

INQUIRY INTO SKILLS SHORTAGES IN RURAL AND REGIONAL NSW

Organisation: Illawarra Skills Shortage Taskforce (ISST)
Name: Ms Tracey Freeman
Position: Chair
Telephone: 02 4274 4191
Date Received: 5/08/2005

Theme:

Summary

3rd August 2005

Standing Committee on State Development

RE:INQUIRY INTO SKILLS SHORTAGES IN RURAL AND REGIONAL NSW

The Illawarra Skills Shortage Taskforce (ISST) was established in early September 2004 following the conduct of a Skills Shortage Forum facilitated by the Regional Manager of the Australian Industry Group and the Chair of the Illawarra Area Consultative Committee.

The initial forum brought together a wide range of local employer, trade union, local government and regional representatives of various bodies (including more than a dozen industry representatives, TAFE Illawarra Institute, Illawarra Regional Information Service; Illawarra Regional Development Board; Illawarra Business Chamber, University of Wollongong, Department of Education & Catholic Education Office VET in Schools representatives etc) who shared common interests in alleviating the skills shortages occurring in the Illawarra. Representatives from the federal Department of Education Science and Training were also present.

The taskforce has acted as the regional steering group for the Illawarra component of a Department of Education Science and Training funded project being undertaken by Ai Group in the Illawarra and Hunter regions. In turn, the Ai Group has provided secretarial and administrative support to the taskforce.

The Taskforce has a large and varied membership, covering many industries and sectors, as evidenced in the attached document: Appendix A – Taskforce Key Achievements. This document, as its name suggests, also lists the key achievements to date by the Taskforce and some future identified outcomes.

Members have met at six weekly intervals since September 2004, developing terms of reference and sharing information on new and existing programmes; and also formed three industry led, action focussed sub committees to address key issues identified as important in the region to address skills shortages. These sub committees (in no particular order) are:

- Employment
- Branding
- Policy

The subcommittees have met at more regular intervals in order to achieve many of the items listed in Appendix A and have demonstrated high levels of cooperation across the various stakeholders in the region.

Appendix B outlines the Key Stakeholders identified by the Taskforce.

Results to date are very positive, with significant achievements already and increased recruitment into areas of skill shortage. There is still much to be achieved, however the momentum of the taskforce and it's sub committees bodes well for the achievement of further goals.

As an example of some of the achievements, Appendix C contains Fact Sheets and Appendix D Case Studies, developed by the Employment sub committee and launched in the Illawarra in May 2005. These have since been widely shared across industries and regions and further explored via small group employer forums. Appendix E – Cover Sheet outlines the complete package of Fact Sheets developed and available to interested parties.

The website www.careersurfing.com.au is currently in development as a result of the work of the Branding Committee, supported by funding from the IMB Community Foundation. A launch of this Illawarra focussed website is expected in early October 2005.

These are but two of the achievements outlined in Appendix A, showing the strength and effectiveness of a diverse group of regional stakeholders coming together to address an issue of shared concern.

Should you require further information on the activities of the Illawarra Skills Shortage Taskforce, I may be contacted at the above address, or via email : freeman.tracey@mainteck.com.au .

Yours faithfully

TRACEY FREEMAN
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER
(and Chair of the Illawarra Skills Shortage Taskforce)

Illawarra Skill Shortages Taskforce

Key Outcomes and Achievements

Taskforce Members

- AiGroup
- Alminco Pty Ltd
- AMWU
- Australian Industry Group
- BlueScope Steel
- Catholic Education Office
- Choices and Challenges
- D&D Services Australia Pty Ltd
- Dept Of Education & Training
- Dept. of Education, Science & Training
- DETNAC
- Judith Stubbs & Associates
- K J Industrial Scaffolding Pty Ltd
- L & R Ashbolt
- Mainteck Services Pty Ltd
- Master Builders Association NSW
- NSW Teachers Federation
- St Vincent de Paul
- TAFE Illawarra Institute
- Warrigal Care
- DMW Group
- Edmen Pty Ltd
- Excellence Auto Body Repairs
- Greenacres Workwise
- Illawarra Area Consultative Committee
- Illawarra Business Chamber
- Illawarra Group Training
- Illawarra Regional Development Board
- Illawarra Regional Information Service
- Thomas & Coffey
- Transfield Services
- Uniting Aged Care
- University of Wollongong
- Wollongong City Council
- Wollongong Training & Employment
- South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service
- Southern Councils Group

Outcomes achieved:

Increased Employment

- Promotion of New General Construction traineeships in Scaffolding and Rigging – 15 trainees subsequently employed in one local business.
- Promotion of accelerated apprenticeships in the Engineering trade leading to first two sign ups in Illawarra

General

- Establishment of 3 action focused, industry led sub committees
 - Branding
 - Employment
 - Policy
- Identification of long and short term strategies and development of action plan
- Preparation and completion of an Employer Apprenticeship Survey
- Job Network discussion commenced
- Individual Advice to employers

- Extensive research on skills related topics including historical data on NA incentives and School Based New Apprenticeships
- Media Plan in conjunction with the Illawarra Mercury

Increased Awareness

- Successfully attained IMB funding for Career Surfing Illawarra website (Branding) to promote the benefits of working in skill shortage areas to Illawarra youth.
- Extensive media coverage encouraging awareness of skills shortages issue
- Hosted the following guest speakers :
 - Macarthur Apprentice Recruitment Strategy
 - Illawarra Regional Development Board Skills Audit
 - Accelerated Apprenticeships
 - VET in Schools and Bridge to Industry Solar Car project
 - Mission Australia
 - Julie Tolley – School Based New Apprenticeships Co-ordinator
 - Phil Rouse – Bluescope Steel – Workforce Planning Tool
 - TAFE – Pre-Vocational Planning
 - Campbell Page NAC – Changes to the Federal Government New Apprenticeships Scheme
- Conducted focus groups with teachers and students to ascertain perceptions of industry and awareness of Skills Shortages and career opportunities (Branding)
- Promotion of Pre Vocational courses
- Attendance at 2005 Illawarra Careers Expo – Taskforce stand to assist smaller employers in promoting opportunities, plus several individual employer stands

Liaison and Assistance

- Invitation by DET to fund Skill shortage courses in Train Small Groups and Front Line Management
- Engagement and Liaison with Group Training Organisations
- RTO visits and engagement
- Research on, and involvement in meetings relating to Australian Technical Colleges
- Liaison with Manufacturing Learning Australia related to the Make it! Campaign
- Hosted visit from Murray Youth training and Employment
- Industry visits
- Assisted local VET in Schools Coordinator with a Non English Speaking Background students' employment awareness day

