UPSKILLING
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

INTERNATIONAL WORKFORCE LITERACY REVIEW

› AUSTRALIA

A report prepared for the Department of Labour
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1.   Brief reviewer introduction

Louise Wignall

Louise Wignall has worked in the education sector for the past 25 years as a teacher, resource developer, policy advisor and quality assurance manager with a specialisation in adult literacy and learning in vocational education and training (VET). She works on a range of national and state-based initiatives.

She has been a consultant in the field since 2005. Before that her work with the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) saw her assist in the implementation of the 'built-in not bolted-on' policy of LLN integration into Training Packages as well as into other key policy documents, including the Australian Quality Training Framework and the National Strategy for VET.

For the last five years she has been the quality assurance mentor for 'Innovative projects' funded through the DEST Adult Literacy National Project, where she has further promoted the concept of the integrated model into community-based projects. She has also worked as a researcher, writer and project manager on a number of national Industry Skills Council WELL projects, and internationally on the Descriptor Bank Project for Workbase New Zealand.

Louise is currently working on a number of national strategic Industry Skill Council (ISC) WELL projects and an NCVER research project on new models of Enterprise Based Training.

Her key interest in looking at the big picture, and then 'joining the dots' between policy and practice, reflects the work she does towards improving the quality of VET learning experiences.

Robert Bluer

Robert Bluer has worked in various roles in education and training for 35 years. Robert's most recent work (1998—June 2005) was with the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) where he dealt with a number of issues related to the National Training Framework, including aspects of Training Packages, the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF), the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and issues concerning adult literacy.

More specifically, his period with ANTA included working with training packages and training package developers on:
- creating a quality instrument for the delivery of competency based training
- Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS), especially in its relationship to the National Training Framework (NTF)
- developing and monitoring the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)
- evaluating major aspects of the NTF i.e. Training Packages and the AQTF
- aspects of the Australian Qualifications Framework as it related to the NTF.

Most recently, during the last 18 months with ANTA, Robert worked on the Pathways into Training Packages project, which was designed to develop certificate I qualifications in training packages to provide pathways for those whom access to the formal (VET) system has been limited. At the same time he worked on a related project to incorporate

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employability skills in Training Packages. This work and its outcomes should prove to be highly significant for Australia's VET sector because it takes the definition of workplace competency standards to a new and higher level, which should provide opportunities to more closely match literacy skills with workplace needs.

At ANTA Robert worked with Louise Wignall on a range of adult literacy issues for a number of years.

2. Background information on the context for workforce literacy

2.1 Country workforce demographics and projections

As at February 2007 the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimated Australia's population at about 20,700,000.

The following table shows the population proportions at ages 0–4, 15–4 and over 65 in 1954 (when the population was less than 10 million), in 2004 (population 20 million) and a projection to 2050/51, when the population will be in the range 23 to 31 million (depending on a series of assumptions).

TABLE 1 Australian population data

Year	Age range	Proportion of population
1954	0–14	28.6%
	15–64	63%
	65 plus	8%
2004	0–14	20%
	15–64	67%
	65 plus	13%
2050/51	0–14	14%
	15–64	59%
	65 plus	27 (including 6% over 85)

Source: Derived from ABS 3222.0 Population Projections, Australia, 2004 to 2101

This table shows the significant decline expected in the working-age population over the next few decades, and the projected doubling of the 65 and over group. The ramifications of this likely trend are manifold and will include education, training and adult literacy.

2.2 Immigration patterns and volumes

Immigration is an important component of Australia's population growth. Approximately 5.7 million immigrants have arrived in Australia since the end of the Second World War. Together with their descendants they have contributed more than 40% of population growth since then. Immigration has also brought changes to Australia's population composition. Over the past 50 years, Australia's population has changed from one where over 90% of the population were of British origin to the current multicultural society, in which about 30% are non-Anglo-Celtic, coming from a range of countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. This increase in diversity began in the 1950s with immigration from the countries of Southern and Eastern Europe and continued in the last 30 years with the ending of the 'White Australia' policy and the influx of Asian migration after the Vietnam War.

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An analysis of 2007 ABS Yearbook data reveals that:

- of Australia's 20 million population at 2004, 24%, or 4.5 million were overseas born. That includes 1.1 million from the United Kingdom, 442,000 from New Zealand, 227,000 from Italy, 182,000 from China, 176,000 from Vietnam, 128,000 from Greece and 128,000 from India.
- in 2004–05, 123,400 people arrived in Australia intending to settle, the majority of whom (70%) arrived as part of the Migration Program.
- of Migration Program arrivals, most arrived under the skilled migration category (43% of all permanent arrivals), while 27% of all permanent arrivals arrived under the family migration category. A further 11% of all permanent arrivals arrived as part of the Humanitarian Program, while 18% were eligible to settle in Australia because of their New Zealand citizenship.
- of skilled migrants arriving in 2004–05 (53,100), 29% came from Europe (85% of whom were from United Kingdom and Ireland), while 19% came from southern Asia and 17% from north-east Asia. South-east Asia contributed 16% and sub-Saharan Africa contributed 10% of skilled immigrants to Australia during 2004-05.
- in 2004-05, 27% of settlers (33,200) came as part of the family component of Australia's immigration program. The major country of birth regions were Europe (23%), south-east Asia (22%), north-east Asia (18%), southern Asia (10%) and north Africa and the Middle East (9%).
- of the 13,200 settlers arriving under the Humanitarian Program, the highest proportion were born in north Africa and the Middle East (61%), followed by sub-Saharan Africa (28%) and central Asia (6%).
- in addition to the 99,700 settler arrivals under the Migration and Humanitarian Programs during 2004–05, there were a further 23,700 non-program (i.e. non-visaed) arrivals.

