations that require specialised skills.** Many industries that were characterised by low or negative employment growth over the past decade are now experiencing a boom in employment. Rapid changes in technology have also led to demand for workers with new skills.
- > **significant changes in occupational structure.** The very strong growth in professional and associate professional occupations has outpaced the take-up of training for these sectors of the labour market.

Skills shortages are also caused by a range of recruitment and retention issues at an industry or enterprise level, including:

- > **insufficient remuneration to retain skills in an industry or occupation.** This is exacerbated by the attractive remuneration packages and working conditions offered by competing employers or industries.
- > **adverse perceptions of industry attractiveness.** As participation in education and training increases, fewer people seek jobs in 'dirty'

industries, or in industries with a negative image.

- > **relative unattractiveness of work due to its remote location.** Workers are likely to be reluctant to take up jobs away from major centres that offer better education and community services and that require relocation to small towns/settlements or long or frequent periods of family separation.
- > **work organisation.** Many workers now value lifestyle more than remuneration and do not want a job that includes long hours or shift work.
- > **job design.** Young, intelligent, skilled people value meaningful work, career paths, continuous learning and fair pay.

The way skills are deployed in the workplace is also a significant factor. Many current workforce management practices unintentionally exacerbate skills shortages. These include:

- > a 'just in time' approach to skilling, with employers preferring to recruit people who are already skilled.
- > employer reluctance to train workers due to a fear that investing in workforce training will make employees more mobile or lead to demands for higher wages.
- > re-engineering of business operations through downsizing the existing workforce and recruiting new skills. With skills deficits across many industries, the new skills required to make these strategies work are not always available in the labour market.

- > a desire by employers to seek new skills (especially Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills) in younger people, while offering redundancy packages/early retirement packages for older workers. As the proportion of older workers in the labour market will continue to grow due to the ageing of the population, a failure to invest in the skilling of older workers will ignore the major supply of labour.
- > a desire to have more and more on-the-job training or short bursts of training to minimise the time workers spend away from the job. The skills requirements of today's workplace are increasingly complex, often requiring sophisticated and complex instruction off-the-job at education and training institutions.

A failure of employers to change these workplace strategies will have serious consequences on the economy as the workforce ages.

The need for national reform

Queensland is playing its part in driving the Australian economy with a range of education, training and workforce participation strategies that are having major impacts on key drivers of economic growth. These include:

- > the *Breaking the Unemployment Cycle* initiative. This is an integrated suite of programs aimed at supporting the most disadvantaged job-seekers into the labour market based on a combination of work experience and skills development. This

initiative has helped more than 120 800 people since its implementation in 1998.

- > *Education and Training Reforms for the Future.* These major reforms of education and training services for 15-17 year olds were announced in 2002 to ensure the connection between school and work. A major element of this initiative is the integration of VET as part of a senior student's educational program.
- > *SmartVET.* This new approach to skills development for priority industries was announced in 2004. The initiative has provided new funding and programs aimed at accelerating the supply of skilled workers for critical industries including a renewed focus on up-skilling existing workers, particularly the mature-aged.

These strategies have helped the Queensland labour market to adapt to industry investment and expansion in the state over the last few years. This is evidenced by:

- > a rapid shift from endemically high unemployment to the lowest unemployment rate of any Australian state. Queensland's unemployment rate is now at 4.6%, down from 6.1% in April 2004 and at levels last experienced in 1975-76.
- > employment growth which was almost double the national average during the year to April 2005, higher than any other state or territory at 6.4%. This was almost 37% of the nation's employment growth.
- > a 42.7% increase in the number of apprentices and trainees in

training in the four years from September 2000 to September 2004, increasing from 51 200 to 73 000 (compared with a 40.3% increase nationally).

- > strong growth in traditional trades apprenticeships with Queensland outstripping national growth. As at 30 September 2004, traditional apprenticeships made up around 38% of all apprentices and trainees in training, up from 31% a year earlier. These programs are building the workforce for Queensland's manufacturing and construction industries which are critical to the state's economic well-being.
- > training of almost half the school-based apprentices and trainees in the country. Around 77% of year 11 and 12 students in Queensland state schools had enrolled in at least one VET in Schools program in 2003.
- > continued absorption of net interstate migration characterised by low-skilled workers, requiring increasing investment in training to ensure that migrants are able to move into productive work in the labour market.

This demonstrates the effectiveness of strategies aimed at the most disadvantaged in the labour market including the continued significant investment in meaningful labour market programs and accredited entry-level training.

However, it is becoming increasingly difficult for Queensland to respond to the rapidly changing needs of the labour market in an environment of continued inaction at the national level. There must be a meaningful and

serious commitment by the Commonwealth and other state and territory governments to the immediate implementation of well considered long-term strategies to equip the training system to respond to the challenges associated with changes in the structure of the labour market.

The Commonwealth Government's proposals outlined in the discussion paper *A New Direction for VET* go some way towards addressing issues that have hampered inter-jurisdictional collaboration, but do not address the major challenges for the VET system in responding to the changing needs of the economy.

The continued strong focus on entry-level training through apprenticeships and traineeships ignores the critical need to focus on high-level accelerated skills development for the existing workforce, particularly the mature-aged. The current system of employer subsidies and brokerage through the Commonwealth new apprenticeships centres is poorly targeted and has led to an improper balance between low-skills pathways and the higher-level technical skills desperately required in the economy.

Similarly, the continued over-reliance on industry advice ignores the need to consider this advice in the context of an economic strategy based on a proper analysis and understanding of the labour market. Industry advice, while critical, is simply one source of information that should be used in developing coherent policy and program responses.

There must also be a national review of the role of public training providers and consideration of the impact of a

failure to support investment in this important infrastructure. The debate must move beyond simplistic rhetorical arguments about the perceived quality of TAFE training and employer choice.

TAFE institutes and other public training providers are often the only training providers able to deliver training in key industry areas. This is particularly true for training that is prohibitively expensive for the private training sector due to factors such as high infrastructure costs or geographical location.

The Commonwealth is implementing more than \$1.37 billion of VET-related election commitments over four years. This is a significant commitment in comparison to the total \$1.1 billion per annum provided to states and territories under the current Commonwealth–State funding agreement. However, the initiatives are, while well intentioned, unlikely to make a significant difference in addressing the most critical present or future needs of the VET system.

This paper proposes substantial reforms in response to the major skilling issues that will impact on Queensland's future economic growth.

Both the Queensland and national economies will ultimately suffer without a national commitment to the implementation of major new approaches to the delivery of VET in Australia. This should include:

- > the development of a national policy in relation to the role of the Commonwealth, state and territory governments in funding and delivering VET services
- > a new framework for funding for VET provided by the

Commonwealth Government to state and territory training authorities based on a clearer understanding of the training services to be purchased through the agreement

- > the development of a comprehensive policy aimed at the development and delivery of new training approaches to meet the current and emerging needs of the workforce. This should include a review of the national new apprenticeships policy and related employer incentives
- > the development of a coherent policy in relation to the continued valuable role of public training providers based on an analysis of training markets.

Priority 1:

Tackling the urgent shortage of trades skills now

For discussion only – not government policy



Reforming the trade apprenticeship system

The shortage in trades skills is partly cyclical—especially in the building industry with its recent boom period—and partly structural, as the intakes to the trades apprenticeship system are insufficient to meet the projected growth and turnover in the skilled trades. Even more pressing is the need to modernise trade skills training to equip the trades workforce with leading edge skills. While almost two-thirds of tradespeople have VET qualifications, the government considers that a long-term objective may be that all tradespeople should be VET qualified.

Challenges in attracting people to the trades include the poor image of trades, a lack of training infrastructure to meet contemporary skills development needs, and inflexibilities in some approaches to trade training. Some of these challenges can be overcome through:

- > better resourced trades training infrastructure

- > a stronger focus on tailoring training to individual and business needs
- > developing best practice models of delivery that can be adapted to the needs of the apprentice and employer
- > improving the image of trades to encourage young new entrants and others to pursue the excellent opportunities provided by a trade career.

In addition, two significant structural reasons for the growing gap between the supply of, and demand for, skilled tradespeople have been identified:

- > the nominal duration of many apprenticeships is longer than is necessary to gain all the competencies required to become a competently skilled tradesperson
- > apprentice wages are too low to attract sufficient people into trade apprenticeship pathways.

Work-based training provided through apprenticeships and traineeships continues to be highly regarded. It is

therefore important that any reform maintains the integrity of apprenticeships and traineeships.

The following strategies are proposed to support significant improvement in the numbers and skills of tradespeople:

1. modernise apprenticeships
2. establish a new adult trade apprenticeship system
3. establish a new specialist Trade and Technician Skills Institute
4. improve Recognition of Prior Learning and trade recognition processes
5. upgrade the skills of existing tradespeople
6. market a new look for trade careers
7. review the role and performance of group training organisations.





Proposal 1

Modernise apprenticeships

Four reforms are being considered to modernise the apprenticeship system in Queensland:

- > *Request the Training and Employment Recognition Council to shorten the nominal apprenticeship contract periods* for some (but not all) trades from four years to three years, or even two years in some cases, to better reflect the time required to achieve competency.
- > *Move to a system where once all of the competencies required for the trade have been achieved (and assessed) then in all cases the apprentice can become a fully-qualified tradesperson without having to serve out the remaining time of the apprenticeship period.*
- > *Review the trade apprenticeship training wage system* to identify what changes might be necessary, while maintaining attractiveness to both employers and prospective apprentices. This review would examine, for example, whether wage increases based on time served have continued relevance as part of a competency-based training system. This review would be undertaken by the Departments of Industrial Relations and Employment and Training in partnership with industry and union representatives.

- > *Review the delivery of trade training* so that potential apprentices can receive intensive skills training and development in trade competencies (i.e. a modern version of pre-vocational training) prior to commencing in the workplace.

Queensland's competency-based system for apprenticeships allows for the completion of a trade on the determination of competence by the registered training provider, employer and the apprentice regardless of the time served by the apprentice. Despite this, the majority of trades are still seen as requiring the completion of four-year terms.

Attaining the required trade competencies must become the single determinant of apprenticeship completion.

The most acute skills shortages in certain trades areas, especially in building and construction, are putting pressure on the completion rates for apprenticeships. Desperate employers are offering full tradesperson wages to apprentices who have not served out their time under their four-year apprenticeship contract, as an incentive to cut short their training.

While this may be a consequence of the tightness of the labour market, it is also the case that trades do not all

have the same complexity or require the same duration of training for people to gain all the skills that they need to be a competent, expert tradesperson. Apprentices may not always need four years of repeated workplace practice to master trade skills.

A significant proportion of apprentices complete their trade apprenticeship inside its nominal duration and, in several trades, the proportion of early completions is quite pronounced.

The first step in modernising the trades apprenticeship system could be a proposal to reduce the duration of the contract period for most trade apprenticeships from the standard four years to three or two years, where appropriate. A proposed new duration for each trade apprenticeship offered in Queensland is shown in Table A1, Appendix A.

Under this proposal, apprenticeships with recommended levels of off-the-job training of:

- > more than 960 hours could be established as four-year apprenticeships
- > 600–960 hours could be established as three-year apprenticeships
- > less than 600 hours could be established as two-year apprenticeships.

The proposed shorter contract periods reflect a reduced period for repetitive practice of skills in the workplace. The new approach might involve more intensive periods of off-the-job training than at present, but over much shorter periods of time for most trades.

The second step may be to ensure that the completion of trades qualifications is solely based on the achievement of competency, rather than a set apprenticeship contract period. This means that, irrespective of the contract period for the apprenticeship, in all cases once an apprentice has been assessed as having all of the competencies required for the trade then that person can become a fully-qualified tradesperson. This could be achieved through a review of employer obligations under the training agreement.

VET Facts

In a recent analysis of apprenticeships in the automotive, construction, process manufacturing and engineering industries it was found that 30% of trade apprentices are already completing and becoming fully-qualified tradespersons in less than the standard four-year indenture term. Of these, 18% become fully-qualified tradespersons in less than three years and 82% became fully qualified between three and four years.