Innovative or alternative options

- Development and promotion of an employer toolkit outlining actions employers can take to address skill shortages (see attached)

- Development of career pathways (Branding/Employment) and Employer Fact sheets (Employment)
- Promotion of Ai Group Adopt a School strategy
- Discussion paper apprenticeship indentures (Policy)
- Meeting and engagement with VET School Based New Apprenticeships Officer Julie Tolley to assist in promotion of School Based New Apprenticeships

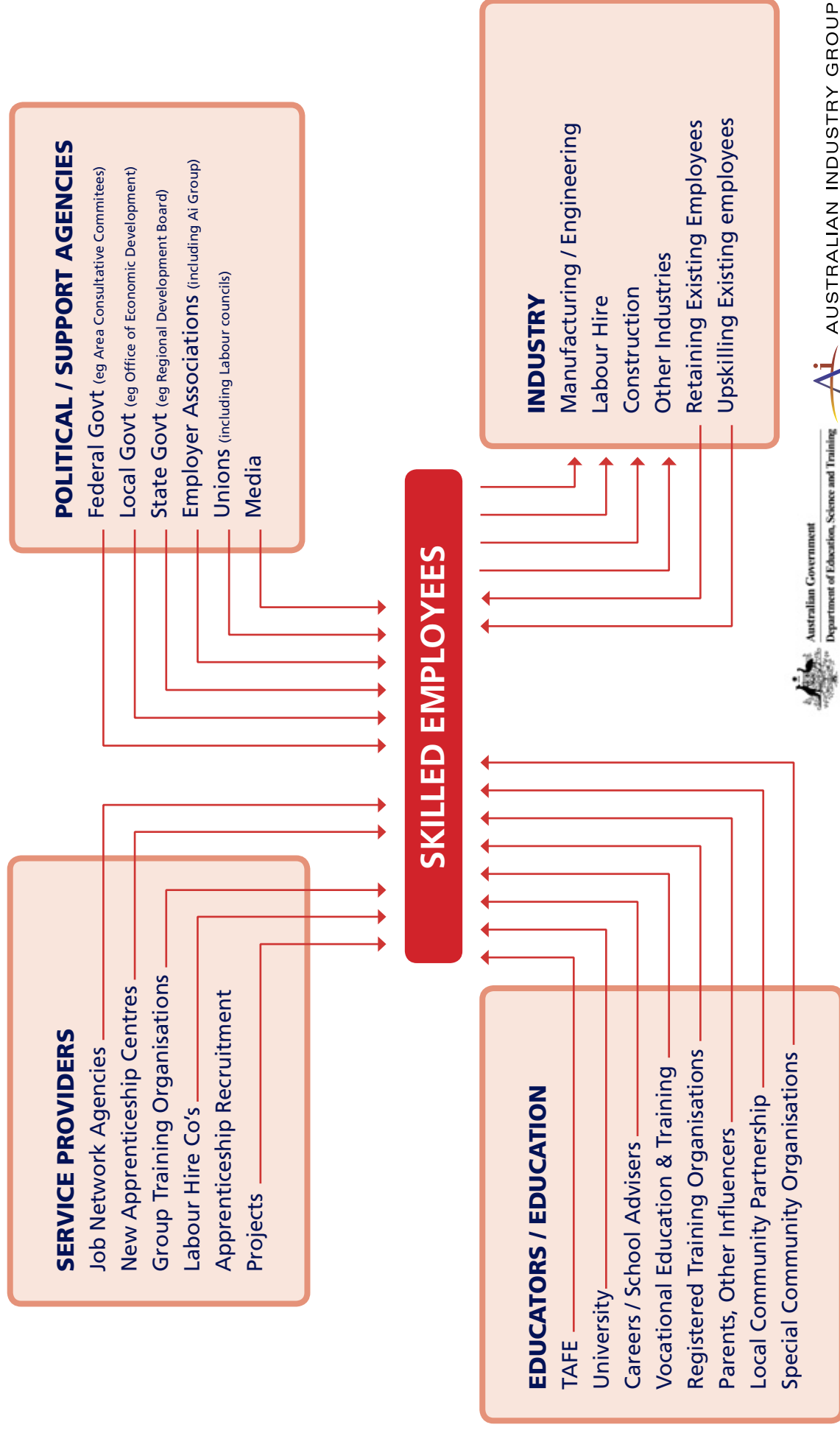
Representation

- Representation on Illawarra Schools Workplace Learning Program Management Committee
- Representation on Illawarra Apprenticeship Pilot Committee (Funded through the DEWR Employment Innovation Fund)
- Lobbying to The Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs on the regional Sponsored Migration Scheme
- Involvement in the Southern Councils Group meetings to address skills shortages across local government councils
- Meetings and briefings with:
 - The Hon. David Campbell MP, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for the Illawarra, and Minister for Small Business
 - Sharon Bird, Federal Member for Cunningham
 - Jennie George, Federal member for Throsby
 - Connie Fierravanti-Wells, Senator Elect

Future

- Ongoing Job Network engagement/partnership with potential for focused recruitment strategy development (Employment)
- Information/education sessions (Employment)
- Distribution of fact sheets and case studies (Employment)
- Launch of Career Surfing Illawarra Website for young people (Branding)
- Enterprise Skills for the 21st Century (DEST) funding submission for a solar car project or similar (Branding)
- Meeting with Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Regional Migration Unit Manager

MAP OF STAKEHOLDERS



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Prepared by the Illawarra Skills Shortage Taskforce May 2005 using information provided by the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, www.immi.gov.au and the Department of Workplace Relations www.workplace.gov.au workplace. The work of the Illawarra Skills Shortage Pilot Programme is funded by the Department of Education, Science and Training.

Fast tracking apprentices in Engineering Trades

The accelerated apprenticeship reduces the term from 48 to 24 months for eligible adult applicants. According to the guideline on adult accelerated apprentices, an adult apprentice is a person of at least 24 years of age.

Which trades are they available in?

The opportunity exists to upskill employees including but not limited to; trades assistants, or tradespeople in different disciplines with existing skills in Engineering (Mechanical) and Engineering (Fabrication) with the establishment of accelerated adult apprenticeships in these trades.