Traditionally, non-program migrants are predominantly New Zealand citizens; they accounted for 94% of non-program migrants in 2004–05. Under the Trans-Tasman Agreement, New Zealand citizens are free to enter Australia without applying for a visa.
Source: ABS 1303.0-Year Book, Australia, 2007

There has been significant media attention and public debate in recent times about the degree to which migrants or refugees should be competent in English language on arrival. In September 2006 John Howard announced he was considering introducing an English language test and and Australian values test for those seeking Australian citizenship. However, he denied that it would be a return to the type of exclusionary tests of the White Australia policy.[1]

The Survey of Aspects of Literacy (see below) showed a strong correlation between literacy levels and English as a first language. Those who spoke a language other than English and arrived in Australia after the age of 16 were significantly more likely to have lower levels of literacy (SAL, 1996). There is significant challenge in providing programmes for migrants that gives them not only language acquisition but also opportunities to learn how to apply language and literacy practices for a range of purposes.

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[1] Sydney Morning Herald article http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/new-language-test-will-be-flexible-pm/2006/09/15/1157827137457.html (sighted 21.6.07)

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This indicates the need to provide learners from a non-English speaking background with linked programmes that tackle literacy from a number of fronts—as a component of language acquisition (English language services), and as a social practice learned in different contexts over time (community and workplace learning options). Research into participation and completion rates of VET qualifications by students from a non-English speaking background indicated dissatisfaction with 'language' only VET Multi-field courses and the clear preference for integrated language and vocational skill options (Miralles, 2003:NCVER).

Currently, the Adult Migrant English Program (see 4.5 below) is the main English tuition programme provided to migrants without functional English. This program is currently under review[2], as employers in particular have called for it to provide more targeted vocational outcomes. If this change were made in the intent of the program it would have important consequences for the delivery of English language training and its assessment. Although there are arguments about the best ways to address the language, literacy and numeracy needs of the population, it is generally acknowledged by all political parties that strong literacy skills are 'fundamental to people's adaptability and flexibility in the new information economy, and crucial for improving their employment and income prospects and reducing the risk of becoming economically disadvantaged' (Shalla and Schellenberg, 1998:9 cited in Hagston, 2002).

2.3   Employment rates and patterns

ABS figures for May 2007 show the number of employed persons at 10,432,000 with unemployed people at 472,000 or 4.4%. The participation rate was at 64.9%.
Source: ABS 6202.0—Labour Force, Australia, May 2007

The trend estimate of employed persons rose from 8,414,000 in February 1997 to 9,056,100 in September 2000. The trend then fell slightly to 9,037,900 in January 2001, before generally rising to stand at a high of 10,350,400 in February 2007.

The trend estimate of unemployed persons generally fell from 771,700 in February 1997 to 583,700 in September 2000, before rising to 685,700 in October 2001. The trend then fell to 532,800 in January 2005, remained relatively stable for 18 months, before falling to stand at 495,900 in February 2007.

The trend unemployment rate generally fell from 8.4% in February 1997 to 6.1% in September 2000. After rising to 7.0% in October 2001, the trend fell to 5.1% in July 2005. After remaining steady for 18 months, the trend has fallen to stand at 4.6% in February 2007.
Source: ABS 6202.0—Labour Force, Australia, Feb 2007.
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In relation to persons not in the workforce, the ABS found the following:

> *In September 2005, there were 5,453,500 people aged 15 years and over who were not in the labour force. This represented 34% of the civilian population aged 15 years and over. Just under one-quarter (21%) of persons not in the labour force wanted to work and 61% of persons not in the labour force were women.*

The proportion of people who were not in the labour force varied according to age. In the 15–19 years age group, where there are high levels of participation in education, the proportion was 41% for men and 38% for women. In all other age groups, there were

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[2] See attachment on Interdepartmental Committee to review AMEP, LLNP and WELL models.

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more women than men not in the labour force. The proportion of women not in the labour force decreased from 27% for those aged 25–34 years to 23% for those aged 45–54 years, before increasing sharply to 43% for those aged 55–59 years, and 98% for those aged 70 years and over. For men in the same age groups, the proportion not in the labour force increased from 7% for those aged 25–34 and 35–44 years, to 11% for those aged 45–54 years, 24% for those aged 55–59 years, and 93% for those aged 70 years and over.
Source: ABS 6222.0 Persons not in the Labour Force, Australia September 2005

Generally speaking the Australian economy has performed very well recently in relation to the generation of jobs, although we have not yet discovered ways and means of providing people with a marginal attachment to the workforce with the technical, and probably literacy skills, they need.