It is also proposed to examine the current framework for apprentice wage rates. The primary concern is that the basis for determining apprentice wage rates was put in place some 20 years ago, when the skills, experience and expectations of apprentices was very different to now. This framework was developed at a time when most apprentices commenced their apprenticeships at 15 or 16 years of age.

Apprentice wages are based on a proportion of the relevant tradesperson's rate with increments paid on the successful completion of stage or year of apprenticeship. The proportions originally determined by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission in 1973 covering state-based awards are:

- > first stage 40%
- > second stage 55%
- > third stage 75%
- > fourth stage 90%.

In times of labour surplus, the four-year system with its lower training wages suited most employers. The four-year contract period allowed apprentices to complete the requirements of the certificate III qualification (increasingly within three years) combined with exhaustive practice in the workplace over a four-year period prior to completing their contract and becoming a fully-qualified tradesperson. The four-year period of lower training wages also allowed employers to recoup the very low productivity of first-year apprentices by paying them apprenticeship wages for a further three years.

The situation is now dramatically different. Most apprentices are 17 years of age and older. They have generally completed year 12 and may have already undertaken some VET training at school or have already gained skills in the workplace. Employers are also increasingly keen to accelerate the skills development of apprentices so that their skills can be deployed more quickly in the workplace.

Discussion Point

Compounding the problem of low apprenticeship wages, many students aged 15 to 24 years now combine work with full-time study. This means the lure that apprenticeships once had in paying young people while they learned their trade has been lost. Young people can now study full-time at university or in VET while working in much higher paying part-time or casual work. In effect they now earn a greater total income from part-time work than many apprentices earn full-time in the first two years of an apprenticeship.

Would the proposals outlined address these issues? In what other ways could these issues be addressed?

The final potential reform relates to the proposal to provide pre-apprenticeship intensive skills training and development in trade competencies prior to commencing in the workplace.

Unlike pre-vocational training, these new programs could focus on the delivery of trade-specific skills rather than generic skills.

This proposal is designed to respond to employer concerns that they are finding it increasingly difficult to accommodate first-year apprentices in the workplace. These programs could allow an apprentice to progress quickly through the early stages of an apprenticeship, allowing them to access higher wage rates while also providing the employer with access to an already-skilled employee.

Discussion Point

These proposals aim to strengthen the integrity of the current trade apprenticeship system. The skills and competencies required will remain the same. The achievement of competence will be the basis for apprenticeship completion.

What more could be done to strengthen the integrity of the apprenticeship system?

Proposal 2

Establish a new adult trade apprenticeship system

The ageing population and the attractiveness of other education and training pathways for young people make it necessary to find ways to increase the uptake of trade training by people over 25 years of age.

People over 25 years of age experience considerable difficulties in gaining effective access to apprenticeships, the only pathway to becoming a fully-qualified tradesperson in most trades⁴. The system was originally designed for young school-leavers to gain instruction and supervision from qualified tradespeople. It does not easily lend itself to adaptation to encourage young adults and mature-aged people into trade apprenticeships. Three problems may be:

- > **Wage rates are too low.** Despite the availability of adult apprenticeship wages, not enough older people are being attracted, especially those with experience in the relevant industry. Labourers and trades assistants earn more than apprentices, so there is little immediate financial incentive for these experienced workers to undertake trade training.
- > **Most trade training is still only available through a four-year program.** There is considerable reluctance to move away from this tried and true model of four-year apprenticeships. However, this traditional approach offers no real recognition of the considerable skills and expertise many older people may already possess.
- > **Lack of information and resources.** This hampers employers in their efforts to effectively attract and recruit mature-aged apprentices.

VET Facts

In Queensland minimum rates of pay exist for adult apprentices (over 21 years of age) in the automotive, building, civil construction, electrical, engineering and forestry industries. These industries employ around 70% of trade apprentices. Adult apprentice wage rates generally range between 75% and 90% of the tradespersons wage rate.

However, new adult apprentices still earn considerably less than labourers or trades assistants. For instance in the engineering industry award an adult apprentice earns \$86 per week less than a trades assistant and \$63 per week less than a labourer. In the construction industry award an adult apprentice earns \$108 per week less than a trades assistant and \$96 per week less than a labourer.

Discussion Point

A recent survey by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) has found that half of employers of apprentices in traditional trades are now paying their apprentices above award wages – typically 15 to 20 % above award rates (*ACCI 2004 Survey of Apprentice Wages*). Is this enough to attract people to apprenticeships?

It is proposed to establish a new adult trade apprenticeship system in Queensland aimed at people aged 25 years and over who are:

- > experienced in the industry or
- > new entrants to an industry who are seeking a fast-tracked approach to becoming qualified in a trade.

The six features of this system would be:

- > **Industrial relations arrangements** that make adult apprenticeships attractive to both employers and adult apprentices. This would include a review of adult apprentice wage rates.

- > **A streamlined process for assessing all skills and competencies** that people already have that can count towards a trade qualification. New Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes are already being piloted. These may be further developed for trade training throughout Queensland.
- > **A customised training response** for adult trade apprentices to allow them to become fully qualified in the shortest possible time.
- > **Brokerage arrangements** to help employers and potential adult apprentices enter into an effective adult apprenticeship. These arrangements may involve a collaborative relationship between Commonwealth new apprenticeships centres and the Department of Employment and Training.
- > **A new information service** to give employers and apprentices information about apprentice training wages and how to enhance wage packages over and above training wages to attract and retain people in apprenticeships. This could be achieved through an enhancement of the current Wage Line service operated by the Department of Industrial Relations.
- > **A new registration service** to register trade apprentice vacancies and people seeking them to assist employers in matching people to trade apprenticeships. This may involve partnership between the Department of Employment and Training and local Job Network providers.

4. The notable exception is hairdressing which provides an off-the-job training option.



Discussion Point

The proposals outlined above would only work effectively if the issue of appropriate wages for adult apprentices is addressed. In most cases employers who engage people as adult apprentices are already required to pay adult apprentice wage rates. But in a persisting skills shortage environment, employers will need to offer adult trades award or above award wages (rather than apprentice wages) to attract adult apprentices and overcome their existing skills shortages (noting that many employers already do). Australian Government incentives for employers are available in full if apprenticeships are completed in less than four years, providing they take at least two years. The Queensland Government will request the Australian Government to make available the same total funding for employers irrespective of the time taken to complete an apprenticeship to encourage employers to offer higher wages to attract adult trade apprentices.

Are there other issues that need to be considered in encouraging employers to recruit adult apprentices?

Proposal 3

Establish a new specialist Trade and Technician Skills Institute

Around 76% of trade and technical training through apprenticeships is delivered by the public provider, TAFE Queensland, through its 15 institutes.

Discussion Point

Queensland has experienced unprecedented levels of growth in trade apprenticeships in the past year. From the end of 2003 to the end of 2004 the number of new commencements in trade apprenticeships increased by 23% with seven TAFE institutes—Barrier Reef, Brisbane North, Mount Isa, Moreton, The Bremer, Logan and Yeronga—increasing their apprenticeship intakes by 30% or more in 2004. But this has still not been enough to meet all the increased demand for apprentices!

What could be done to increase the number of trade apprentices?

Various commentators and economists often call for reform of the TAFE system through a more competitive market privatisation and corporatisation of TAFE institutes. The argument follows that such reforms will produce a more dynamic market and increase training output.

However, much of the VET currently being delivered in Queensland is being offered through a competitive market. Private registered training providers are delivering training in areas where financial returns can be maximised. As trade and technical training is high-cost and more capital intensive it is difficult for private providers to enter this training market.

Third party access to public TAFE infrastructure may assist more private providers to access this market. However, the reality is TAFE will continue to remain the main provider of higher-level trade and technical training. Many training markets, particularly in regional areas, suffer from limited scale and it is not considered possible to have a number of providers competing for a small amount of training places.

The current system may not require radical market reform. Instead, consideration can be given to how TAFE can be improved to respond to the needs of students, employers, unions and other stakeholders in the technical and trade training area.

TAFE Queensland, as the major provider of trades skills training in Queensland, must increase its specialist capacity across a range of trade areas and build strong links with relevant industries. The VET sector—and TAFE in particular—also needs to take a greater role in diffusing skills throughout industry.

To achieve this, it is proposed that a new specialist state-wide Trade and Technician Skills Institute be established within TAFE Queensland. This new specialist institute would be responsible for the delivery of all TAFE trades training in the areas of:

- > automotive
- > building and construction

- > electrical and electronic
- > engineering, manufacturing and metals
- > other related technical trades.

These TAFE trades account for around 10% of total TAFE training delivery across the state.

The proposed institute would be responsible for:

- > entry-level training
- > short specialist courses aimed at upskilling existing workers and meeting enterprise needs
- > the innovative development of trade and technical training program content and its delivery across the state; for example, new training and skills-development approaches to allow apprentices and other students to have their prior experience recognised and only undertake the training required to address their identified skill gaps.

In Brisbane, trade training would primarily be delivered at two new 'state-of-the-art' trades and technician training campuses on the north and south sides of Brisbane. Existing trades skills delivery across Brisbane would be transferred to these centres.

It is also proposed that the new specialist institute would deliver training across the state through trade and technician centres located in other TAFE campuses. Sites would include Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Maryborough, Hervey Bay, Nambour, Ipswich, the Gold Coast, Toowoomba and some other trade training sites currently in the TAFE Queensland network.

The institute would be responsible for the development of strong links with industry to ensure that state-wide trades training best meets industry needs.

Proposal 4

Improve Recognition of Prior Learning and trade recognition processes

To better cater for the increasing numbers of mature-aged people seeking trade skills qualifications, there needs to be a stronger emphasis on recognising the trade and other skills that many existing workers already have, so that training can focus on filling skill gaps.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) enables people to have their existing skills assessed and credited towards a formal qualification. Participants can update their current skills and gain a qualification by undertaking training only in those areas where they do not already have sufficient skills and knowledge. This enables the targeting of training to individual areas of need. It also allows Queensland to rapidly improve its skill profile. In the long term, every student who is not a new entrant to their chosen training area should have access to an efficient RPL process.

There is a separate system of trade recognition which allows experienced but uncertified workers in trade areas to gain recognition as tradespersons, without obtaining a qualification. Applicants can have their experience and skills tested in a workplace environment, providing them with access to industry-based licensing outcomes and, in most cases, the ability to supervise apprentices. However, they do not obtain a formal qualification and are not identified as qualified under Queensland's skills profile.

To meet the growing needs of industry, a model is required which combines the capacity to test trade

skills (as evident in trades recognition) with RPL. The currently separate arrangements for RPL and trade recognition need to be overhauled so that workers undertaking trade recognition can also gain a qualification where appropriate.

In combining these processes it is necessary to streamline current practices in RPL so that the trade assessment portion of the process can be replaced by RPL assessments. In line with current trade testing practices, the reforms need to accommodate the testing of skills in a workplace, rather than solely through assessing written evidence.

The main problem with the current system is that RPL is under-used as a tool to provide formal recognition of skills. Current practices vary dramatically. In some cases highly-organised assessment of each student's skills occurs, but in most cases students are required to gather an onerous amount of evidence to gain recognition of their skills.

The Queensland Government proposes to develop a trade and technician skills assessment process, combining RPL and trade recognition processes. This process would be offered as a specialised service of the proposed TAFE Trade and Technician Skills Institute (Proposal 3).

Proposal 5

Upgrade the skills of existing tradespeople

The rapid changes in trades skills arising from new technology is resulting in a shortfall in the skills of those tradespersons who obtained their trade qualifications many years ago.

It is proposed to boost the skills of existing tradespeople through new vocational graduate certificate and vocational graduate diploma programs across the full range of trade areas. This would allow tradespeople who completed their apprenticeships some time ago to upgrade their skills.

In the rapidly changing workplace, all workers need to continually gain new mixes of skills. The traditional range of university and vocational qualifications were not designed to provide workers with a combination of conceptual knowledge and a greater focus on complex industry, technical and employability skills. In response to this, vocational graduate certificates and vocational graduate diplomas have recently been added to the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

These qualifications have been developed in response to research that suggests that they will benefit a range of workers including:

- > experienced workers without previous qualifications
- > recent graduates requiring industry skills
- > experienced graduates from VET or higher education seeking to update their skill sets.