Two years credit towards the nominal term of the apprenticeship in these recognised trade vocations will be granted where the applicant apprentice can demonstrate:

- Three years or more practical experience, in a related field of work, immediately prior to making the application; and
- Competence to a minimum level of 32 weighted points, in accordance with the Metal and Engineering Training Package MEM98 packaging rules

How do I establish an adult accelerated apprenticeship?

1. Contact your preferred Registered Training Organisation (RTO) e.g. TAFE NSW, to discuss the skills and competencies of your potential apprentice, as well as the needs of your business. The Business Development unit of your local TAFE Institute can arrange advice on recognition and / or processes used and arrange to meet with you if appropriate.
2. Once the training plan is received TAFE or your nominated RTO will undertake an assessment of the apprentice against the minimum 32 weighted points required to grant the 24 months credit.
3. An appropriate training plan is developed for the apprentice based on the existing competencies and skills gaps identified in the assessment.

4. With the assistance of your New Apprenticeship Centre, the assessment and other relevant information, including a letter from the employer/s confirming the applicants minimum 3-years experience is forwarded to the Department of Education and Training to support the application for 24 months credit.
5. Subject to standard eligibility guidelines, and approval of the reduction in the nominal term by the Department of Education and Training the employer will be eligible for the same government incentives as a standard 4-year apprenticeship term.

Where do I get more information?

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP TRAINING AND EDUCATION ADVISERS

T: 02 9466 5566

TAFE NSW ILLAWARRA INSTITUTE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT UNIT T: 4229 0483

Contact your local New Apprenticeship Centre on:

CAMPBELL PAGE NEW

APPRENTICESHIPS CENTRE T: 4251 4580

DETNAC T: 4224 9333

AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS LIMITED

NEW APPRENTICESHIPS CENTRE T: 1300 652 236



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Up-skilling Existing Trades Assistants & Production workers

What options do I have to upskill my Trades Assistants and Production Workers?

Adult Apprenticeship

Where an existing worker has worked in a field relevant to the trade for a minimum of three years and where he/she can demonstrate competency equivalent to a Certificate II in Engineering Production (32 pts - C12), to the satisfaction of a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) such as TAFE NSW, the nominal period of structured training and the nominal period of the Training Agreement would be 2 years. The full qualification could therefore be obtained within a two-year period.

Qualifications available for accelerated adult apprenticeships are:

Certificate III in Engineering – Mechanical Trade

Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication Trade

What are the Government incentives?

Government incentive – \$4,400* (incl. GST) subject to eligibility

Cost of training – Administration fees only (the NSW government will fund apprentice training)

Existing Worker Traineeships

Existing workers without prior qualifications may take on one of a range of traineeships at a number of certificate levels. It is usual for existing worker traineeships, however, to be at the Certificate III level, whereby the scope for the recognition of current competency can be maximized and government incentives accessed. Certificate II programs for existing workers do not attract government incentives, neither do qualifications of less than two years nominal duration.

Typical qualifications accessed by existing workers include:

Certificate III in Engineering Systems

Certificate III in Process Manufacturing

Certificate IV in Frontline Management

What are the Government incentives?

Government incentive – \$4,400* (incl. GST) subject to eligibility

Cost of training – To be negotiated with Registered Training Organisation (RTO) (the NSW government does not fund training for existing worker traineeships)



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What if the employee already holds qualifications?

Existing workers with previous qualifications may enter into a training agreement to take on post-trade qualifications, an additional qualification at the trade level or a traineeship. To attract a government incentive, however, the existing qualification would generally have to be greater than 7 years old and from a separate Training Package e.g. a motor mechanic with a ten-year-old qualification taking on an engineering mechanical trade. Typical qualifications would be additional trades or the Certificate IV in Engineering.

What are the Government incentives?

Government incentive – \$4,400* (incl. GST) subject to eligibility but usually limited to existing qualifications greater than 7 years old and from a separate Training Package

Cost of training – Cost of training in trade areas borne by the NSW government. The cost of existing worker traineeship training to be negotiated with RTO.

Where do I get more information?

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP TRAINING AND EDUCATION ADVISERS

T: 02 9466 5566

Contact your local New Apprenticeship Centre on:

CAMPBELL PAGE NEW

APPRENTICESHIPS CENTRE T: 4251 4580

DETNAC T: 4224 9333

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NEW APPRENTICESHIPS CENTRE T: 1300 652 236

* Rural & Regional, Women in Non traditional trades incentives may also apply



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Existing worker traineeships

What is an Existing Worker?

An existing worker is classified as an employee who has had an employment relationship with an employer for more than 3 months full-time or 12 months part-time or casual.

What are the benefits of training my existing staff using New Apprenticeships?

Your staff obtain a nationally recognised qualification while continuing their employment (no changes are made with respect to the working conditions of Existing Worker New Apprentices).

Your organisation receives government funds to cover the costs associated with allowing your staff to gain these qualifications. An organisation can expect to receive approximately \$4,400 in standard incentives for eligible traineeships. Additional incentives may also apply depending on the qualification selected.

IN MOST INSTANCES THE TRAINING IS COST NEUTRAL TO YOUR ORGANISATION OR YOUR ORGANISATION IS FINANCIALLY BETTER OFF AT THE COMPLETION OF THE TRAINING.

Your chosen New Apprenticeship Centre can send an experienced Field Officer to your workplace to assist with all the paperwork involved, organise the Training Organisation of your choice and help you to secure incentives payments.

What is the Basic Eligibility for incentives?

The employee:

- Must be an Australian Citizen or Permanent resident or New Zealand resident who has been in Australia for more than 6 months.
- Can't be a sole trader or partner, director, franchisee etc.
- Must be employed full time or part time – i.e. Not casual.
- Must be paid under an award, AWA, Certified Agreement.

Staff who have prior qualifications may not attract the full set of incentives. Talk to your New Apprenticeship Centre for more information about how prior qualifications can affect an organisation's financial incentives.

Where do I get more information?

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP TRAINING AND EDUCATION ADVISERS

T: 02 9466 5566

Contact your local New Apprenticeship Centre on:

CAMPBELL PAGE NEW

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What is Trade Skills Recognition?

Many people with trade skills and experience do not have formal qualifications. There are opportunities for these people to have their skills assessed and formally recognised.

Who can apply?

If a person has experience working in a particular recognised trade but does not have formal qualifications in that trade, he/she can apply to have his/her trade skills assessed and formally recognised by the NSW Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) and receive trade certification. They may do this if they:

- Have worked in the particular trade for at least four years (either in Australia or Overseas), or
- Have completed an apprenticeship or other trade training (either in Australia or Overseas), or
- Have completed a recognised industry assessment program or
- Have acquired an appropriate qualification

What trades are recognised in NSW?