2.4 Growth industries and industries in decline

Unpublished and published ABS data which enables comparisons between employment on an industry basis over a 20-year period (November 1984 to August 2005) and comparisons of production on an industry basis measured in $A over a 10-year period (1994/5 and 2004/5) can be summarised as follows:

- Three industries—property and business services, retail trade, and manufacturing—represent almost half of total employment in 2005.
- Comparing employment changes over the period 1984 to 2005 with production in 1994/5 to 2004/5 gives an indication of productivity changes in Australian industry. For example, employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing declined over the 20-year period but experienced a significant increase in production over 1994/5 to 2004/5. A similar pattern emerges with manufacturing, and electricity, gas and water supply.
- A number of industries experienced both significant increases in employment and production over the periods. For example, mining, construction, retail trades, transport and storage, and accommodation, cafes and restaurants.
- Communication and services, and finance and insurance exhibited modest employment growth but very significant production increases.

Source: Unpublished ABS data on total employment by industry, ABS 1309.0, Australia at a Glance 2007

These data show that while there have been significant shifts in employment between industries, all have grown in employment terms to a lesser or greater extent over a 20-year period, but there are very significant differences in production outcomes over the last 10 years. Productivity improvements are a notable feature of many of these industries, but have certainly not resulted in increases in unemployment as the May 2007 figures above show.

2.5 Population literacy statistics

> In June 1996 there were 8,365,000 employed persons and 745,500 unemployed (8.2% of the workforce).

Source: 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia, June 2006, ABS

The International Adult Literacy Survey carried out in 1996, and released as an analysis of data in the Survey of Aspects of Literacy, resulted in the statement that: 'while many adult Australians have extremely good skills, there are over 6 million (47%) who do not have the skills to cope with the literacy demands of everyday life and work.' (SAL, 1996)

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TABLE 2: Summary on 1996 IALS data for Australia

1.1 NUMBER AND PROPORTION AT EACH SKILL LEVEL

Skill level	Prose scale		Document scale		Quantitative scale	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Level 1	2,607.4	19.7	2,580.3	19.5	2,531.8	19.2
Level 2	3,631.9	27.5	3,738.3	28.3	3,590.8	27.2
Level 3	4,668.9	35.3	4,774.2	36.1	4,764.0	36.0
Level 4	2,052.7	15.5	1,880.8	14.2	2,011.9	15.2
Level 5	259.9	2.0	247.2	1.9	322.3	2.4
Total	13 200.8	100.0	13 200.8	100.0	13 200.8	100.0

Source: (4228.0 - Aspects of Literacy: Assessed Skill Levels, Australia, 1996)

The skill level distribution of people aged 15–74 was similar on each of the prose, document and quantitative literacy scales. About 2.6 million people had very poor skills (level 1) and could be expected to experience considerable difficulties in using many of the printed materials that may be encountered in daily life. About 3.6 million were at level 2, and could be expected to experience some difficulties in using many of the printed materials that may be encountered in daily life. Level 3 was the largest category, and the skills of the 4.8 million people at this level would enable them to cope with many printed materials found in daily life and at work, though not always with a high level of proficiency. Some 2.0 million people were at level 4, representing good skills, and a relatively small number (300,000) were at level 5, representing very good skills. People at both level 4 and level 5 are considered capable of managing the literacy demands of everyday life.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics

The SAL yielded some estimates for people who were of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin (indigenous peoples), but the data was criticised heavily as it excluded remote and sparsely settled areas from the SAL sample. This meant that an estimated one-quarter of indigenous peoples, who lived in such areas, did not have a chance of being selected in the survey. As the English literacy skills of this group were estimated to differ widely from the skills of those Indigenous peoples living in urban areas, the results could only be used as an indicator of the literacy skill levels of the total Indigenous population.3

Significantly, greater proportions of Indigenous peoples were at low literacy levels compared with other people who spoke English as their first language, and their skills showed more variation across the three scales. Some 41% were at Level 1 on the prose scale, 45% were at Level 1 on the document scale, and 47% were at Level 1 on the quantitative scale.

Different levels of educational attainment may explain these results to some extent. Some 62% of Indigenous peoples did not complete the highest level of secondary school

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[3] 98% of the indigenous peoples represented by the sample, reported speaking English as their first language, whereas, the 1996 census found that English was spoken at home by 80 per cent of Indigenous people. In the Northern Territory however, 61 percent of Indigenous people spoke an Indigenous language at home while in New South Wales less than one percent spoke an Indigenous language at home (ABS Census of population and Housing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people cat. No.2034.0, Canberra, 1998 p85).

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(the corresponding proportion for other people whose first language was English was 36%).

Although indigenous education and literacy have been issues of much debate over several decades, the Commonwealth government did not elect to fund a specific extension project to the 2006 Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALLS) that would have produced a larger and broader sample of indigenous respondents, and therefore more valid data.

The lack of specific attention to indigenous adult language and literacy has disappointed many in the adult language and literacy field, who believe that the ALLS could have provided important and significant data about this group of Australians and the platform for refreshed policy development.

Australian's perceptions of their skills

'People overestimate their literacy abilities and many adults with poor skills see themselves as having adequate skills for life and work.' (Hagston 2002: 36)

It is of interest to note that the Australian Survey of Aspects of Literacy found that people's self-rating of their skill level decreased as age increased; in particular, a higher proportion of people aged 55 and over rated their skills as moderate or poor. Compared to actual findings of the survey Australians tended to over-rate their skills.

Findings of the survey found that of 9.6 million workers, 90% rated their reading skills for the needs of their job as excellent or good and 86% rated their writing skills for the needs of their job the same way.