VET Facts – New vocational graduate qualifications established to upskill the workforce

Earlier this year Australian Education and Training Ministers endorsed two new qualifications as the first VET post-graduate qualifications in Australia. The vocational graduate certificate and the vocational graduate diploma have been developed to enable people to undertake shorter high-level VET courses leading to nationally-recognised post-graduate vocational qualifications.

This will enable the development of a wide range of new shorter courses that are aimed at giving the workforce new skills needed in the economy.

These new qualifications will be an important part of strategies to upskill the existing workforce and to raise the level of qualifications held by Queensland's working-age population.

Discussion Point

What barriers might need to be overcome to encourage older tradespeople to upgrade their qualifications and modernise their trade skills?



Proposal 6

Market a new look for trade careers

Trade careers are sometimes perceived to be dirty, hard and poorly paid. In addition, apprenticeship training is perceived to be inflexible, time-based and taking years to complete. These stereotypes act as disincentives in attracting people to a trade career.

There is a need to correct these negative perceptions so that more young people will be attracted into trade careers. With the ageing of the workforce, more mature workers also need to be encouraged into trade careers, building on their acquired expertise and experience.

The reality is that the trades are often highly-paid careers. People with VET qualifications at the certificate III level or higher have excellent employment prospects that are on par with those enjoyed by university graduates. In addition, VET graduates at certificate IV level or higher now earn similar incomes to university graduates in the same general occupational category. Trades occupations are also the main educational pathway to self-employment in the labour market.

The Queensland Government proposes to work with the Australian Government and key stakeholders to develop marketing and information strategies that challenge the stereotypes, lift the profile of trade careers and highlight the opportunities they provide for new entrants to the workforce as well as those changing their careers.

Discussion Point

What are the most effective communication strategies for promoting trade careers across all generations and across all regions of Queensland?

How can we encourage more people to consider trade and technician careers?

Proposal 7

Review the role and performance of group training organisations

Group training organisations have an important role in providing skilled workers for the state's industries. Given the changing demographics of the workforce, they need to:

- > respond to the challenge of providing more opportunities for older workers and shape training responses to meet their needs
- > be at the forefront of strategies to boost the completion and early completion of apprenticeships and traineeships.

However, group training is under-performing in these areas, as evidenced by the following indicators:

- > Fewer group training apprentices complete their apprenticeships

ahead of the standard four years than those undertaking apprenticeships with other employers. In a time of skills shortages, this means an increased likelihood of people taking up higher-paid employment with other employers prior to completing their training.

- > Completion rates of group training apprentices are lower than those with other employers.
- > Far fewer adults are employed as apprentices in group training companies.

The barriers preventing group training organisations from meeting these challenges must be identified, and options or alternatives developed.

It is proposed that an external review of the operations of group training organisations in Queensland be conducted under the auspice of the state's Training and Employment Recognition Council. This review would:

- > consider the performance of group training in meeting its core functions
- > identify issues, policies or practices that might be inhibiting the performance of group training organisations
- > identify improvements or changes that will increase the effectiveness of group training arrangements in addressing Queensland's skills development priorities.



Priority 2:

Strengthening Queensland's skills base for the future

For discussion only – not government policy



Establish a world-leading, highly-skilled professional and associate professional workforce in Queensland

The national reforms in higher education in the late 1980s raised Australia's university educational attainment from about 15th in the OECD at the time to the current 6th ranking in the proportion of the working-age population with university qualifications. Since these reforms, Australia has experienced strong and enduring rates of economic growth by world standards.

A similar national effort is now needed to raise the level of VET attainment if Australia is to maintain its global economic competitiveness. Australia sits at 16th in the OECD for VET qualifications attainment.

Universities will continue to have an important and indispensable role in

research and development, innovation and instruction in high-level professional skills. At the same time, there must be a more responsive investment in VET, because over the next 20 years at least twice as many people with VET qualifications will be required.

It is estimated that some 85% of jobs in the economy require or would benefit from workers with tertiary qualifications:

- > from university—required by just over 20% of jobs; or
- > from a VET provider—required by just over 60% of jobs.

However, only 46% of the working-age population—aged 15 to 64 years—now holds a tertiary qualification, with 16% from university, and 30% from a VET provider.

Higher-level skills are a key driver of growth and are essential to maintaining

the economic well-being of Queensland. There are also clear economic benefits for individuals with higher-level VET qualifications and university-level qualifications. A focus on delivering higher-level VET qualifications at certificate III and IV levels, VET diplomas, advanced diplomas and VET graduate qualifications⁵ is now critical, with a particular emphasis on skills for the associate professional and professional workforce.

Our main proposed strategies to achieve this include:

- > the development of new training products and training delivery approaches tailored to the needs of people working in associate professional and professional occupations
- > enhancing the flexibility and quality of training delivered by TAFE and other public VET providers.



5. VET graduate qualifications include the new vocational graduate certificate and vocational graduate diploma.



Proposal 8

Skilling for the associate professional workforce

The associate professional workforce presents the biggest long-term skills deficit in both the Queensland and national economies. Only half of the people employed in some of the highest-skill jobs now hold a VET or university qualification. Most associate professionals in the future will need tertiary qualifications—mostly high-level VET qualifications. A high priority will be providing technicians with the latest skills.

This proposal focuses on substantially raising the number of Queenslanders with higher-level VET qualifications. It aims to significantly increase the number of certificate IV, diploma and advanced diploma graduates, as well as graduates of the new vocational graduate certificate and vocational graduate diploma.

In particular, it is proposed that:

- > *Queensland TAFE Institutes shift their training effort* away from general education and certificate I and II level programs. Instead there would be a new focus on courses at certificate IV level and above to provide the higher-level skills required by the associate professional workforce.
- > *A range of technician training programs be developed or re-designed*, at certificate IV level or above. These should be consistently available across the state in the following areas:
 - building, architectural and surveying associate professions
 - civil engineering technicians
 - electrical engineering technicians (especially in electrical distribution)
 - electronics engineering technicians
 - other building and engineering associate professionals.
- > *These technician programs be aligned* with the corresponding trade training programs in the proposed specialist Trade Training and Technician Skills Institute (see Proposal 3) to provide higher-level skills pathways for people in relevant trades.
- > *High-level VET courses be reviewed and developed* for consistent delivery throughout the TAFE network in the following areas:
 - business, finance, computing support and administration associate professionals
 - health, welfare and community services associate professionals
 - hospitality managers, sales and marketing associate professionals
 - other specific associate professionals such as library technicians and sports associate professionals.
- > *A strategy for high-level skills training be developed* for small business managers.
- > *A wide range of new vocational graduate diploma and vocational graduate certificate programs be developed* to upskill the existing associate professional workforce in all of the fields referred to above.
- > *New cadetship arrangements be developed* in conjunction with the Australian Industry Group (AiGroup), combining structured workplace training with relevant certificate IV or diploma-level instruction in selected high-priority areas.

[Case Study – Technology Cadetship]

The *SmartVET* Cadetships initiative announced by the Queensland Government last year as part of the *SmartVET* strategy aims to develop and trial new high-level VET qualification pathways. These cadetships will be introduced into industries experiencing skills shortages, to complement traditional apprenticeships and traineeships and provide the skills required for associate or para-professional occupations.

The Technology Cadetship is a new initiative developed by the AiGroup to provide more efficient pathways for school leavers to enter technical occupations in modern manufacturing industries. They will offer a large choice of electives within four pathways. These are Computer Assisted Design (CAD)/Drafting, Manufacturing Operations, Laboratory Operations and Technical Officer. The cadetships will enable manufacturing enterprises to customise the qualification to meet the unique needs of their business.

AiGroup also facilitated the introduction of a new Award in late 2004 to establish wage rates and employment conditions for people undertaking Technology Cadetships – the *Manufacturing & Associated Industries – Skills Development – Wages & Conditions Award 2004*.

The Queensland Government has taken the lead in partnering with AiGroup on the implementation of this national initiative. It is anticipated that a pilot group of up to 40 Manufacturing Technology Cadets will commence with manufacturing enterprises in South-East Queensland later this year, with the nationally-recognised qualification to be provided by Yeronga Institute of TAFE.

Proposal 9

Encourage all professional workers to be appropriately tertiary qualified

While 85% of all professionals have a university or VET qualification, all professional workers should be encouraged into a career of lifelong learning. Universities have traditionally been considered to be the primary providers of skills for professional occupations. However, there is increasing interest in many industries, particularly new and emerging industries, for professional workers to complement their degree qualifications with specialist high-level, technical VET skills.

By working in conjunction with universities, TAFE institutes in Queensland, and in particular the Southbank Institute of TAFE, have led the way in successfully developing a sophisticated range of integrated VET/university degree and diploma programs, to improve entry-level training for people seeking professional employment.

It is proposed that this approach be expanded across a wider range of professional skills areas, with Southbank Institute of TAFE developing a full and comprehensive range of integrated bachelor degree/VET diploma programs in conjunction with the state's universities.

It is proposed to:

- > develop a wider range of integrated degree and diploma programs, in conjunction with universities. This would enable students to undertake combined bachelor-diploma/advanced diploma/certificate IV programs and gain both university and VET qualifications in much the same

time as it would otherwise take to complete a bachelor program.

- > develop a range of new vocational graduate certificates and vocational graduate diplomas aimed at giving existing professionals, who already hold university qualifications, a range of additional VET skills to enhance their capacity in their professions.
- > establish the Southbank Institute of TAFE as an institute of technology (Proposal 12) specialising in innovative and leading edge higher-level programs, for example integrated VET/university programs and high-level VET programs. Southbank would move away from certificate I, II or III level programs and take responsibility for a new range of vocational graduate qualifications aimed at meeting the specific VET skills needs of professional workers. These programs would be accessible to people across the whole of Queensland through the regional TAFE network.

Discussion Point

It is not proposed to introduce TAFE degrees (as has been the case in some other states). Instead, it is proposed to further develop partnerships with universities to allow students the dual benefit of a degree from a recognised university and a VET qualification, generally in the same time that they would otherwise take to gain a degree only. Only in rare situations where industry has a clear need and no university is willing to partner with TAFE in meeting that need might a TAFE degree be considered.

Would this approach adequately meet the skills needs of industry?

Modernise TAFE Queensland and other public VET providers

Queensland's public VET system comprises:

- > TAFE Queensland, which has 15 TAFE institutes with campuses in over 80 regional and metropolitan centres and provides training to around 240 000 students each year
- > four agricultural colleges, currently being amalgamated into one state-wide agricultural college, the Australian Agricultural College Corporation
- > Aviation Australia
- > a new specialist approach to publicly-funded training in the electricity distribution industry.

Queensland's jobs and training markets have experienced substantial change in recent years. Technology has altered the way people work and learn. Knowledge-based industries have grown rapidly. Training options have increased. Queenslanders are increasingly seeking VET programs that provide a seamless transition to university courses.

TAFE Queensland has made significant changes in recent years especially in the increase in trade apprenticeship

intakes. However, there continues to be rapid growth in demand for new skills to meet the needs of the Queensland economy.

The long-term sustainability of Queensland's public provider network depends on significantly revitalising its learning environment, product and image. TAFE Queensland must offer an appealing and accessible training option for Queenslanders at all stages of their working lives. It must offer contemporary facilities, access to the latest technology, and up-to-date training products.

It is proposed that TAFE Queensland and other public VET providers be modernised by:

- > *upgrading the infrastructure of TAFE and public VET provider facilities*
- > *streamlining and re-focusing publicly-provided training services to be more responsive to industry needs and students' learning requirements*
- > *giving TAFE institutes and other public VET providers the capacity to provide leading-edge training services*
- > *placing the student and contemporary workplace skills needs at the centre of the training system.*

[Case Study – Aviation Australia]

Development of the aviation industry has been one early outcome of innovation in the Government's approach to skilling through industry engagement. In 2001, Aviation Australia Pty Ltd, a centre of excellence for training in the aviation and aerospace industries, was established, thereby ensuring that the emergence of a greatly expanded aviation industry in Queensland could be underpinned by the availability of crucial relevant skills. Aviation Australia is a key factor in the recent growth of employment in this priority industry. Rapidly growing commercial training for industry in areas such as aircraft-type maintenance and cabin crew emergency training is in addition to aeroskills training funded by the Government.