Check the list of trades and current competencies required for each trade at <http://apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au>

How do I apply?

- Complete an application form available from a local State Training Centre (STC) or the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) See below for contact details.
- Attach photocopies of the required documents
- Attach two recent passport-size photographs signed on the back with your normal signature.
- Pay an application fee
- Send or deliver the application to the Vocational Training Tribunal or a local State Training Centre

How much will it cost?

Application for trade recognition
\$125.00

Trade Test
\$250.00

* Further Trade test on appeal
\$250.00

Work based assessment for trade recognition
\$250.00

Replacement of trade certificate
\$25.00

Where do I get more information?

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP TRAINING
AND EDUCATION ADVISERS
T: 02 9466 5566

For more information on the trades recognised in NSW, the list of required documents to support your application, the location of the State Training Centre of Vocational Training Tribunal or any other information visit <http://apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au> or phone the local State Training Centre on **13 28 11** or the Vocational Training Tribunal on **9266 8450**.



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Retaining, Engaging and Learning from mature workers

Retaining, Engaging and Learning from mature workers

- Did you know that only 49% of Australians aged between 55 & 64 are working today?
- Do you know the average age of your workforce?
- Have you considered a more flexible approach to keep your valuable, mature aged expertise?

Australia has one of the lowest workforce participations rates for older people in the developed world and many employers are finding a significant percentage of their workforce approaching traditional retirement age. Only 49% of Australians aged between 55-64 years are working today, compared to 59% in the US; 60% in New Zealand and up to 65% in Scandinavia. Business needs to take a proactive approach to addressing demographic changes in their workforce.

My experienced staff are approaching retirement, what can I do?

- Consider attracting older workers and retaining existing staff by offering part time and other alternative arrangements. The Hudson Group found in a recent study that if part time or casual arrangements were offered approximately 70% of managers would remain in the workforce for a longer period.
- Preserve critical knowledge before it leaves the company and offer part time or casual mentoring roles to keep older workers engaged and contributing to the learning of younger, less experienced staff. The challenge is to leverage the skills and experiences of older workers against the enthusiasm and energy levels of younger members of staff.
- Focus on Workforce planning for at risk skills and knowledge in your workforce and identifying flexible work options such as job sharing or part time work.

- Embrace 'life-long learning' strategies to not only keep older workers current and interested but also meet future skill needs and prepare younger workers for greater levels of responsibility.

- Consider offering monetary or benefit incentives to encourage older workers to remain engaged and share their knowledge.

What can I do now?

- Assess your aging workforce against current and proposed projects
- Include succession planning in performance appraisal procedures
- Discuss retirement plans with older workers and begin identifying opportunities to redirect their skills and knowledge.

Where do I get more information?

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP TRAINING
AND EDUCATION ADVISERS

T: 02 9466 5566

For more information on all mature age related issues check out <http://www.dewrsb.gov.au/toolboxes/matureage/links.asp>.



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Skilled Migration

What is Skilled Migration?

The Skilled stream of Australian Migration program is designed to target migrants who have skills or outstanding abilities that will contribute to the Australian economy.

Employers should always check that prospective employees are eligible to work in Australia. Proof of permanent residency or an appropriate working visa should be found in the person's passport.

Asking to check a passport for the relevant visa or residency status, where the person has emigrated from overseas, does not breach anti-discrimination laws.

Employers must always ensure that they are paying in accordance with the relevant Australian Industrial Award or Agreement.

What options are available to employers in the Illawarra?

Employment of independent skilled migrants – people who have migrated independently as skilled workers have satisfied a points system put in place by the Australian government. Requirements include qualifications and English language ability. Once eligibility is established, employers are required to treat them as part of the Australian labour force. This includes abiding by the relevant anti-discrimination legislation.

Degree qualifications gained overseas should be certified as equivalent by the relevant industry or professional association, for example, IE Aust. Trade qualifications should be certified by the Department of Workplace Relations.

University students from abroad often have a provision for part-time work included in their visa.

Employer sponsored permanent migration – is not available to employers in the Illawarra (post codes 2500 – 2530) at the time of printing.

Temporary employer sponsored entry – allows employers to recruit staff from overseas for temporary stays of up to four years. There is usually a requirement for employers to demonstrate that they have failed to fill these roles from within the Australian labour market, unless the position is listed in the Migrant Occupations in Demand List (available from DIMIA).

How much does a sponsorship application cost?

A sponsorship application costs around \$500.

Sponsored employees must leave Australia if their employment ends during the sponsorship period, or find another employer willing to apply to sponsor.

Where do I get more information?

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP TRAINING AND EDUCATION ADVISERS

T: 9466 5566

For more information on migration requirements and steps to take for temporary employer sponsored entry, see www.immi.gov.au/migration or contact the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs on T: 131 881.



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C & M Leussink Engineering

Company Profile



Industry	Engineering
Location	Unanderra, Wollongong, NSW
No. of Employees	35 (Including 7 apprentices)

Executive Summary

C & M Leussink Engineering is a leading and prominent manufacturing company who have been operating in the Illawarra for over 32 years. Their specialised areas and products include precision machining, fabrication, power transmission repair, the Demmeler modular clamping system, the MicroLoc clamping system, Joshua Corts precision flat bearings, design, retrofits, repair and assembly services for the steel, mining, earthmoving, rural, marine and general engineering industries.

C & M Leussink Engineering employ a full time Apprentice Supervisor, who oversees an average of eight apprentices. This leading Illawarra based small business employs 35 people, including around 20% apprentices.

C & M Leussink Engineering recognise that the skills of fully qualified trades personnel are an integral part of the company's future and ability to continue to grow and develop with the needs of their customers.

The Apprentice Training scheme and Apprentice Supervisor allows C & M Leussink Engineering to develop its employees with the hands-on tuition that will enable them to operate every piece of machinery to their own specific standards.

C & M Leussink Engineering engage several strategies to ensure their focus on training and networking provides top quality trades people including; maintaining ongoing relationships with schools, networking and links with TAFE teachers, careers advisers and metals teachers; the involvement of parents; encouragement of apprentices to compete in competitions and awards; professional and personal mentoring; involvement of 2nd, 3rd and 4th year apprentices in the training process and by allowing work experience and junior apprentices to operate machinery with supervision.

C & M Leussink Engineering believes this focus on training pays off. They have low staff turn-over rates and a true workplace culture of training. They also believe this contributes greatly to their high levels of customer satisfaction; repeat business and business development opportunities.