Hagston's analysis of Australian data shows that, in addition to serious overestimations of their existing skills, many Australians do not realise that they need to use their literacy skills or risk losing them. This is extremely problematic when combined with findings by O'Neill et al (2001: 59) that found 'Employers were significantly less positive about their employee's English language and literacy skills than the employees themselves.' There is a significant risk therefore that those with the weakest skills are likely to ignore or resist the need for skills development whilst being judged harshly by employers for their lack of skills. This is confirmed in Dr Larry Smith's research (2001:5) that found that 'many employers have unreasonable/unrealistic expectations of what is a reasonable level of performance for persons in training'.

Labour force statistics

There was a clear relationship between literacy skill level and labour force status. Depending on the literacy scale, 11% to 12% of employed people were at level 1. The corresponding percentages for unemployed people were 30% to 31%, and for those who were not in the labour force, the proportions were even larger.

The proportions at level 2 within each labour force category were similar, but significantly larger proportions of employed people were at levels 3 and 4/5, compared with unemployed people and those not in the labour force.

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3.1 PROPORTION AT EACH LEVEL, By Labour Force Status — Prose Scale
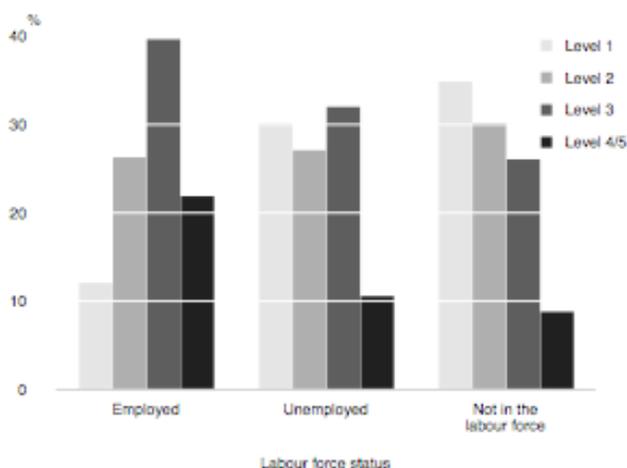
3.2 MEDIAN SCORE, By Industry

Industry	Prose scale	Document scale	Quantitative scale
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	274	277	283
Mining	305	294	303
Manufacturing	274	279	280
Electricity, gas and water supply	276	288	293
Construction	271	275	283
Wholesale trade	284	290	293
Retail trade	283	284	284
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	284	286	280
Transport and storage	288	288	296
Communication services	291	297	304
Finance and insurance services	306	303	312
Property and business services	302	301	308
Government administration and defence	306	305	311
Education	326	318	317
Health and community services	305	294	293
Cultural and recreational services	296	298	301
Personal and other services	281	286	288
Total employed	**291**	**291**	**293**

Industry statistics

In the 17 broad industry groups the largest proportions of employed people were usually at level 3. The exceptions to this were, on the prose scale:

- education, which had a larger proportion at level 4/5
- construction, which had a similar proportion at level 2
- communication services which had marginally larger proportions at levels 2 and 4/5.

Education had the largest proportion of employed people at level 4/5, with 50% at this level on the prose scale, 44% at this level on the document scale, and 43% at this level on the quantitative scale. Depending on the scale, this was between 7 and 15 percentage points higher than any other industry.

The industries with the largest proportions at Level 1 were:

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- agriculture
- forestry and fishing
- manufacturing
- electricity, gas and water supply
- construction.

In these industries the proportions at this level were 19% to 22% on the prose scale, 17% to 19% on the document scale, and 15% to 19% on the quantitative scale.

Analysis of the figures at the time contended that many of the people in work with this level of skill would have difficulty with many literacy tasks taken for granted within the workforce. These include:
- completing non-routine aspects of safety audits
- following written safety procedures especially in new situations
- completing an incident report and reading the minutes of safety meetings.

The analysis of data also proposed that the introduction of new policies and industrial legislation and new quality-assurance work practices would increase the demand on employees to read, understand and use complex documents, and to gather and record information. The analysis cautioned that seeking people with higher education to carry out the tasks usually done by level 1 and 2 employees would not be a successful strategy unless the wage rates and career prospects of the jobs were enhanced.

While no direct action has been taken by industry and governments to address these issues, to some extent they would have been considered in the development of national training packages (see below).

Emerging lessons from SAL

In the 10 years since the 1996 survey, workplace changes such as multiskilling and the introduction of hi-tech machinery have occurred, bringing the anticipated higher literacy demands because of greater dependence on print for compliance. In some cases, job re-design was a solution to take into account the low literacy levels of some employees and ensure that the literacy tasks required on the job were within their reach. But the main policy solution to emerge for Australia was the acknowledgement by McLennan in Aspects of Literacy that there was a need:

> …to develop the literacy skills further through job-related training. To do this, the workplace literacy tasks must be recognised as core workplace competencies so that they will be incorporated into industry-based training packages. (p72 SAL)

Surprisingly, the issue that directly accompanied this policy suggestion is one that has remained a constant challenge for the Australian VET system:

> Moves to enterprise-based training need to acknowledge the level of literacy skill of such a significant proportion of the workforce who may be asked to assist in training apprentices. While they may have excellent practical skills and knowledge of the enterprise, Level 1 and 2 employees are likely to have difficulty understanding training materials and assessment tasks unless the terminology is highly familiar, relevant and concrete. (P72)

Building the capacity of our training and assessment system and the professional development of specialist and generalist vocational and language and literacy teachers is still a major unresolved challenge today.