Government investment of approximately \$15 million to date has established an industry-centred training provider, with strong relationships with over 150 organisations, including Boeing, Cathay Pacific, Brisbane Airport Corporation and Qantas. Its facilities at Brisbane Airport are acclaimed as world class. Aviation Australia also manages the new Cairns Aviation Skills Centre, supporting the development of the local \$120 million per annum regional industry.

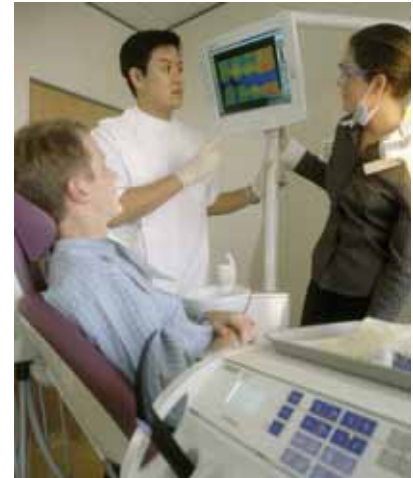
Proposal 10

Upgrade the infrastructure of TAFE and other public providers

TAFE's infrastructure needs urgent targeted investment to reach contemporary standards of excellence. TAFE infrastructure also needs to be located so that it is accessible to Queensland's industries and communities.

The Queensland Government proposes to develop a staged investment

program that would allow TAFE Queensland students to have access to leading edge equipment and technology. TAFE Queensland would provide a training environment that is reflective of modern workplaces and inspires students to learn.



Proposal 11

Develop a modern, streamlined TAFE network responsive to industry needs and supportive of students' learning requirements

Queensland's future prosperity requires a training system that equips people with high-level trade and technology skills that support business growth and innovation. Training programs need to be streamlined, responsive to industry needs, and sufficiently flexible to ensure students can undertake training at times and in places that suit their various commitments.

The aim is to ensure TAFE Queensland offers innovative training products delivered by highly qualified staff. Queenslanders need access to:

- > innovative and personalised training that uses the latest teaching techniques and equipment
- > streamlined qualifications which recognise their existing skills and experience and which do not require them to 'learn' things they already know
- > greater flexibility in training delivery on a 24x7 basis, regardless of location, through more effective use of ICT and other modern training methods⁶.

Queensland's 15 TAFE institutes generally operate independently. Each institute attempts to provide a full range of services within its geographical area or region. TAFE institutes have developed close links with local industries, communities and the student population. In recent years, individual institutes have developed highly innovative responses to changing regional and industry needs.

However, there is not a simple or clear interface between industry and the TAFE network. This has meant that TAFE institutes have been hampered in their ability to develop a sufficient industry or occupational specialisation in their approach to training delivery.

With some 10% of all TAFE delivery across the state to be delivered by the proposed specialist Trade and Technician Skills Institute (Proposal 3), the number, location, training focus and service delivery approaches of the other TAFE institutes across Queensland needs to be reviewed. It is proposed that the new TAFE system will:

- > *retain its network of regional institutes and campuses* throughout

Queensland, building on TAFE's existing connections with local industries to provide training services responsive to local needs. These campuses would continue to provide quality entry-level training for people just starting out in the labour market through to higher-level qualifications for people seeking to upgrade their skills or change careers.

- > *enhance the statewide training responsibilities of the regional institutes in areas of specialisation* as required by local businesses and workers.
- > *ensure the location of its institutes and campuses across the South-East region of Queensland reflects population growth and expansion.* Brisbane North Institute of TAFE already operates across the whole of the north-side of the greater Brisbane area, incorporating Redcliffe and Caboolture. A possible model for the rest of the region might be:
 - amalgamate Yeronga Institute of TAFE with the Bremer Institute

6. Currently, about 28% of TAFE products incorporate flexible learning techniques such as on-line training, videostreaming and on-the-job training.

of TAFE into a new larger TAFE institute – Ipswich and Brisbane West TAFE.

- establish a new Brisbane South TAFE along Brisbane’s south-eastern corridor combining the current Moreton Institute of TAFE and the Logan Institute of TAFE (although it is also possible that some of Logan Institute of TAFE could merge with the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE).

- > *give the Open Learning Institute (OLI) a new state-wide role* so that all TAFE products and services, outside of the trade and technician areas, would be available on-line through supported delivery models from all major TAFE outlets across the state.

It is proposed that TAFE facilities will be reorganised as part of the proposed plan to upgrade TAFE infrastructure (Proposal 10).

This new approach to the delivery of training through TAFE institutes would see a much greater emphasis on collaboration between providers rather than competition. Although specialist training capacity would be fostered in existing institutes, these institutes would become responsible for the coordination and quality of training delivery in these specialist areas throughout the state at other TAFE locations.

Discussion Point

This proposal aims to address the tensions between providing adequate regional access across Queensland to TAFE training products and services, while at the same time maintaining a sharp focus on skills specialisation in response to industry demands. The role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is crucial to the success of this approach. What are the other service delivery elements that we need to consider?

[Case Study – TAFE Queensland Mining Services partnering with the mining industry]

The mining industry was traditionally the least satisfied with the services provided by TAFE nationally. Queensland responded in 1999-2000 by forming a new partnership with the mining industry designed to address their training needs in their environment— the outcome being TAFE Queensland Mining Services.

The major strength of TAFE Queensland Mining Services’ business model is the combination of industry’s training capability and resources and the quality assurance and national standards applied by TAFE. It also adds value through training for specialised and regulatory positions. TAFE Queensland Mining Services delivers a range of client-based training and assessment services through a regional network of training coordinators located to service the state-wide sector’s numerous operations.

TAFE Queensland Mining Services is a consortia led by the Central Queensland Institute of TAFE in partnership with the Mt Isa Institute of TAFE, the Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE and the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE.

The amount of training delivered has grown more than three-fold from 2001-02 to 2003-04, with more than 7000 people achieving relevant competencies through TAFE Queensland Mining Services in 2003-04. As the market leader in training services for the mining sector, TAFE Queensland Mining Services is an example of TAFE Queensland’s ability to be responsive to a major industry sector’s particular skilling needs.





Proposal 12

Establish Southbank Institute of TAFE as a VET Institute of Technology

The Southbank Institute of TAFE has secured a reputation for providing VET opportunities that lead to university programs. Over 25 programs have been negotiated with Griffith University, the Queensland University of Technology, the University of Southern Queensland and the University of Queensland.

It is proposed to redevelop the Southbank Institute of TAFE into a high-technology campus—a VET Institute of Technology. The institute would have strong links to the university sector and be capable of providing high-level training in specific professional and associate

professional fields across the state.

Over the past 20 years, the former colleges of advanced education have been transformed into universities. This change has resulted in a gap in the para-professional training market. Selected TAFE institutes, commencing with Southbank, can bridge that gap by focussing on higher-level VET qualifications.

A new Southbank Institute of Technology would provide a pathway to university, offering advanced diploma and diploma courses, and integrated degree and diploma programs in partnership with universities.

[Case Study – The Southbank TAFE Education Precinct]

The Queensland Government announced a \$230 million redevelopment of the Southbank Institute of TAFE in April 2005, as the first Public Private Partnership project in Queensland.

A state-of-the-art facility will be constructed in partnership with Axiom Education Queensland, a private sector consortium. The project is expected to have a net present value over its full life of some \$550 million, including the construction costs of \$230 million.

Proposal 13

Establish specialist TAFE centres

Specialist TAFE centres could focus their attention on a more targeted range of training programs to meet the needs of one or several major industries. Students would be able to access entry-level training and short courses through to higher-level VET qualifications.

Work has already commenced on delivering highly specialised VET programs such as the highly successful specialist public provider, Aviation Australia.

The Queensland Parliament recently passed legislation that will see the state’s four agricultural colleges amalgamated into a single state-wide agricultural college. This college will be capable of providing a new range of services, especially at high levels, to Queensland’s agricultural sector.

As discussed previously (Proposal 3), it is also proposed to establish Australia’s first tertiary level specialist Trade and Technician Skills Institute to be a state-of-the-art training facility that is the hub of trade and technician skills development throughout the state.

Under this proposal, other TAFE institutes would develop specialist training delivery expertise in other training areas. These institutes would then be responsible for the coordination of training delivery in these areas of specialisation throughout the State.

Discussion Point

Possible options for TAFE specialist centres

A number of possible options exist for Queensland TAFE institutes to develop centres of excellence (outside of the trade areas in the proposed specialist Trade and Technician Skills Institute – proposal 3) in the state-wide development and delivery of training. Some areas like Tourism and Hospitality, Hairdressing and Beauty, Business and Finance will continue to be provided by most institutes. All institutes would continue to provide a wide range of training opportunities across numerous and diverse industry areas. Possible centres of excellence include:

Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE	Mining, Aged Care and Indigenous
Brisbane North Institute of TAFE	Horticulture, Environment and Information and Communication Technology
Central Queensland Institute of TAFE	Mining
Cooloola Sunshine Institute of TAFE	Aquaculture, Fitness and Recreation
Gold Coast Institute of TAFE	Creative Industries and Boat Building
Logan Institute of TAFE	Small Business
Moreton Institute of TAFE	Fashion, Nursing and Health Services
Mount Isa Institute of TAFE	Mining
Open Learning Institute of TAFE	Develop a state-wide approach to e-learning
Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE	Local Government, Transport, Logistics and Mining
Southbank Institute of TAFE	A specialist in high-level skills
The Bremer Institute of TAFE	Community and Health Services
Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE	Marine and Indigenous
Wide Bay Institute of TAFE	Marine and Retail
Yeronga Institute of TAFE	Sport and Recreation

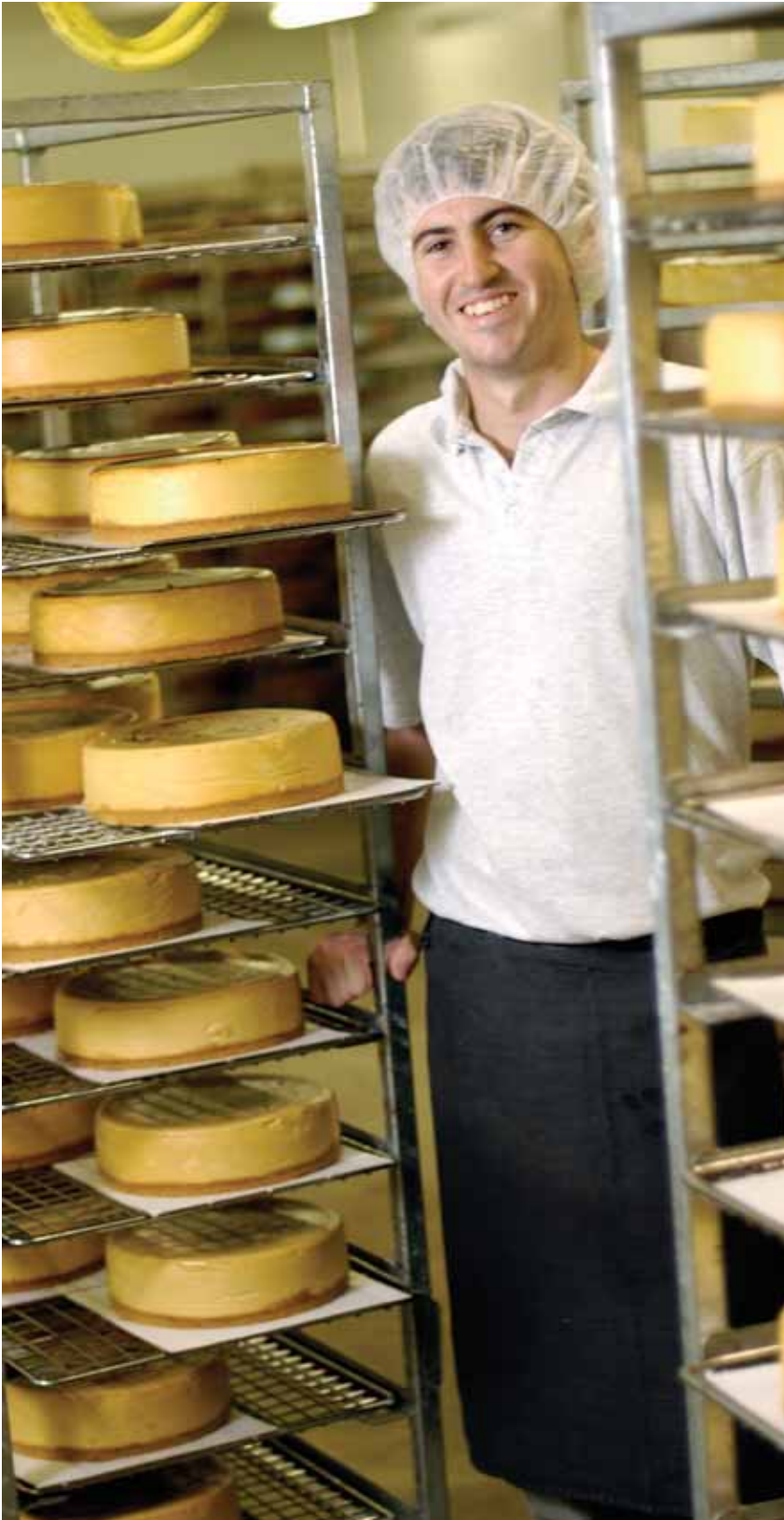
Would specialist centres of excellence meet the needs of Queensland industries and employers?