C & M Leussink have been recognised for their dedication to customer service, quality product and commitment to apprentice training with numerous awards.



Apprentice Supervisor

As a result of the company's commitment to customer service and excellence, approximately 10 years ago it was identified that apprentices were not learning and achieving to the required standards of the company. This was believed to be as a result of the lack of time available to the supervisor to individually train each apprentice in the specialisations of the company and state of the art machinery used to supplement the trade skills learnt at TAFE.

As a result a designated Apprentice Supervisor was employed 10 years ago, to not only supervise, mentor and train the apprentices but also be involved in a multi-faceted approach to inform local students, teachers and parents about the career opportunities C & M Leussink are able to offer young people.

The Apprentice Supervisor has been employed in the industry for over 40 years, and involved in the training and mentoring of apprentices for approximately 20 years in an official capacity, but has always been interested and available to train and mentor during his employment history, regardless of his position.

Strategies

- Ongoing relationship with Illawarra's local High Schools with a strong Metals department has resulted in approximately 15 work experience placements per year, who are considered for apprentice vacancies as they arise. This attracts apprentice applicants who have a genuine interest in the engineering industry.
- Maintenance of network and links with TAFE teachers, Careers Advisers and Metals teachers. These networks are used to source candidates for apprentice vacancies.
- Apprentice Supervisor receives all apprentice applications and enquiries for employment.
- Involvement of parents in Apprentice recruitment and interview process, at which time the commitment, expectations and assessment process is explained to all parties.
- Expectation by company of all apprentices to maintain high standards and results, and therefore encouragement to compete in competitions and awards.
- Personal as well as professional mentoring provided by Apprentice Supervisor to apprentice on a strictly confidential basis. Apprentice has access to Supervisor after hours as necessary.
- Apprentice Supervisor undertakes initial basic training of apprentice in the workshop delegating specific machine, programming and computer related training to specialised tradesperson in-house.
- Involvement of 2nd, 3rd and 4th year apprentices in training processes as required, encouraging leadership and training skills in apprentices as they progress.
- Work experience students and apprentices are allowed to operate machinery at appropriate levels with appropriate supervision with the aim that the apprentice will be given sufficient exposure to choose the machine they wish to specialise in and take responsibility for once competent.

Key Success Factors

C & M Leussink believes they have a responsibility to ensure their apprentices become the best person they can be, not only the best tradesperson they can be. Apprentices are encouraged to ask for help at all levels, but also trust the Apprentice Supervisor with any concerns that may affect their learning or development, personal or work related. All discussions with the Apprentice Supervisor remain confidential, unless the issues affect work performance to the extent that termination of employment is considered.

As the majority of tradespeople employed by the company have been trained in the same environment, apprentices feel comfortable asking for help. Apprentices are sometimes involved in training senior staff if they are aware of a different, or alternative procedures due to recent TAFE training.



Thomas & Coffey

Unanderra, Wollongong, NSW

Company Profile



Industry Maintenance and Engineering
Locations Sydney, Newcastle, Muswellbrook, Wollongong, Brisbane, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Moranbah, Mackay, Emerald, Blackwater

No. of Employees 190 – 200 (including 35 apprentices)

Executive Summary

Thomas & Coffey is a leading provider of multi-trade maintenance services to the heavy industry, mining, manufacturing and commercial sectors. The company has been providing maintenance services across the eastern seaboard for over 50 years and has one of the most extensive ranges of trade expertise and workshop facilities in the industry. In addition, Thomas & Coffey has access to extensive professional building, construction and project management support through its parent – leading building and construction company, Cordukes Limited.

Thomas & Coffey's extensive range of in-house capabilities include multi-trade competencies covering, fitting/machining; fabrication/pressure welding; rigging/scaffolding; crane maintenance; laser alignments and rotating equipment repairs; carpentry; plumbing; electrical and instrumentation; air conditioning and refrigeration.

These capabilities, coupled with a first-class customer service, provide Thomas & Coffey's clients with industry-leading services in asset and facility maintenance.

As a socially responsible company, Thomas & Coffey is cognisant of the need to support local communities and the company takes an active role in community-based activities within the regions that it operates.

In response to the national as well as local skill shortage issues, Thomas & Coffey have increased their already strong commitment to the training and recruitment of apprentices. Their apprentice intake has increased from 9 new entrants in 2004 to 16 new entrants in 2005, including 2 accelerated adult apprentices. This brings their total of apprentices to 35, which is approximately 18% of their permanent workforce.

In an environment when other employers advise of difficulty in attracting apprentice applicants, particularly quality applicants, Thomas & Coffey report no such difficulty. On the basis of referral and word of mouth, Thomas & Coffey received in excess of 100 applications during 2004 from quality applicants wishing to commence a trade, without external advertising.



Thomas & Coffey recognise that the increased number of apprentices requires an even greater commitment to ensure the apprentices receive sufficient support, guidance, and mentoring to make their apprenticeships as successful as possible.

Accelerated Apprentices

Introduced in August 2004, an accelerated apprenticeship option exists for adult apprentices, over the age of 24, with a minimum of three years industry experience in the vocations of Engineering (Mechanical) and Engineering (Fabrication). The option allows apprentices meeting the criteria to effectively reduce the term of their apprenticeship from 48 months to 24 months.

Thomas & Coffey became aware of the accelerated option in November 2004 and quickly identified and approached two suitable, experienced and motivated casual trades assistants to undertake an apprenticeship. Both of the employees were extremely keen and as a result were employed on a permanent basis as apprentices commencing 10 January 2005. They are the first accelerated apprentices to be employed in the Illawarra and amongst the very first in NSW.

Thomas & Coffey are to be commended for being the first in their area to undertake this option, as well as for the substantial investment in both time and money undertaken by offering this opportunity.

Strategies

- Strong relationship with TAFE teachers to monitor apprentice performance and ensure on the job training complements TAFE taught disciplines.
- Mentoring relationships exist and are encouraged between apprentices and Department heads, senior apprentices, the two accelerated apprentices and the Human Resources Manager.
- Comprehensive induction procedures including the expectations of the company, commitment to quality customer service as well as general safety and company guidelines.
- Holistic approach to apprentice mentoring, including inviting outside agencies to assist in apprentice education on a personal level, in areas such as budgeting and finance, suicide prevention and drug and alcohol awareness.
- Organisation of company social events, e.g. barbeques and sporting teams, to encourage teamwork and interaction amongst all staff, especially apprentices.
- Attractive industrial & remuneration arrangements for adult accelerated apprentices, recognising their increased financial commitments over more traditional apprentices, as well as their increased productivity and experience.
- Adopt a School
- Inter Branch and client exchanges to broaden experience.