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Despite posing serious challenges, the survey did result in Australia committing to two key solutions to dealing with adult literacy

- the integrated approach to literacy in industry competency standards (what was to eventually become the 'built-in not bolted-on' policy)
- the continuation of bipartisan support for the Workplace English Language and Literacy programme (WELL) as the key nationally funded workplace initiative.

ALLS 2006—What will be the new lessons?

Australia took part in the Adult literacy and Life Skills survey second round in 2006. The survey was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and funded by a number of Commonwealth Departments.

Australian ALLS data will be available from late October 2007 with the summary publication due to be released 30 October.

It is anticipated that Australia may find (as did Canada) that although there had been a decrease in low-level skills there had also been a decrease in high-level skills and that the population was pooling at level 3.

TABLE 3: Comparative performances between Canada and Australia: percent of population aged 16-65 at each skill level (prose)

Prose scale	Survey year	level 1	level 2	level 3	level 4/5
Australia	1996	17.0	27.1	36.9	18.9
Canada	1994	16.6	25.6	35.1	22.7
Canada	2003	14.6	27.3	38.6	19.5

Source: NCVER Breakfast briefings Exhibit 5:   International adult literacy survey components and results – 1996 and 2006

TABLE 4: Comparative performances between Canada and Australia: percent of population aged 16-65 at each skill level (document)

Document scale	Survey year	level 1	level 2	level 3	level 4/5
Australia	1996	17.0	27.8	37.7	17.4
Canada	1994	18.2	24.7	32.1	25.1
Canada	2003	15.6	27.0	36.9	20.5

Source: NCVER Breakfast briefings Exhibit 5:   International adult literacy survey components and results – 1996 and 2006

Given the ageing population and shifts in employment statistics it remains to be seen whether Australia will see an improvement in its overall skills or a similar middle-band increase to Canada. Ten years ago, in June 1996, there were 8,365,000 employed persons and 745,500 unemployed (8.2% of the workforce)4. Whereas today there are only 4.4% unemployed.

The Survey of Adult Literacy showed that the literacy skills of all employees are strengthened and developed in workplaces where a considerable amount of reading, writing and numeracy occurs. Those who don't have the opportunity to interact with literacy materials in the workplace are more likely to have lower levels of literacy. Little opportunity to practice skills at work increases the probability of staying at the lowest level (Hagston 2001:39).

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[4] Source: 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia, June 2006, ABS

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It will be of interest to see if more people operating from within the workforce has increased the overall skill levels, or whether similar bands of low-level skills will still be apparent within the labour force statistics.

The release of ALLS data will be a valuable opportunity to reflect upon and analyse Australia's policy and provision efforts over the last ten years. Interestingly Australia is in an election year (just as it was in 1996). This means that data-release will coincide with either a 10-year anniversary for the current government if they win the election, or a potential new government. Depending on the outcome of the survey, and depending on the outcome of the election, we may find that the ALLS data-release provides a platform for renewed interest and energy around adult literacy, or it may be 'buried' in order to save face. It will be important for the adult language and literacy field, interested research bodies and community and industry organisations to maintain an interest in the results in any case to mitigate against the latter.

2.6　Drivers for workforce literacy

The Australian national context of workplace reform and restructuring towards a more internationally competitive and productive position has had significant consequences for employees. Restructuring has resulted in leaner organisations requiring a different approach to work. Participative workplace practices and multiskilling are two of those differences. (Baylis, 1995, p.10).

There have been a number of significant changes in the shape and structure of the Australian economy over the last 25 years.

Some of these changes can be gleaned from the employment and production analysis in 2.4 above, which indicates sectors of employment and productivity growth.

In addition to these changes there have also been a number of developments, which, taken together, can be said to have the effect of requiring not only different workplace skills, but also higher workplace skills. The basis of many of these new or higher order skills is literacy.

In summary the major drivers for workplace literacy include:
- structural changes in the economy, such as a competitive environment with the decline in the incidence of tariff protection and the opening up of the Australian economy in the early 1980's
- structural changes in the workforce, such as increasing numbers of part-time and casual workers, and lower proportions of unskilled workers
- the evolution of what is termed the knowledge economy, which provides a competitive advantage to enterprises which transform data and information into valued knowledge, processes and applications in the global and domestic market place
- over the last three decades stronger legislative obligations placed upon enterprises such as occupational health and safety and other reporting and compliance requirements
- the application of a standards-based approach to business operations, such as the ISO series which require documentation of business processes, some of which may have been implied or 'tacit' in the past

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- the revolutionary effect of information and communication technologies as a powerful tool in the operation of all enterprises, large or small, public or private.

Consideration of the skills required by workers to cope with the rapid changes in the new, increasingly technologically-driven, economy has led to a concentration not only on information technology (IT) and job-specific skills but also on what are often dubbed 'generic' or, in Australia, 'employability' skills.

The overall impact of these developments in the Australian economy over the last 25 years has been to increase the focus on the individual's employability skills as well as their technical competence. Skills such as the ability to work in teams, the capacity to communicate effectively and efficiently with peers and supervisors, the ability to plan, to use technology and computation techniques where required, have all placed a premium on the need for higher levels of literacy in many workplaces.