Priority 3:

Developing a more responsive and flexible VET system

For discussion only – not government policy





The nature of work and the demographics of the workforce are changing at a faster rate than at any time in our history. It is difficult to predict future training and skill requirements with any precision.

As an example, demand for ICT courses, which were amongst the fastest growing in the state in 2002, fell significantly in 2004—just two years later. In recent months, ICT enrolments appear to be surging again. Fluctuations like these make it difficult to plan training delivery. The training system must be flexible and able to quickly respond to the changing skills demands of the workforce.

Employers who use the VET system consistently report high levels of satisfaction. However, client satisfaction surveys consistently raise the need for the VET system to increase responsiveness. It is becoming more important than ever to increase flexibility and responsiveness.

The public training provider cannot do this alone. Queensland's vibrant private training sector is better equipped in many cases to deliver responsive, specialised training programs in many niche markets. A strategic alignment of private and public training provision is needed.

The Queensland Government's suggested approaches for improving the responsiveness and flexibility of the VET system are:

- > a more strategic relationship with private training providers
- > more responsive training programs.

Proposal 14

Develop a new relationship between public and private training providers to better meet Queensland's skill needs

Queensland has a vibrant private VET sector supplying services to just as many, if not more, students as TAFE Queensland. In fact, in addition to the 10% of the Queensland working-age population who participate in a publicly-funded VET program each year, an estimated 11% participate in privately-funded programs. However, around two-thirds of this training delivery is for lower-level qualifications or in training that will not lead to the awarding of a qualification.

The strong growth in the private training market, particularly since the mid 1990s, has vastly increased diversity in the training available in Queensland. Private providers have led the development of a wide range of new products and services to meet niche markets that were not well met by public providers.

Given the strength of Queensland's vibrant private training sector, it is time to rethink the respective roles of public and private training providers. It is time to move beyond the traditional competitive approach to establish a more strategic relationship based on what each sector does best and is best positioned to deliver.

As outlined previously, Queensland's most critical training skills gaps are in high-level training for associate professionals, especially high-skill technicians.

The private training sector has been highly successful in developing niche training for low and high-skill training, particularly in the service industries. The private sector in Queensland has been taking an

increasingly prominent role in some of the high-volume training of certificate II and III level. This is enabling TAFE to focus on more expensive technician and associate professional training and on markets where private training provision is not financially viable.

It is proposed:

- > that TAFE and public providers in Queensland increase their focus on post-graduate vocational qualifications; higher-level VET qualifications at the certificate IV, diploma and advanced diploma levels; and trade qualifications at the certificate III level.
- > to examine opportunities to progressively withdraw public providers from some training at the certificate II and III level where private training providers are able to meet this demand and provide reasonable access to low-income students. Allocations to private providers through the User Choice

program would be reviewed as part of this process.

- > to explore with the private training sector the greater role it might have in providing specialist high-level skills for the professional and associate professional workforce in Queensland. The private training sector has already developed some high-quality, high-level skills programs, in particular, at the advanced diploma and diploma levels.

These proposals would create new market opportunities for private registered training organisations. The Queensland Government proposes working closely with the Australian Council of Private Education and Training Providers (ACPET) and other private registered training organisations to manage this transition.



Proposal 15

Skilling Solutions Queensland: information and guidance for people of all ages

Prospective students, for one reason or another, frequently opt for university qualifications over VET qualifications, despite:

- > university qualifications being relevant to only around one in five jobs while VET qualifications are relevant to around three in five jobs
- > employment outcomes from VET being just as good as those from university
- > similar earnings potential of university and VET graduates in the same occupational categories
- > costs of VET to the student generally being lower than university.

Available research shows that most young people make long-term career decisions on the basis of limited information. They rely mostly on family and peer group influence rather than professional guidance. Older

people and existing workers have access to even less professional assistance when making training and career decisions.

The days of training for just one career in a person's lifetime have been left behind. Today, people of all ages need to continually reassess their work progress in order to make better decisions about their future. To do this, they need access to up-to-date information about the job opportunities available and the additional skills they need for these jobs.

In recognition of this, the Queensland Government is piloting a new service called *Skilling Solutions Queensland* to help people of all ages to make informed decisions about training and employment opportunities. Four locations have been selected for the *Skilling Solutions Queensland* pilot—South Brisbane, Meadowbrook, Woodridge, and the Logan Hyperdome.

The service provides information on local sustainable job opportunities and puts people in contact with training providers who can help them fast-track recognition of their existing skills, and develop and complete customised training plans.

[Case Study – *Skilling Solutions Queensland: a first in Australia*]

Skilling Solutions Queensland is a first in Australia. It provides much needed information about skills options to people of all ages. *Skilling Solutions Queensland's* customer service centres link Queenslanders to various other skilling and employment service providers, including Centrelink, new apprenticeship centres, Job Network Providers, public and private training providers for assessment and training services, universities, schools and relevant community organisations.

The first *Skilling Solutions Queensland* centre at the Logan Hyperdome was opened by the Premier and the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations in April 2005.



Skilling Solutions Queensland will also assist in implementing a number of the key *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* (ETRF) initiatives. For example, as part of *Skilling Solutions Queensland*, a SmartJOB Info database will assist the Queensland Studies Authority to provide young Queenslanders with more up-to-date information on the labour market.

Subject to the success of the *Skilling Solutions Queensland* pilots, it is

For discussion only – not government policy

proposed to roll out *Skilling Solutions Queensland* across the state into customer service centres located in regional shopping centres, Department of Employment and Training regional offices and mobile centres.

More responsive training programs

As the economy diversifies, workers are requiring new sets of skills. Today's enterprises are more diverse; the level of skills complexity is more varied across different occupations; and people with previous work experience have different training needs.

Some of the factors that have contributed to the diversification of skills are:

- > the need for continuous innovation
- > a blurring of professional and workplace skills
- > the growing importance of generic employability skills

- > a move away from mass or process production work to more highly-skilled niche work in a global marketplace.

Consequently, a national training system which applies the same training package framework across more than 70 different industry sectors or occupational clusters cannot meet all of the emerging training needs. The VET system in Queensland is largely based on providing certificate or diploma courses for people seeking to enter an occupation. Training packages identify the basic to advanced-level competencies required by each of the 70 industry or occupational clusters. These competencies are ranked against the qualification levels under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

However, in addition to entry-level training, many industries are looking for training with a specific focus on new and emerging skills. People with industry experience who are already skilled in their area of expertise need

ways to update and refresh their skills. Existing workers have largely enrolled in selected modules or units of competence. However, training packages were never intended to meet these needs. These course components are usually part of a longer course designed for entry-level students and lead to a statement of attainment rather than achieving a full qualification.

VET Facts

For the best part of two decades, an increasingly large number of people have accessed VET to gain specific skills without ever intending to undertake a full qualification. The National Centre for Vocational and Education Research (NCVER) reports that about 25% of all persons enrolling in VET complete a full qualification, but a further 50% successfully complete every module (or unit of competency) that they begin⁷. This trend has led to an increasing number of statements of attainment.



7. Foyster, J., Hon Kok Fai & Shah, C. (2000), 'Student flows through Australian TAFE courses', NCVER, Adelaide

Proposal 16

Develop shorter and more flexible training responses

There is a need to move away from standardised training frameworks to more adequately reflect the different training needs of workers. Specific skills sets need to be packaged for adults to provide access to shorter and more flexible training products that allow the learner to receive a qualification that accredits and attests to the skills they have acquired. Simply issuing a statement of attainment is no longer adequate.

It is proposed:

- > *to develop new strategies to encourage workers to re-engage in formal learning* as their needs change.
- > *that a wide range of innovative and flexible courses be designed* to provide people who have industry experience and skills with access to qualifications. The Queensland Government would work with training providers in Queensland to foster a new commitment to designing customised training

programs that meet the specific needs of the individual.

- > *that the Department of Employment and Training commission the development of specific training tools to tailor training to the needs of existing workers.* This would include RPL (see Proposal 4) diagnosis tools and flexible training programs that allow learners to undertake the units of learning required to “fill the gap” between their existing skills and the skills needed to earn a qualification.



Proposal 17

Establish a range of shorter nationally-recognised new vocational education and training programs across all industries to better skill the workforce

The Queensland Government proposes to introduce a range of vocational graduate certificate and vocational graduate diploma courses in late 2005 across Queensland, in consultation with employers. This would include trade qualifications (Proposal 5) and some para-professional occupations (Proposal 8).

These courses are a new category of nationally-recognised VET qualifications in a wide range of areas specifically targeting the diverse skills needs of today's workers. These courses would provide flexible and customised training for university graduates to achieve technical skills in addition to their academic knowledge—meeting industry needs in areas that are not currently catered for by existing training packages.



[Case Study – Piloting employability skills]

Queensland has been piloting new ways of incorporating employability skills into VET programs.

One example is a pilot study in the delivery of employability skills within the horticulture, hospitality and construction qualifications conducted at Brisbane North Institute of TAFE. The study demonstrated that students and teachers identified closely with employability skills when they were explicit as stand-alone units in the qualification.

The Gold Coast Institute of TAFE also trialled the delivery of employability skills through a Job Ready Profile that students received upon graduation. Teachers mapped their learning and assessment strategies against the employability skills framework to identify gaps in existing training delivery. Teachers then refocused their learning activities or assessment tasks to make these generic skills more explicit.

Discussion Point

Employability skills are growing in importance as the structures of the workplace, workplace demands and the roles of employees change. There has been a growing voice from employers and businesses across Australia that employability skills have not been given enough attention in the current VET system. For example, a 2004 report prepared by the Allen Consulting Group for the Business Council of Australia reported that employability skills are not given sufficient emphasis in training packages.

How would the proposals assist employers recruit appropriately qualified employees? In what ways will the proposals help workers find suitable employment?

Proposal 18

Employability skills

Workers need more than industry specific skills to operate effectively in the workplace. Governments and employers are placing increasing emphasis on employability, literacy and numeracy skills.

Many employers are arguing that employability skills are now as important as the professional, para-professional or technical skills that have been the main focus of most tertiary education and training.

The report *Employability Skills for the Future* that was produced by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia in 2002 outlined the need for workers to have skills in:

- > communication
- > teamwork
- > problem solving
- > initiative and enterprise
- > planning and organising
- > self management
- > learning
- > technology.

A national survey of adult literacy skills found that just under half of Queensland's adults experience some difficulty with texts in the workplace. Recent OECD research has indicated

that raising a country's literacy score by 1% leads to a rise in productivity of 2.5% with the flow-on increase of 1.5% in GDP.