Key Success Factors

Thomas & Coffey recognise that to ensure they can continue to provide quality customer service in an employment environment where qualified and skilled staff are scarce, they have a responsibility to be involved in the solution to the skill shortage issue.

The aim and objective of the company's recruitment, training and support policies for staff is to increase staff retention and to be regarded as an employer of choice. It has been noted by Thomas & Coffey that staff who leave to seek alternative employment more often than not return to the company when an opportunity arises, preferring the environment and support at Thomas & Coffey. This fact, along with their attractiveness to apprentices seeking an entry into a trade, demonstrates they are well on their way to achieving their goals.



Edmen

Company Profile



Industry	Employment Services
Locations	Warrawong, Wollongong, NSW Kogarah, Sydney, NSW Brisbane, QLD
No. of Employees	36 – 40 Permanent staff 500 Casuals on average

Executive Summary

Edmen was established in Wollongong in 1990, initially providing a small group of clients with short-term industrial Labour Hire. Throughout the 1990's Edmen slowly grew in volume, turnover, services and infrastructure, culminating in a major expansion in 1999 into the Sydney market, initially located in Parramatta and recently re-located to Kogarah.

Edmen is professionally affiliated and is an active corporate member of the Recruitment & Consulting Services Association (RSCA) and is a founding member of the Australian Industry Group.

Edmen have recently expanded interstate, having opened a new office in Brisbane employing 12 Staff specialising in Disability Support services.

Due to recent expansion of their corporate services and the growth of the organisation, Edmen is in the process of re-locating their Head Office. These new state of the art offices will include meeting and training rooms, allowing Edmen to further extend their services and facilities to existing and new clients.

Edmen is committed to addressing local skill shortage issues, to the benefit of the businesses and communities in which they operate. To this aim they have identified and are committed to a range of strategies to impact the issue on a short, long and medium term basis.



Skilled Migration

Edmen are constantly seeking innovative and industry responsive strategies to address local skill shortage issues. In a strategic planning session, it was identified that Skilled Migration was an option in addressing skill shortage needs that was currently being under utilised.

Whilst the strategy is still in the development stages, Edmen has identified a variety of activities which are in the planning or pilot stage, to assist both clients seeking skilled staff and overseas applicants seeking employment. These activities include:

- Partnering with an immigration agent to assist in the completion of Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) applications and assessment of suitability of candidates.
- Referral of casual staff currently employed on working visa's to the immigration agent, with the view of gaining permanent residency.
- The ability to act as a sponsorship organisation on behalf of a host employer wishing to recruit a skilled migrant.
- Undertaking a survey of international students studying at the University of Wollongong, with the aim of identifying skilled students and potential employees.
- Proposed regular networking sessions at the new Edmen offices, to advise clients on the opportunities of skilled migration and introduce individual candidates in a relaxed and comfortable setting.

Other Strategies to address skill shortages

- The creation of 15 Disability Support traineeships employed by Edmen, as a direct result of client needs.
- Gaining Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status, allowing Edmen to provide accredited training specialised to industry and customer needs.
- Targeted marketing campaign to attract local employees back to the Illawarra area who are currently commuting to work in Sydney and other locations.
- Engaging in Australia-wide marketing campaigns to increase the profile of employment opportunities in the Illawarra.

Key Success Factors

Edmen is constantly seeking innovative and responsive strategies to assist their current and potential clients to address skill shortages. They recognise their role and responsibility as a provider of employment services, to directly impact on one of the biggest issues effecting business today.

Edmen is committed to partnering with other stakeholders, including clients, Registered Training Organisations, Australian Industry Group and Recruitment & Consulting Services Association (RSCA) among others. Their services are provided on a long-term outcomes based as opposed to commission-based payment, further strengthening their responsibility to assist in skill shortage outcomes for customers and the community.

Edmen is to be commended for their commitment to skill shortage issues and improving the employment opportunities for the local community as well as the recruitment and growth opportunities for business.



Bluescope Steel Limited

Company Profile

Industry	Steel Solutions
Location	Global
No. of Employees	17,000



Executive Summary

BlueScope Steel is a leading flat steel products company, serving customers in the building and construction, manufacturing, automotive and packaging industries. It holds leading market positions in Australia and New Zealand for most of its value-added products and services. BlueScope Steel is also continuing to build on its long-established presence in Asia. It is also a major exporter, supplying customers in the United States, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, the Pacific and elsewhere through a worldwide network of sales offices.

BlueScope Steel flat products business is centred on the Port Kembla Steelworks, an integrated steel plant in Wollongong NSW, operating in the low end of the world steel production cost curve with an annual production capacity of over 5 million tonnes.

As one of the Illawarra regions largest employers, both directly and via contractors, BlueScope Steel have accepted and are responding to the local as well as global issue of skill shortages, in a variety of innovative and proactive strategies, both long and short-term.

BlueScope Steel is committed to training and growth. This assists BlueScope Steel to achieve its business goals, but also assists its employees to continue to learn and develop; its partners to provide the highest level of service; and the local community to address skill shortage issues and provide employment opportunities.

Strategies

Apprenticeships - BlueScope Steel hosts apprentices employed by 'Illawarra Group Training' at its Port Kembla Steelworks in a range of disciplines - principally Mechanical and Electrical Engineering – disciplines where many are experiencing skill shortages. In recent years BlueScope Steel and its alliance maintenance partner, Transfield Services, have increased the number of apprentices hosted– with two intakes per year spending their first six months at the Steelhaven Training Centre before moving out onto the plant. These apprentices, with their high standards of skills and training, can then start to make an impact on site, filling vacancies and new roles created by the changing workplace demands.

Cadetships - BlueScope Steel's Port Kembla operations offer cadetships (for students completing or who have recently completed their HSC) in disciplines such as Mechanical, Electrical, Computer or Materials Engineering, Chemical



Engineering and Chemistry. From time to time opportunities exist in the fields of Environment and Civil Engineering.

The cadetship offers the chance to combine full time work with part time study so that cadets are “paid as they learn.” Some 27 cadets started in 2005 with a similar number expected next year.