Although it is not yet well understood, in fact the basis of many of these so-called employability skills is literacy. The incorporation of employability skills in national training packages in the VET sector is an important step forward, but in itself will not lead to the attention required to upgrade literacy skills. Only when there is seen to be this explicit linkage, and teachers and trainers adjust their approach and pedagogy accordingly, will increases in the level of literacy occur. Lifelong learning and access to continuing education and training are no longer clichés.

3. Overview of key polices related to workplace literacy

3.1 Background

Australia has not had a formal national language, literacy and numeracy policy since the Australian Language and Literacy Policy of 1991. The ALLP policy had a 'National Collaborative Adult English and Literacy Strategy' offshoot created in 1993. The intention of it was for the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, industry and the community sectors to work together ' in this area of national importance, demonstrating that language and literacy development is a responsibility of the whole society'.(NCAELLS, 1993)

The policy became defunct in 1996 with the change of Commonwealth government. Since 1996, language and literacy policy has been developed within several separate Commonwealth and state government departments. The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) coordinated the funding and policy development for VET until June 2005 when it was abolished and its role subsumed into the Department of Education Science and Training.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of language and literacy policy is not the remit of a single Commonwealth Government department. The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) regulates policy relating to language programmes provided to migrants and refugees. The Department of Employment and Workforce Relations (DEWR) manages policy relating to increased workforce participation. The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) manages the policy relating to LLN in:

- vocational qualifications
- the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Programme (LLNP)

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- the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Programme
- the management of the Adult Literacy National Project.

Commonwealth LLN scope and focus

The current role of the Commonwealth can be defined as including:

1. The National Training Framework

The National Training Framework (NTF) was developed in cooperation with states and Territories and funded 35% by Commonwealth. The NTF is a national system of nationally recognised qualifications delivered by registered training providers under the quality assurance of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). Within the national training system LLN is integrated into accredited courses and industry Training Packages,

2. The Adult Literacy National Project

Major components of the Adult Literacy National Project for the last 10 years have included:

- a reading and writing hotline (1800 number linking caller to local LLN provider)[5]
- funding for innovative community based projects
- an adult literacy research program (Language Australia, ALNARC and then from 2002-06 NCVER)
- professional development forums for literacy practitioners through Australian Council of Adult Literacy (ACAL)
- funding to support participation in ALLS and development and subsequent review and redevelopment of the National Reporting System (NRS).

Competitive tendering for the yearly allocation has seen the loss of the adult literacy research component managed by NCVER in 2006. The total budget for the Adult Literacy National project has now been reduced from $2million to $1.4 million.

Commonwealth-funded programmes and initiatives (see Table 5)

TABLE 5: Commonwealth-funded language and literacy programmes and initiatives

Programmes/Project	Audience	Budget
The Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP DEST.	Designed to support unemployed people to operate more effectively in training or the workforce.	Allocated $49.7m.over the period 2005/6 to 2008/9. This will enable the purchase of 20,450 training places.
The Workplace English Language and Literacy program (WELL) DEST	Designed to support companies to provide integrated LLN skills development in the workplace	Spent $14. 2 million in 2005–6,
The Adult Migrant English Program - AMEP Funded through the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship.	English language tuition for migrants and humanitarian entrants who do not have functional English.	Budget in 2006/07 is $153.70 million. This funds six million hours of adult English language tuition
Skills for the Future- work skills vouchers DEST	To assist adults to gain Yr 12, basic literacy and numeracy skills or entry-level vocational	$408m. over next five years

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5 see Appendix J for Reading and Writing Hotline statistics
[6] Priority will be given to applicants in the following order: unskilled workers wishing to acquire qualifications

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	skills. [6]	

Skills for the future initiative

In a statement in 2006 the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, made the following comments in relation to a Skills for the Future statement:

> *One of the biggest challenges we face as a nation is to improve the basic skills of our workforce. Almost a third of Australians between the ages of 25 and 64 are without a Year 12 or equivalent qualification.*
>
> *Many adults fall short of functional levels of literacy and numeracy, which are now essential for just about all jobs, and certainly all jobs that involve the operation of computers and digital literacy.*
>
> *This problem largely reflects lower educational participation by young Australians two or three decades ago and previous migration programs that placed much less emphasis on skills*
>
> *Because many Australians left school or arrived in Australia without the levels of English literacy and numeracy necessary to gain qualifications, they miss out on the opportunity to move into more skilled jobs. This leaves them vulnerable to economic change and Australia misses out on their full potential.*

This is the first key Commonwealth policy statement over the last 10 years to explicitly mention adult literacy. It links the cause of low LLN skills within the population on the low participation in education and training 30 years ago, and the lack of vocational focus of English programmes for new arrivals. This paves the way for a number of new government initiatives that are positioned to increase participation in post compulsory education for mature aged people and the revision of the Adult Migrant Education Programme (AMEP) (see 3.2)

Skills vouchers

The recent Skills for the Future policy statement was generated from the Treasury Department. It represents a recent, serious, and as yet untested, attempt to engage with adults both in and outside the workforce who need their skills upgraded, including those requiring more literacy/numeracy training. Because it is to deliver substantial funds in the form of $3,000 vouchers, this program has considerable potential to engage those both in and outside the workforce with poor literacy/numeracy skills. (See Appendix C for details.)