While there is increased emphasis on literacy, numeracy and employability, workers are also increasingly required to update their technical and industry skills to incorporate new technologies, changing work practices, and evolving products and services.

The Queensland Government proposes to develop new employability skills training products that can be integrated into all relevant training programs. These products would focus on:

- > employability skills drawn from the Employability Skills Framework developed by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Business Council of Australia.
- > language, literacy and numeracy competencies drawn from the National Framework for adult English language, literacy and numeracy.



Priority 4:

Initiating a new engagement with employers to tackle skill shortages

For discussion only – not government policy





Consultative and strategic employment and workplace reforms

For the past 15 years, the Australian national training system has been characterised as 'industry-led'. During the 1980s, the industry-led competency-based training system was introduced so that training would not be exclusively determined by training providers. The intention was for the skills required by industry to directly influence the nature of the training provided⁸.

This approach has continued through the implementation of training packages that began in the mid 1990s. National industry training advisory bodies, now called national industry skills councils, are responsible for specifying the competencies required in the training packages relevant to their industry⁹.

At the state level, industry training advisory bodies have contributed to

the implementation, quality review, and planning of training delivery relevant to their industries. This process is based on the premise that the industry training body can comprehensively specify, in advance, the skills needs for an industry or occupational cluster.

However, with the rapid pace of change in skills needs, many sections of business claim that industry training bodies no longer reflect the views of business, as the system is designed to provide industry-wide consistency rather than meet individual enterprise needs. While consistency is important, many businesses are calling for customisation and flexibility to meet the varying needs of enterprises.

The Queensland Government proposes to:

- > *work more closely with industry* to develop a Future Skills Agenda
- > *work more closely with employers* to tackle the skills deficit and

develop a shared approach to redesigning workplaces and employment practices so that the right skills are recruited and retained in enterprises

- > *encourage and assist employers to develop and retain the skills* needed—in particular, new workplace strategies are needed to deal with the impact of the ageing population.

These aims will primarily be achieved through a new type of engagement with industry, based on the establishment of industry specific Skills Formation Strategies. These proposed strategies would be used to develop action plans for industries and industry sub-sectors.

8. The development of competency-based training in Australia is described in Robinson, C & Misko, J (2000), 'Competency-based training in Australia' (2000); in Gonzi, A & Arguelles, A (eds), 'Competency-based education and training: A world perspective', National College of Technical Professional Education, Mexico, pp61-83

9. See National Centre for Vocational Education Research (2000) 'Australian vocational education and training: An overview', NCVER, Adelaide

[Case Study – Developing new Skills Formation Strategies]

The Queensland Government is promoting the development of Skills Formation Strategies as a process where industry, community and government stakeholders can collaborate to analyse specialist skills formation needs in different regions, sectors and industries. These strategies are a basis for private and public sector responses to skills needs.

Strategies currently being developed are:

- > Aged care including enrolled nursing
- > Construction
- > Electrotechnology and electronics
- > Lockyer Valley region skill needs
- > Marine tourism—Cairns
- > Mining—Central Queensland coal
- > Tourism in Mackay and Bundaberg
- > Normanton region skill needs
- > Western Downs region skill needs
- > Childcare
- > Creative industries—film and TV
- > Hospitality
- > Marine—boat building in the Gold Coast
- > Marine Tourism—Mackay, Whitsunday, Bowen
- > Mining—North Queensland metalliferous
- > Construction, manufacturing and engineering in the Townsville region
- > Pharmaceuticals and nutraceuticals
- > Wine

Proposal 19

Engage government and industry in developing a shared future skills agenda

It is proposed that new approaches be implemented to establish relationships at the most senior levels of industry and government. This would ensure better planning of the skills needs of the future. **The Future Skills Agenda** would aim to meet the various skills needs across industry sectors. The agenda would include comprehensive skills formation strategies to guide the allocation of public training funding and resources.

These skills formation strategies would provide new ways to build a skilled, flexible and innovative workforce.

These would include new workforce management strategies to assist industries to remain competitive in a knowledge-based economy.

The Queensland Government proposes to:

- > *withdraw funding for state-based industry advisory bodies* over a 12 month period, replacing current state-based industry advisory bodies with new arrangements
- > *establish new types of industry partnerships* including a new mechanism for coordinating government, union, industry and training provider interaction with enterprises to develop strategies for identifying, analysing and addressing skills shortages
- > *develop skill formation strategies* that:
 - assist industry to analyse and address skills issues
 - increase industry's capacity to consider skills within workforce management strategies

- work more closely with research agencies to ensure that VET is well-positioned for skilling the workforce to use new and emerging technologies
- involve VET providers in the process to ensure training needs are considered a priority
- create new training products and approaches where necessary to meet specific industry needs.

In the first instance, skills formation strategies would be developed for:

- > health and aged care
- > ICT and e-business
- > environmentally sustainable systems
- > childcare
- > food processing
- > transport and logistics
- > agriculture
- > small business
- > local government
- > wine industry
- > hospitality
- > seafood and aquaculture.



Proposal 20

Initiate centres of excellence

The Queensland Government also proposes to establish centres of excellence in industries that are designated as high priority (see also Proposal 13). The centres would develop strategies to be more responsive to industry, and to strengthen the role of employers in overcoming skills shortages in their industry.

Each centre would have a board, including senior level industry and government appointments. The board would recruit a Chief Executive Officer with strong industry credibility, commercial management expertise in the relevant industry sector and strategic leadership ability. The employees of each centre would be recruited from the specific industry sector. As such, each proposed centre of excellence, while being government-owned, would be commercially managed and operated.

Significant planning, consultation and scoping has commenced for centres of excellence in the mining, manufacturing, building and construction and electrical distribution industries.

Possible areas for further centres of excellence include:

- > agriculture
- > health and community industries
- > transport and logistics

- > tourism and hospitality
- > ICT
- > automotive
- > local government.

New strategies at the enterprise level: Employer practices

Skills shortages will never be addressed by training initiatives alone. Many skills deficits are not only due to insufficient levels of training, but also from a failure to retain skilled people in the industry because of:

- > inadequate remuneration relative to other occupations
- > difficult, strenuous, hazardous or unfavourable work
- > long and unconventional working hours
- > unfavourable location of work.

Many current recruitment and workplace practices originate from an era when the skills needed by employers were in surplus, and many skills could be easily gained on-the-job. This meant that employers tended to look externally to recruit new skills.

While a significant proportion of today's jobs remain at the lower-skill end where many skills can be formed in the workplace, there is now a major shift toward high-level technical, cognitive and generic work skills that

require tertiary education and training.

In the global economy, there is expanding demand for these higher-level skills. Strategies that employers have relied on to buy in skills when they need them and shed labour when it is no longer immediately required will become much less effective as the long-term demand for high-level skills rises.

Employers will need to develop a range of recruitment and skilling strategies and dispense with outdated practices to ensure adequate skills in their enterprise. For example, employers can:

- > redesign jobs to retain skilled people, rather than shed them and hope to recruit new skills
- > become actively involved in the further development of the skills of their workforce.

Skills development is not just a matter of increasing the supply of skills. It is also about how the skills are used in the workplace. Employers need to more strategically build and utilise the training and skills of their workers.

As the workforce ages, employers will need to shift current attitudes, recruitment processes and skilling practices. Currently, many employers

favour younger people as the source of new skills over retraining their existing workforce, applying most of their training resources to younger workers. Age pathways will be required to encourage older skilled people to stay in the workforce for longer, at least on a part-time basis.

VET Facts

Most part-time employment (some 70% of all part-time jobs in Queensland) is in low-skill occupations. Only 2.5% of all part-time jobs are in managerial occupations, 14.8% are in professional occupations, 7.7% are in associate professional occupations, and 4.5% are in skilled trades occupations. For people in most high-skill jobs, the options are full-time work or 'out of work', with few options in between.

Proposal 21

Develop a new business skills advisory service

It is proposed that a new business skills advisory service be established to:

- > *provide small and large businesses with a comprehensive diagnostic service* that reviews an organisation's current human resources, recruitment, training and employment practices and evaluates the likelihood of current practices meeting future skills needs and business objectives
- > *help organisations overhaul their existing practices* to give them a market edge in gaining and retaining skills in a persistent skills shortage environment
- > *help organisations put into place effective strategies* that would *achieve an age balance in their workforce*

- > *advise business on how to safeguard* their enterprise against the effects of an ageing workforce
- > *promote the establishment of part-time, high-skill job pathways* to encourage the retention of high-level skills in the labour market.

It is also proposed that this service would be operated as a commercialised organisation, possibly with partners from the employment recruitment industry. It would provide expertise on a fee-for-service basis, although some services may be subsidised.



Priority 5:

Developing a workforce and skills response to the ageing population

For discussion only – not government policy





The need to respond to the changing economy and the changing nature of work has been highlighted throughout this paper. The ageing population is one of the largest factors influencing how the world of work will change in coming decades. In fact, tomorrow's workforce will be predominantly made up of mature-aged and older workers.

Tomorrow's older workers:

- > will be more highly educated than ever before
- > will generally be highly computer literate
- > will be healthier and have a longer life expectancy than in the past
- > will be keen to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge but will not be looking to undertake lengthy courses
- > will want full recognition for the skills they already have
- > will have access to more financial freedom from the age of 55 onwards (in terms of

superannuation) and will therefore have more early retirement options

- > will be more likely to stay in the workforce if they have access to options that allow for:
 - more work-life balance as they get older
 - phasing out of full-time/full pressure roles
 - pathways that make it possible to supplement retirement income with part-time work.

The workforce needs to retain the skills of older workers and to turn around the long-term pattern of declining employment rates for older people. To achieve this, a major cultural change in attitudes to ageing and the value of older people is required.

The prevailing attitude to older people in the workforce has been poor. They have been regarded as more likely to be absent due to illness, less likely to learn and gain new skills, less likely to adapt, and likely to become less productive as they age.

As a result, employers generally:

- > attempt to recruit younger, more educated workers especially in high technology and information technology-based work contexts
- > develop labour shedding strategies to encourage older workers to retire early such as through the provision of incentives under voluntary early redundancy packages.

In the last decade, as the impact of the ageing population has become more widely understood, it has been increasingly considered as a threat to our living standards, and portrayed as an impending burden for younger generations of the future.

Research into ageing workers has discredited these negative stereotypes¹⁰. Nevertheless, these negative attitudes persist and have played a big role in the substantial decline in older people's employment over the past 20 years.

The imperative for change could not be more urgent. A shift to positive attitudes and responses is needed to take full advantage of the ageing workforce.

Proposal 22

Develop new training responses for the ageing workforce

As the workforce ages, the VET system needs to adapt to the needs of the older client group.

To do this, VET would need to be more age-friendly. The learning styles and needs of mature-aged workers are different from their younger co-workers. Mature-aged workers also require a system that recognises their

10. See for example Smith A (ed) (1999), 'Creating a future: Training, learning and the older person', National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide

prior experience and knowledge, and that is well-matched to their career plan. Many mature-aged workers have a range of workplace, lifestyle and family commitments, and require training opportunities that are flexible and provide continuous entry and exit points to learning. Additionally, many mature-aged workers had their last educational experiences in the 1950s, 1960s or 1970s and have different prior learning experiences to their younger counterparts.

Consequently, training products and modes of delivery must be more flexible. Services such as career advice will also be increasingly sought by older workers who want to upgrade their skills to remain up-to-date in their existing job or to gain new skills to transition to new jobs.

It is proposed that:

- > TAFE institutes in Queensland, through the *Skills Assessment Service* in each TAFE will develop customised skills gap training to allow people who have existing skills and competencies to undertake only the extra training they need to get a qualification.
- > vocational graduate certificates and diplomas will be developed as a new range of much shorter training courses that are especially designed to meet the re-skilling needs of already-qualified workers seeking new technical skills.
- > TAFE Queensland will offer more training opportunities for people aged 45 years or more who currently have no tertiary qualifications or whose qualifications are assessed as being obsolete.