Graduates - BlueScope Steel has also reintroduced a two-year graduate development programme in 2005, which takes recently qualified graduates from fields as diverse as Finance, Human Resources and a range of engineering disciplines. This programme places graduates into real jobs with the aid of experienced mentors and challenges them to make a real impact.

The Challenge of Diversity - As a global company BlueScope Steel recognises the strength that comes from diversity and as such is actively promoting itself as a company that is looking to see more women and a more diverse community amongst its employees.

The company has an increasing number of women amongst their cadets and graduate workforce and is looking to encourage others to join them – even in the areas of mechanical and electrical engineering. BlueScope Steel is working with schools, universities and other groups to foster this aim. In a region with low female employment participation rates, BlueScope Steel recognises the valuable resource and contribution female employees can provide.

Preparing for our Future - BlueScope Steel's Port Kembla operations are proactive in seeking out those who see that they might have a future with Australia's leading steel solutions company. They are working closely with local and Sydney universities, TAFE and the University of Ballarat to provide high quality fit for purpose training for our people starting on day one. BlueScope Steel's strong safety focus underpins all their training efforts.

Each year BlueScope Steel hosts

Career Snapshot – Interested Year 10 students can book in for a one-day session where they have a plant tour, a tour of the training shops and laboratories and get to speak with current apprentices and cadets as well as more experienced company officers. There are information sessions on subject choices and information about BlueScope Steel, their alliance partners, training programmes, and Illawarra Group Training – who is the employer of the apprentices they host as well as information to help students choose if an apprenticeship or cadetship is right for them.

Work Experience – BlueScope Steel have a limited number of opportunities to host Year 11 and 12 students on the Port Kembla site usually for one week unpaid intervals – mainly in Mechanical and Electrical engineering disciplines although with appropriate notice they have placed people in many functional areas including Human Resources, Finance, Environment, Computer Engineering, Materials and Marketing.

Vacation Employment – BlueScope Steel's Port Kembla Engineering Team arranges 12 weeks of paid vacation employment for a limited number of university students. Mid to later year students are given preference for this experience which is conducted during the Christmas university break period.

Key Success Factors

In line with their commitment to build for tomorrow, BlueScope Steel is undertaking learning and development activities at every level in their organisation and also in conjunction with alliance partners. BlueScope Steel have acknowledged that in order to meet existing and projected business needs, it is essential to continuously improve the skill levels of their workforce to allow the company to grow. This commitment not only assists BlueScope Steel, its partners and employees but also makes a positive impact on local skill shortage issues.

BlueScope Steel is a company going places and that's why many more people are finding BlueScope's 'steel solutions' provide an exciting and rewarding career option.



K J Industrial Scaffolding

Company Profile

Industry	Scaffolding
Location	Port Kembla, NSW
No. of Employees	114 (including 15 trainees)



Executive Summary



K J Industrial Scaffolding is a market leader in the scaffolding industry. K J Industrial Scaffolding has for over 15 years provided a skilled and motivated workforce conversant with all clients scaffolding requirements.

K J Industrial Scaffolding commenced discussions with Australian Industry Group on the possibility of employing trainees in May 2004, and Illawarra Group Training soon after, as a direct result of skill shortages. K J Industrial Scaffolding had actively attempted to upskill and arrange for current and potential employees to source training and 'tickets', without success due to the difficulty in obtaining specialised training. TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute were consulted and involved in discussions and planning also. As a result of these consultations, independent funding was gained from the Department of Employment and Training (DET) to offer additional scaffolding and rigging training targeted at unemployed people wishing to enter the industry via TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute.

K J Industrial Scaffolding, via Illawarra Group Training, have identified fifteen trainee Scaffolders who will be commencing employment with the company between March and June 2005, in Certificate III in Scaffolding, to address their skill shortages. Industrial scaffolding is vastly different to commercial scaffolding and this will form part of the customised scaffolding qualification the trainees will undertake.

TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute is the Registered Training Organisation and is working in partnership with all stakeholders. Their considerable commitment to serving these new traineeships involves the development of appropriate training resources, specific to K J Industrial Scaffolding's needs, as well as the scaffolding industry in general.

Scaffolding Trainees

In November 2004, qualifications to the training package of General Construction were added, including Certificate III in Scaffolding. It has been over four years from the first proposal to WorkCover and the representing unions to gain support and establishment of Scaffolding traineeships. This change allowed scaffolding companies, including K J Industrial Scaffolding, to train new entrants and existing workers to a Certificate III level qualification using the support and government incentives of the New Apprenticeship Scheme. Establishing a traineeship was seen by K J Industrial Scaffolding as a method to achieve formal recognition for the industry of the importance of scaffolding



skills. This qualification is delivered over a 24-month period, involving institution based training one day per week using the up to date facilities of TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute for 12 months, at which time all competent trainees will be eligible to apply for a WorkCover ticket. For the remaining 12 months of the traineeship term, trainees will undertake on the job experienced and flexible work based learning.

K J Industrial Scaffolding enlisted the assistance of Illawarra Group Training to employ fifteen apprentices in three intakes of five trainees at 5-week intervals commencing 29 March 2005. Illawarra Group Training is the employer, and K J Industrial Scaffolding is the Host Employer. K J Industrial Scaffolding is extremely satisfied with the quality of applicants, and the services of Illawarra Group Training. The final intake is expected to commence in early June, and all trainees will commence their training together with TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute shortly afterwards. Trainees commencing at the earliest intake will be a valuable support and resource for newer entrants due to their on the job experience, and all trainees will be in a position to support each other as they study the same material at the same pace.

Strategies

- Consultation with Registered Training Organisations (RTO) during the initial stages of planning to ensure the training is tailored to the needs of the company, resulting in the engagement of TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute.
- Engagement of a highly successful Group Training Company, Illawarra Group Training, which increased the quality of applicants and provided valuable recruitment assistance.
- Illawarra Group Training co-hosted an information session at TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute and distributed recruitment information handouts. Recruitment resources were developed to specifically target the scaffolding industry and were relevant to the requirements of K J Industrial Scaffolding. Presentations were made by the Head Teacher Building and Construction, the General Manager of K J Scaffolding and the Manager of Illawarra Group Training, ensuring potential applicants and their families where appropriate, were thoroughly informed prior to the formal application and interview process.
- Whilst there was no age limit on the applicants, it was very clearly stated to all applicants that if their personal circumstances allowed them to undertake a traineeship, all were welcome to apply. K J Industrial Scaffolding's presentation at the information session focused on the career and income opportunities that would be applicable once the qualification and tickets were obtained, making the prospect attractive to all ages.
- Mentoring relationships exist and are encouraged between trainees and supervisors, and appropriate staff have been trained in Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessing to assist in the assessment and support of trainees on the job.
- Comprehensive induction procedures will be undertaken by Illawarra Group Training, including OH&S inductions, on behalf of both the Group Training Company and the host employer K J Industrial Scaffolding.