It remains to be seen how effective a vocational certificate II outcome will be in relation to real employment pathways, and whether those people who choose the stand-alone English language and literacy option will also receive appropriate case management to support them in seeking appropriate employment. The risk is that of creating a growing pool of people 'churning' through a range of pre-vocational and functional English skills training courses but failing in real terms to convert their skills to real job outcomes.

Adult Migrant Education Programme (AMEP) review

Recently, (June 2007) a series of consultation meetings were held by an interdepartmental committee (IDC) to investigate the efficacy of provision of English language training and employment services. This has followed on from recommendations on Humanitarian Settlement that resulted in the $209.2 million dollar

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—income support recipients eg parents returning to the workforce; unemployed job seekers in receipt of income support: and people not in the labour force.

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package announced as part of the 2007–08 budget. The IDC will consider options for better integrated, flexible, vocationally-focused and employment-friendly English language training programmes to meet the diverse needs of clients. This IDC is chaired by DIAC and involves DEST, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of the Treasury, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Human Services and Centrelink.7

This IDC represents a rare policy occurrence for adult language and literacy policy within Australia, as there has not been a history of cross-department collaboration in the last 10 years. The IDC activity has raised concern in some quarters, as there are fears that English-language provision for migrants and new arrivals may default to 'vocational'-only thus denying many the required 'settlement' and citizenship-focused literacies. On the other hand, the current lack of flexibility of delivery (with the programme tied to one state-based curriculum) has drawn criticism from participants themselves and industry associations. The provider field and industry eagerly await the recommendations the IDC will make to Government in the second half of 2007.

3.2   Current issues and planned development

National Training System

Over the last 10 years Australia has built a National Training System (sometimes referred to as the National Training Framework).

The delivery building blocks of the system are national training packages, which are combinations of units of competency that describe industry training qualifications, and a series of state-based accredited courses that cover content outside of industry qualifications. These, plus the quality assurance system, the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) (see 4.8 below) which regulates training providers, delivered vocational education and training outcomes to approximately 1.8 million in 2006.8

The National Training System consists of the funding and delivery of recognised (accredited) training. The Commonwealth and all state and territory governments contribute to this effort–the Commonwealth about a 35% funding contribution in a total of more than $4 billion recurrent funding.

Accredited training options are available to all members of society through public, private and community providers (and through education provided in prisons).

Integrated vocational

In relation to literacy and numeracy, the distinctive quality of the units of competency in training packages is that they seek to integrate these requirements, rather than treating them as elements to be separately delivered and assessed. This has been described as 'built-in, not bolted-on'.

The Training Package Developers Handbook is the key document that informs the development of the industry competency standards. It advises:

Often, successful performance of an industry competency will depend on specific language, literacy or numeracy skills. The required language, literacy or numeracy skills need to be explicitly stated in the unit of competency to ensure

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7 see Appendix A
8 Australian vocational education and training statistics: Students and courses NCVER, 2006

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that assessment is fair and valid and to provide sufficient information to support training. Language, literacy and numeracy skills:

- *should be placed in context*
- *should only include those skills actually required for successful performance of work tasks*
- *could be included within elements, performance criteria, or in the range statement or evidence guide, depending on how the skills relate to workplace tasks.* (P6)

Because the advice allows for integration at unit-title, element, performance-criteria or range-statement level, and because our data analysis tool can only count content at unit-title level, we do not really know statistically how effective this 'built in' process has been over the last 10 years. Nor do we really know the extent of the effort put in by teachers and trainers to ensure that students are being trained to the appropriate level of literacy and numeracy.

Early unpublished findings from NCVER research currently underway have found that:

Literacy and numeracy' subjects occur in 19% of all training packages; for the other fields, mathematics subjects occurred in 46% of all TPs; written communication, 43%; verbal communication 52%; learning skills, 72%; and work practices, 99%.

*(**Source: unpublished data NCVER, May 2007**).*

Because language and literacy can only be counted at 'unit-title' level we know that there is an amount of 'built-in' activity that cannot be adequately measured. Further analysis of this data is needed to ascertain the exact statistical nature of the integrated effort.

Stand-alone courses

Operating alongside the industry training packages are a raft of accredited courses that also lead to qualifications. It is in this area that many courses deal directly with literacy and numeracy issues. Accredited courses, unlike national training package qualifications, are developed and accredited by the state and territory training authorities.

The NCVER report: *Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: Adult Literacy and Numeracy Courses 2002–04,* reported data on courses in the vocational education and training (VET) sector that are generally described as 'adult literacy and numeracy courses This includes general education programmes, social skills courses, employment skills courses and other mixed field programmes, plus some other activity. It does not include data on literacy and numeracy embedded in other vocational courses. The key messages from the report were that:

- there were 188 300 students enrolled in literacy and numeracy courses in 2004, which represents 11.8% of total VET students
- overall, literacy and numeracy activity has grown—from 11.3% of total VET annual hours in 2002 to 12.8% in 2004.
- In 2004, 61.2% of all literacy and numeracy students were enrolled in general education programmes (115 300 students), with a further 21.6% (40 600 students) in employment skills courses and 15.9% (30 000 students) in other mixed field programmes. The remaining 1.3% (2 500 students) was enrolled in social skills Courses.
- in 2004, most literacy and numeracy activity continued to be undertaken by:

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- females (54.8% in literacy and numeracy courses, 47.7% in total VET)
- people aged between 30 and 49 years (38.5% in literacy and numeracy courses, 35.0% in total VET)
- people from English-speaking backgrounds (58.9% in literacy and numeracy courses, 69.0% in total VET).