Proposal 23

Workplace reforms to encourage older workers to remain in the workforce

In today's economy, it is pivotal for enterprises to develop an age-balanced approach to recruitment, skill development and retention. Organisations that remain youth-centred by mainly recruiting 18–35 year olds will increasingly struggle to find a wide enough talent pool to draw from. Organisations that focus on recruiting prime age 30–40 year olds will also have a tough time in coming years, as the impact of the ageing population becomes more pronounced.

Organisations that shift their recruitment processes to more heavily target people aged mid-40s to late-50s, will fare much better as the population ages, giving them access to the widest possible talent pool.

The ageing of the population brings significant risks for enterprises¹¹ such as loss of operational knowledge and loss of executive knowledge. All organisations will need to manage these losses in order to avoid a shortage of skilled, knowledgeable and experienced workers and to gain a competitive advantage in the market place.



Organisations will need to implement:

- > an *age-balanced recruitment strategy* to ensure the organisation can draw from the widest possible talent pool across all age groups
- > a strategic and *age-balanced skills development and learning strategy* that invests equally in new skills for older employees as well as for younger employees
- > *strategic approaches to the retention of skills*, especially by developing part-time employment pathways for older workers, particularly in high-skill occupations—these approaches will need to focus on allowing older workers to combine part-time work with a retirement income.

Some suggested elements of what these strategies would need to encompass are outlined in more detail in Appendix B, Tables B1-B3.

It is proposed that the new business skills advisory service (see Proposal 21) would help organisations across the state to implement the required workplace reforms.

11. Rolland, L and Dingjan, A (2005), 'The age chasm: Successfully managing age in your organisation', Drake White Paper Vol 2 No 5, Drake International.

Priority 6:

Increasing labour force participation through new skilling strategies for the under-skilled

For discussion only – not government policy



Breaking the Unemployment Cycle focuses on providing unemployed people with work experience in a community jobs program and/or assistance from a community provider. This program has been extraordinarily successful in assisting the long-term unemployed and most disadvantaged jobseekers back into the labour market in Queensland. Since it began in 1998, more than 120 800 jobseekers have been assisted and more than 87 000 additional apprenticeships, traineeships and job placement opportunities have been created.

However, in the current climate it is time to refocus Queensland's labour market initiatives to reflect the rapidly changing circumstances in Queensland. For this reason, it is proposed to replace *Breaking the Unemployment Cycle* with a new program that focuses on providing disadvantaged jobseekers not only with access to work experience, but also with more skills and intensive support to progress to further education and training and into sustainable employment.

Raising the employment participation rates of all segments of the working-age population will play an important role in addressing the economic challenges of ageing, and assist in maintaining the productivity of the workforce and growth in real incomes.

Despite the reduction in unemployment and solid jobs growth, a large number of jobseekers remain uncompetitive in the labour market. The average duration of unemployment is still high at 34.2 weeks. Regional pockets of high unemployment persist and there are several distinct groups of unemployed Queenslanders that are at a substantial competitive disadvantage due to inadequate skills, age or a lack of recent work experience.

The Queensland Government proposes to continue to support people who are most in need of assistance to gain the skills and experience to compete in the labour market.

Proposal 24

Provide intensive skilling assistance for underskilled and disadvantage jobseekers

It is therefore proposed to replace *Breaking the Unemployment Cycle* with new measures that focus more on providing disadvantaged jobseekers with a skill outcome that would enable them to progress into sustainable jobs, particularly in industries suffering from skills shortages.

These measures would:

- > target long-term unemployed people with no recognised skills aged 18 years or more who are not receiving assistance under Australian Government programs with a particular emphasis on:
 - Indigenous people
 - people with a disability
 - refugees and people from non-English-speaking backgrounds
 - carers returning to the workforce
 - other people returning to the workforce after long absences.
- > provide work placement, skills training and intensive post-

program placement support for up to six months to secure participants' ongoing employment or further education and training outcomes.

It is also proposed to deliver a program targeting young people aged 15 to 17 years who are disengaged from education, training or employment as part of *Education and Training Reforms for the Future*.

Discussion Point

Queensland is enjoying record levels of employment. However, with a shrinking labour market, it will be increasingly important to equip unemployed people to make a successful entry or re-entry into the workforce. A large number of jobseekers remain uncompetitive in the labour market. The average duration of unemployment is still high at 34.2 weeks, and there are several distinct groups of unemployed Queenslanders that are at a competitive disadvantage due to factors such as inadequate skills, age or a lack of recent work experience.

Would these proposed measures assist long-term unemployed and disadvantaged jobseekers to find work? What other measures could be adopted to assist these groups?



Listening to Queenslanders – your views

Establishing a modern, responsive VET system for a skilled and educated workforce is important for all of us. It is important for Queensland's economy and it is important for the social and financial well-being of all Queenslanders across the state, of all ages and in all walks of life.

This is why your view matters to us. We need to hear your concerns, ideas and suggestions in response to our

proposals so that we can not only improve our VET system, but also make it the best in Australia.

Our review will run to:
31 August 2005

You can write to us at:
Skills Reform
Department of Employment
and Training
Locked Mail Bag 527
GPO Brisbane Qld 4001

Or email us at:
skillsreform@det.qld.gov.au

We will also be setting up a series of information seminars and discussion forums across the state. Details will be advertised in the press and on our website at
www.trainandemploy.qld.gov.au

Appendix

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Appendix

Appendix A

Table A1: Proposed nominal duration for apprenticeships in Queensland

Appendix B

Table B1: Active strategic approach towards managing age in recruitment processes

Table B2: Strategic approach towards learning and development in the ageing workforce

Table B3: Strategic approaches to managing retention and exit

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Appendix A

Table A1: Proposed nominal duration for apprenticeships in Queensland

PROPOSED DURATION OF INDENTURE – APPRENTICESHIPS IN QUEENSLAND RETAIN AT FOUR YEARS

Model Name	Qual Code	Qualification Name	Off-the-Job Training Hours
Sprinkler Pipe Fitting	13190VIC	Certificate III in Sprinkler Fitting	1040 - 1040
Electrotechnology (ET) Systems and Instrumentation Tradesperson	39036QLD	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Maintenance (Systems and Instrumentation)	1560 - 1560
Automotive Diesel Fitter	AUR30499	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Diesel Fitter)	1007 - 1778
Heavy Vehicle Road Transport Mechanic	AUR30899	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Heavy Vehicle Road Transport)	971 - 1742
Heavy Vehicle Mobile Equipment Mechanic (Plant/Earth Moving/Agricultural)	AUR30999	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Heavy Vehicle Mobile Equipment Plant/Earth Moving Equipment)	966 - 1737
Sign Manufacturing	BCF30800	Certificate III in Off-Site Construction (Sign Manufacture)	1005 - 1179
Plumbing	BCP30103	Certificate III in Plumbing	1237 - 1667
Plumbing (Mechanical Services)	BCP30203	Certificate III in Plumbing (Mechanical Services)	1261 - 1623
Aircraft Maintenance Engineer – Avionics	MEA40602	Certificate IV in Aeroskills (Avionics)	1320 - 1440
Aircraft Maintenance Engineer – Mechanical	MEA40702	Certificate IV in Aeroskills (Mechanical)	1320 - 1320
Aircraft Maintenance Engineer – Structures	MEA40802	Certificate IV in Aeroskills (Structures)	1320 - 1320
Higher Engineering Tradesperson	MEM40103	Certificate IV in Engineering	1320 - 1320
Electrotechnology (ET) Assembly and Servicing Tradesperson	UTE30199	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Assembly and Servicing	976 - 976
Electrotechnology (ET) Building Services Tradesperson	UTE30299	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Building Services	980 - 980
Electrotechnology (ET) Communications Tradesperson	UTE30402	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Communications	1004 - 1004
Electrotechnology (ET) Computer Systems Tradesperson	UTE30599	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Computer Systems	962 - 962
Electrotechnology (ET) Data Communications Tradesperson	UTE30699	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Data Communications	966 - 966
Electrotechnology (ET) Entertainment and Servicing Tradesperson	UTE30702	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Entertainment and Servicing	1004 - 1004
Electrotechnology (ET) Instrumentation Tradesperson	UTE30899	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Instrumentation	990 - 990
Electrotechnology (ET) Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Tradesperson	UTE30999	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	1032 - 1032
Electrotechnology (ET) Scanning Tradesperson	UTE31099	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Scanning	990 - 990
Electrotechnology (ET) Systems Electrician	UTE31199	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Systems Electrician	1004 - 1004
Electrotechnology (ET) Systems Electrician (Process - Fluid Measurement)	UTE31199A	Certificate III in Electrotechnology Systems Electrician	1004 - 1994
Engineering Tradesperson (Electrical - Lift Mechanic)	UTL30198	Certificate III in Lift Systems (Electrical)	1020 - 1020
Powerline (Electricity Supply) Tradesperson (Linesperson/Cable Jointing)	UTT30198	Certificate III in ESI Distribution (Powerline)	1400 - 1460
Powerline (Electricity Supply/Transmission) Tradesperson	UTT30298	Certificate III in ESI Transmission (Powerline)	1250 - 1260
Power Traction Linesperson	UTT30402	Certificate III in ESI - Rail Traction	1400 - 1420

PROPOSED NOMINAL DURATION OF INDENTURE – APPRENTICESHIPS IN QUEENSLAND SHORTEN TO THREE YEARS

Model Name	Qual Code	Qualification Name	Off-the-Job Training Hours
Pedders Automotive Mechanic (Steering and Suspension)	5035	Certificate III in Automotive – Pedders Light Vehicle Steering & Suspension	790 - 790
Bus, Truck & Trailer Manufacture Level III	AUM35101	Certificate III in Automotive Manufacturing (Bus/Truck/Trailer)	775 - 775
Automotive Electrician	AUR30199	Certificate III in Automotive (Electrical)	769 - 1195
Brake Specialist	AUR30399	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Brakes)	672 - 1098
Driveline Specialist	AUR30699	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Driveline)	697 - 1123
Engine Reconditioner	AUR30799	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Engine Reconditioning)	815 - 1241
Light Vehicle Mechanic	AUR31099	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Light Vehicle)	817 - 1588
Motorcycle Mechanic	AUR31199	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Motorcycle)	792 - 1563
Vehicle Body Builder	AUR31599	Certificate III in Automotive (Vehicle Body Building)	698 - 1124
Panel Beater	AUR31699	Certificate III in Automotive (Vehicle Body Panel Beating)	808 - 1234
Vehicle Painter	AUR31899	Certificate III in Automotive (Vehicle Body Vehicle Painting)	803 - 1149
Marine Equipment Installer	AUR32199	Certificate III in Marine (Installation)	632 - 1058
Marine Mechanic	AUR32299	Certificate III in Marine (Mechanics)	696 - 1740
Outdoor Power Equipment Mechanic	AUR32499	Certificate III in Outdoor Power Equipment (Mechanics)	765 - 1524
Plant Operator	BCC30603	Certificate III in Civil Construction (Plant)	678 - 1230
Shopfitting	BCF30100	Certificate III in Off-Site Construction (Shopfitting)	825 - 1208
Joinery	BCF30200	Certificate III in Off-Site Construction (Joinery/Timber/Aluminum/Glass)	788 - 1066
Construction (Pre-Fabrication)	BCF30400	Certificate III in Off-Site Construction (Pre-Fabrication)	820 - 1014
Stonemasonry	BCF30600	Certificate III in Stonemasonry (Monumental/Installation)	830 - 1089
Carpentry	BCG30798	Certificate III in General Construction (Carpentry - Framework/Formwork/Finishing)	860 - 980
Roof Plumbing	BCP30303	Certificate III in Roof Plumbing	641 - 724
Sprinkler Pipe Fitting	BCP30503	Certificate III in Fire Protection	641 - 724
Engineering Tradesperson Mechanical (Locksmithing)	CNMAN003	Certificate III in Engineering	960 - 960
Pastry Cooking	FD30503	Certificate III in Food Processing (Retail Baking - Cakes and Pastry)	658 - 880
Bread Baking/Pastry Cooking	FD30703	Certificate III in Food Processing (Retail Baking Combined)	888 - 1040
Cabinet Making	LMF30402	Certificate III in Furniture Making (Cabinet Making)	725 - 1304
Wood Machining	LMF30502	Certificate III in Furnishing (Wood Machining)	761 - 1264
Engineering Tradesperson (Mechanical)	MEM30298	Certificate III in Engineering - Mechanical	960 - 960
Engineering Tradesperson (Electronics)	MEM30498	Certificate III in Engineering - Electrical/ Electronic (Trade)	960 - 960
Boat Building	MEM30603	Certificate III in Marine Craft Construction	960 - 960
Jockey	RGR40202	Certificate IV in Racing (Jockey)	647 - 719
Cooking	THH31502	Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery)	905 - 1282