Key Success Factors

K J Industrial Scaffolding recognise that in an employment environment where qualified and skilled staff are scarce, they have a responsibility to be actively involved in training and developing new entrants to their industry as well as existing employees of their business.

All stakeholders in the process were consulted from the outset, to identify the most appropriate Registered Training Organisation, and investigate the most efficient employment option. Illawarra Group Training was engaged due to their high retention rates, excellent reputation for customer service and the recruitment and screening support that was of the utmost importance to ensure effective outcomes. TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute responded to industry needs and provided the most flexible options as required by both the host and the group training company.

All applicants were treated with the same level of respect, regardless of their age, and thoroughly informed during the application process. This ensured the most appropriate and committed trainees were recruited to the benefit of K J Industrial Scaffolding, the scaffolding industry as a whole and the trainees themselves in addressing local skill shortages.



Joy Mining Machinery

A Joy Global Inc. Company

Company Profile

Industry	Manufacturing and Underground Mining
Location	Unanderra, Wollongong, NSW Moss Vale, Southern Highlands, NSW
No. of Employees	4500 World wide 300 Illawarra & Southern Highlands



Executive Summary

Joy Mining Machinery has more than 75 years' experience as a global leader in the development, manufacture, distribution, and service of underground mining machinery for the extraction of coal and other bedded materials. Their vision is 'to be the leading global supplier of underground mining systems and services, in partnership with their customers to enable them to consistently produce at the lowest cost per ton over the lifecycle of the equipment.'

Joy Mining Machinery continues this commitment to partnering in its support of its employees and the community as a whole, as demonstrated by their commitment and support of staff development throughout the organisation as well as sponsorship of community projects.

Having responded to global skill shortages being experienced across a range of operations, Joy Mining Machinery have adopted a learning culture at all levels of their organisation, and this is particularly apparent at their Illawarra and Southern Highlands sites.

New employees, existing workers, tradespeople and graduates are encouraged to undertake professional development and training with the full support of the organisation. Joy Mining Machinery aims to ensure that staff at all levels continue to grow and develop to meet not only their individual but also the organisations future needs and impact on the pressing issue of skill shortages.

Strategies

- Joy Mining Machinery provides support and sponsorship to a **community radio station** based at Moss Vale High School, targeted at a youth audience. This strategy allows Joy Mining Machinery to network with local



students, teachers and other community members and increase the awareness of their organisation, career prospects in their industry, as well as encouraging participants to develop valuable employment and life skills.

- Joy Mining Machinery utilises its **excellent school networks** to offer work experience and industry visits to support its apprenticeship recruitment program. This ensures apprenticeship applicants have an understanding of the organisation and industry as well as the individual roles, and are able to make informed career choices prior to application and commencement of apprenticeships.
- Joy Mining Machinery sponsors a number of 2nd and 4th year engineering students each year in both their Queensland and Wollongong operations by offering 6 months **practical work experience**.
- Appropriate staff undertake **short courses and refresher training** in relevant areas such as OH&S, First Aid, Manual Handling as well as Workcover accredited Forklift, Rigging and Dogman tickets.
- Existing workers are encouraged to undertake **upskilling training** via New Apprenticeships. This includes Trades Assistants undertaking their first qualification or trade, as well as existing trades qualified persons cross skilling into another trade.
- Administration staff also utilises New Apprenticeships where appropriate to undertake **business qualifications** and ongoing development into relevant areas including management.
- All relevant supervisors and team leaders have undertaken, or are in the process of undertaking, Certificate IV in Business (**Frontline Management**) to support their existing management and supervisory skills.
- Appropriate senior managers are assisted and sponsored to achieve a **Master of Business Administration (MBA)** and Engineers are undertaking relevant diploma studies through TAFE.
- Joy Mining Machinery encourages their customers and partners take part in their training programs and attend relevant workshops and courses to develop greater networks, mutual skill levels and knowledge, to assist in joint workplace projects and to ensure ongoing quality of service in their partnerships.

Key Success Factors

Joy Mining Machinery is demonstrating their commitment to skill shortage solutions at every level of their organisation. It allows them to continually 'lift the bar' and develop staff to the highest possible standards.

The commitment to learning and development demonstrated by Joy Mining Machinery assist the organisation to reduce staff turnover rates and sets them apart as an Employer of Choice. The organisation as a whole benefits from this culture by improving quality of service and gains an edge over competitors who may not display the same commitment.

Joy Mining Machinery has achieved record sales figures over two year period, improved safety performance over all sites (with their Unanderra site running at zero incident rate), recognition by the National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia, (NATA) as nearing industries best practice in Learning and Development and stabilised industrial relations with no disputes over the last 4 years.

Joy Mining Machinery believes their commitment to the ongoing development of their greatest resource, their employees, is an investment for the future.

What steps can I take now towards a skilled workforce?

Retention

Is your workforce aging & are you at risk of losing knowledge and experience?

See *Fact Sheets*: • *Engaging and*

Upskilling Mature workers • *Existing*

Worker Traineeships

Tradespeople

Need to take your trade's qualified staff to the next level? Or upskill them in another trade area?

See *Fact Sheets*: • *Fast tracking apprentices in Engineering* • *Existing Worker traineeships*

Trade Assistants

Need more qualified staff & need them now?

See *Fact Sheets*: • *Existing Worker Traineeships*

• *Upskilling TA's and Production Workers* •

Fast tracking apprentices in Engineering

Unskilled Workers

Do your employees have skill gaps?

See *Fact Sheets*: • *Existing Worker*

Traineeships • *Upskilling TA's and*

Production Workers

Skilled Migration

Unable to recruit locally or nationally?

See *Fact Sheets*: • *Skilled*

Migration & Trade Skills

Recognition

Adopt a learning culture

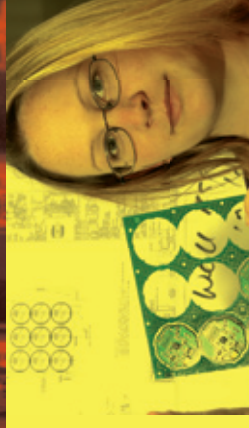


Australian Government

Department of Education, Science and Training



AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP



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