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PROPOSED NOMINAL DURATION OF INDENTURE – APPRENTICESHIPS IN QUEENSLAND

SHORTEN TO THREE YEARS WITH REVIEW WITH INDUSTRY TO CONSIDER SHORTENING TO TWO YEARS

Model Name	Qual Code	Qualification Name	Off-the-Job Training Hours
Fariery	5030	Certificate III in Fariery (Trade)	905 - 905
Musical Instrument (Tuning and Repairing)	6164	Certificate III in Furnishing (Musical Instrument Tuner/Repairer)	800 - 800
Bicycle Mechanic	AUR31999	Certificate III in Bicycles (Mechanics)	681 - 1451
Stair Building	BCF30300	Certificate III in Off-Site Construction (Stairs)	751 - 997
Signwriting	BCF30700	Certificate III in Off-Site Construction (Sign Writing/Computer Operations)	718 - 884
Neon Manufacturing	BCF30900	Certificate III in Off-Site Construction (Neon Manufacture)	683 - 968
Tiling (Wall and Floor)	BCG30198	Certificate III in General Construction (Wall and Floor Tiling)	780 - 820
Plastering (Fibrous)	BCG30298	Certificate III in General Construction (Wall and Ceiling Lining)	800 - 880
Plastering (Solid)	BCG30398	Certificate III in General Construction (Solid Plastering)	720 - 820
Painting and Decorating	BCG30498	Certificate III in General Construction (Painting and Decorating)	830 - 850
Bricklaying	BCG30698	Certificate III in General Construction (Bricklaying/Blocklaying)	920 - 960
Children's Services (Para-Professional)	CHC50302	Diploma of Children's Services	832 - 1200
Leadlight Working	CNLMF024	Certificate III in Furnishing (Glass & Glazing)	800 - 800
Watchmaking and Clockmaking	CNMAN003	Certificate III in Engineering	960 - 960
Floor Covering and Finishing	LMF30102	Certificate III in Floor Covering and Finishing	675 - 1300
Furniture Finishing	LMF30202	Certificate III in Furniture Finishing	614 - 990
Upholstery	LMF31002	Certificate III in Upholstery	691 - 1192
Production Upholstery	LMF31102	Certificate III in Production Upholstery	609 - 1252
Cotton Ginning Level III	LMT30300	Certificate III in Cotton Ginning	700 - 970
Jewellery	MEM30803	Certificate III in Jewellery Manufacture	960 - 960
Meat Retailing	MTM30800	Certificate III in Meat Processing (Meat Retailing)	903 - 1065
Patisserie	THH31602	Certificate III in Hospitality (Patisserie)	615 - 994
Hairdressing (Ladies)	WRH30100	Certificate III in Hairdressing	697 - 697
Hairdressing (Gentlemen)	39078QLD	Certificate III in Gents Hairdressing	641 - 641

PROPOSED DURATION OF INDENTURE – APPRENTICESHIPS IN QUEENSLAND SHORTEN TO TWO YEARS

Model Name	Qual Code	Qualification Name	Off the Job Training Hours
Automatic Transmission Specialist	AUR30299	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Automatic Transmission)	532 - 958
Diesel Fuel Specialist	AUR30599	Certificate III in Automotive (Mechanical Diesel Fuel Specialist)	444 - 870
Parts Interpreter	AUR31399	Certificate III in Automotive (Sales - Parts Interpreting)	475 - 901
Vehicle Trimmer	AUR31799	Certificate III in Automotive (Vehicle Body Trimming)	570 - 799
Machining	BCF30500	Certificate III in Off-Site Construction (Machining)	546 - 612
Roof Tiling	BCG30898	Certificate III in General Construction (Roof Tiling)	560 - 620
Gas Fitting	BCP30403	Certificate III in Gas Fitting	560 - 628
Coopering	CN0180	Certificate III in Furnishing (Cabinet Making, Woodmachining, Polishing, Chair & Couch Making)	*
Bread Baking	FD30603	Certificate III in Food Processing (Retail Baking - Bread)	540 - 830
Saw Doctoring	FPI30699A	Certificate III in Forest and Forest Products (Sawmilling and Processing)	*
Wood Machining (Sawmilling)	FPI30699B	Certificate III in Forest and Forest Products (Sawmilling and Processing)	*
Graphic Pre-press	ICP30399	Certificate III in Printing and Graphic Arts (Graphic Pre-press)	460 - 585
Printing Machining	ICP31399	Certificate III in Printing and Graphic Arts (Printing)	375 - 830
Binding and Finishing	ICP31499	Certificate III in Printing and Graphic Arts (Print Finishing)	540 - 580
Screen Printing - Stencil Preparation	ICP32199	Certificate III in Printing and Graphic Arts (Screen Printing)	505 - 605
Glass and Glazing	LMF30602	Certificate III in Glass and Glazing	594 - 1212
Mattress and Base Making	LMF30702	Certificate III in Mattress and Base Making	355 - 904
Picture Framing	LMF30802	Certificate III in Picture Framing	561 - 1146
Soft Furnishing	LMF30902	Certificate III in Soft Furnishing	421 - 1456
Textile Production Level III	LMT30100	Certificate III in Textile Production	165 - 580
Canvas Goods Making	LMT30400C	Certificate III in Textile Fabrication	365 - 990
Sail Making	LMT30400S	Certificate III in Textile Fabrication	*
Clothing Production Level III	LMT30500	Certificate III in Clothing Production	165 - 650
Bespoke Boot Making	LMT30700	Certificate III in Footwear Production	165 - 780
Boot and Shoe Repair	LMT30800	Certificate III in Footwear Repair	425 - 655
Riding Saddle Making	LMT30900	Certificate III in Leather Goods Production	165 - 510
Hide, Skin & Leather Level III	LMT31000	Certificate III in Hide, Skin & Leather	440 - 690
Engineering Tradesperson (Fabrication)	MEM30398	Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication	*
Composites Technician Level III	PMB30101A	Certificate III in Plastics (Composites)	445 - 1048
Extruder Operator	PMB30101B	Certificate III in Plastics (Extrusion)	445 - 1048
Injection Moulding Operator	PMB30101C	Certificate III in Plastics (Injection Moulding)	445 - 1048
Polyurethane Product Manufacturing	PMB30101D	Certificate III in Plastics (Polyurethane)	445 - 1048
Blow Moulding Operator	PMB30101E	Certificate III in Plastics (Blow Moulding)	445 - 1084
Blown Film Operator	PMB30101F	Certificate III in Plastics (Film)	445 - 1048
Plastics Fabricator	PMB30101G	Certificate III in Plastics (Fabrication)	445 - 1048
Rotational Moulding Operator	PMB30101H	Certificate III in Plastics (Rotational Moulding)	445 - 1048
Greenkeeping	RTF30803	Certificate III in Horticulture (Turf)	428 - 705
Catering	THH32902	Certificate III in Hospitality (Catering Operations)	460 - 1282
Cooking (Asian)	THH33102	Certificate III in Hospitality (Asian Cookery)	*

* The actual approved hours for an individual apprentice or trainee will vary according to the units of competency specified in their individual training plan.

Appendix B

Table B1: Active strategic approach towards managing age in recruitment processes

Determine the rationale for managing age in recruitment

- > This would depend on the organisation, but would include opportunities to expand the pool of talent available.
- > Other rationales may be to improve retention or management depth.

Age audit past recruitment outcomes

Organisations should review their recruitment practices to ensure that they are free of age biases thereby providing access to the broadest pool available of candidates. This view should focus on:

- > the age profile of candidates and new recruits over the past three years
- > testing the level of age awareness amongst those responsible for recruiting within the organisation.

Building age awareness in recruitment

- > Build the general age awareness of people responsible for recruitment within the organisation and equip them with age-free recruitment practices.
- > Brief external recruitment suppliers on the organisation's focus on age-free recruitment practices and the associated expectations that screening and referral processes will not disadvantage older or younger applicants.
- > Review how positions are promoted as well as screening and assessment processes to ensure they do not present age bias.
- > Monitor the age profile of applicants to assess:
 - the effectiveness of the promotional strategy in attracting an age-balanced pool of candidates
 - biases that may present barriers to older or younger applicants as they transition through screening, assessment, induction or placement.

Building consistent practice in the internal environment

- > Prepare the working environment by communicating the organisation's intent and the objectives that underpin that intent to build a better age balance amongst new recruits.
- > Ensure trainers understand generational learning differences.
- > Review induction training to assess any barriers that may present for older recruits.
- > Train line managers and team leaders in managing intergenerational teams.
- > Consider buddy or mentoring roles to support older recruits, particularly when they are breaking ground in shifting the organisation or unit from a young to a more age-balanced profile.

Source: Rolland, L & Dingjan, A (2005), 'The age chasm: Successfully managing age in your organisation', Drake White Paper Vol 5 No 2, Drake International, p22

Table B2: Strategic approach towards learning and development in the ageing workforce

Determine the rationale for learning and development strategies

- > Assess the advantages of training and development for older workers.
- > Develop responses which maximise advantages.

Learning and development audit to identify:

- > participation in training and development with age
- > formal qualifications, to identify any reduction in formal skill currency as people age
- > the year of attainment
- > a concentration of investment in training and development, which is positioning people for career development amongst younger people; or conversely, older people usually only participating in training related to their immediate function.

Achieve organisational support for age aware training

- > Ensure that the training and development policy has a clear statement of the organisation's support for, and expectation of, equal participation in learning and development across age groups.
- > Promote the opportunities to participate in training and development.
- > Educate people of the need for, and the organisation's expectation of, continuing training and development, highlighting the current reduction in participation as people age and the related consequences for the individual and the organisation.
- > Ensure that trainers have an understanding of generational differences in learning styles.
- > Ensure incentives are in place to encourage people to continue to participate in training and development activities as they age.
- > Consider the role of mentoring and coaching in facilitating skill transfer between younger and older workers.

Monitor Outcomes

- > Ensure monitoring by age and type.

Source: Rolland, L & Dingjan, A (2005), 'The age chasm: Successfully managing age in your organisation', Drake White Paper Vol 5 No 2, Drake International, p26

Table B3: Strategic approaches to managing retention and exit

Determine the rationale for retention

- > Determine the critical reasons for retention.
- > Identify the drivers that lead to early retirement.
- > Assess the concentration and extent of loss of skills and knowledge as older workers exit to retirement.

Audit retention and exit to identify:

- > retention by age
- > any patterns of early retirement
- > the representation of people within the organisation in the 55 to 64 year age range compared to the broader population.

Develop responses to these factors

- > Introduce or elevate flexible workforce levels to encourage older worker participation.
- > Structure flexible work arrangements that would support a phased transition to retirement.
- > Consider opportunities for continued workforce attachment and re-entry; for example an alumni for retirees that could provide a pool of experienced people to resource peak business periods, replace people on leave, coach or mentor new managers or work on a short-term basis on special projects.
- > Review current superannuation arrangements to identify any barriers that exist to retention strategies.
- > Promote participation in, and new forms of, retirement planning that dispel myths associated with the superannuation barriers to phased retirement and the consideration of retention and transition opportunities.
- > Ensure that opportunities for flexibilities to support phased retirement are unpinned by appropriate policy.
- > Educate managers about the organisation's views of and opportunities for flexible work arrangements for older workers in transition to retirement.

Monitor and review outcomes

- > Monitor take-up and impact of transition and other arrangements.

Source: Rolland, L & Dingjon, A (2005), 'The age chasm: Successfully managing age in your organisation', Drake White Paper Vol 5 No 2, Drake International, p30