- the majority of literacy and numeracy course enrolments were in non-Australian qualifications Framework (AQF) areas. Within the AQF, activity was dominated by certificate I courses; with significant numbers of certificate II courses also.
- while literacy and numeracy students have lower levels of achievement from their courses and subjects than the average for total VET students, they report higher levels of satisfaction with the quality of their training.

Despite the substantial funding and provision available it should be noted that there is a systemic and funding disconnect between vocational options and stand-alone LLN courses.

The new Skilling Australia vouchers, for example, offer an individual the chance to do a certificate II vocational course, or a stand-alone LLN course, or a combination of both if the $3,000 will cover it. However, certificate III is perceived by industry to be the employment standard, therefore, it could be questioned why it is not possible for an individual to do a vocational certificate III with extra hours of integrated LLN support in order to provide an employment standard outcome. Funding anomalies and lack of parity within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) discount this option. Within the AQF certificate III is also the level for master trades and there is a funding rule that precludes an individual using public funding for more than one type of certificate III. This rule then perpetuates a cycle of people completing multiple certificate II qualifications (which may not lead to an employment outcome), and/or dropping out of certificate III options where there is inadequate time allocated and then funded for the development of vocational English language and literacy skills.

Research by Miralles (2004) and McGlusky (2006) supports the notion that both NESB and indigenous learner groups would prefer learning options that resulted in vocational outcomes rather than language proficiency outcomes alone. In Australia, the divide between Certificates II and III and the funding and policy issues that impede learners receiving adequate 'nominal hours' funding to complete the higher qualification means that for many learners their 'learning pathway' is impeded by the system rather than their own capacity to learn.

3.3   Monitoring workforce literacy provision

In a broad sense, Australia does not place a particular emphasis on monitoring statistics on workforce literacy. Excerpts of data from 1996 IALS and ABS figures continue to be quoted in reports and policy documents but there is not a mainstream desire for literacy figures at 'a level of detail'.

The only explicit 'workforce literacy provision' in Australia that can be quantified in any way is that provided through the Workplace English Language and Literacy programme—the key nationally-funded programme to provide workers with English language and literacy skills to enable them to meet the demands of their current and future employment.

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Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) funding operates on a calendar year basis but is funded by financial year. It has been funded since 1991 when it became an amalgam of the Workplace Literacy Programme (WLP) and the English in the Workplace (EWP) programme. Up until 1995 funds for ESL training in the workplace were allocated separately.

Programme funding has increased only slightly across a 15-year period from just over 9 million in 1992 to 14. 2 million in 2005-6. As there is a co-contribution from industry of 25% of the cost of training in the first year, and 50% in second and third years, the actual figure expended on WELL training is significantly more. However, there is no publicly available data on an exact industry expenditure figure.

The main measure of success of the WELL programme is its survival and stability over time. Its longevity and the degree of bipartisan support for it at government level are both indicators of its success. However the programme ran 'under the radar' for many years, only drawing attention in 1996 when the act governing it was about to lapse legislatively. This triggered a review and subsequent recommendations that it continue.

The programme has consistently trained approximately 20,000 people per year over 15 years across a number of key industries. Many of these industries align with those in growth or decline and reflect figures from the IALS that showed that there were substantial percentages of workers operating at levels 1 and 2 in certain industries such as construction and manufacturing.

Of note is the section 'personal and other services' that describes non-institutional care for example, home carers, home cleaning/lawn mowing/maintenance, security work that is often carried out by franchisees or owner operators. These people are often moving from salaried employment to these models of working after redundancy or semi-retirement, or they are buying into these small business arrangements post settlement.

In 2004 as part of its *Investing in Australia's Aged Care: More Places, Better Care* initiative, the Commonwealth government announced an additional $5.4 million over four years to help up to 8000 more aged care workers improve their literacy and language skills through the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) program. This sought to address the growing need for attendants and carers for the ageing population. This accounts for the high proportion of training in this sector in 2005-6. It is of interest to note that despite the boost in government funding many small aged care facilities cannot afford the 25% first-year and 50% second-year co-contribution. Instead, they offer their support in kind.

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TABLE 6: Major industry sectors funded in 2005-2006 (GST excl.)

Health and community services (including aged care)	$4.416M (37.45%)
Manufacturing	$3.060M (23.17%)
Personal and other services	$1.647M (7.34%)
Construction	$1.024M (4.63%)
Transport and storage	$0.811M (3.09%)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	$0.731M (4.25%)

Source: (DEST WELL FACT SHEET, 22.9.2006)

Reporting of WELL data

Each year annual WELL data is reported by the Commonwealth department responsible for Vocational Education and Training. No single source of data was available for the purposes of this report. From 1995 to 2002 the Department of Education and Youth Affairs (DETYA) published this data. In 2002 a departmental restructure resulted in the Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) being responsible for this data.

Changes to departments, performance indicators and reporting structures have affected the parity of data across time.

TABLE 7: Post-implementation review of Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) for the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Programme (DEET, March 1995)

Year	EWP	WLP	Numbers trained
1991-2		2.5million	11,638
1992-3	$3,8	6.032	16,348
1993-4	$3,8	7,627	20,442
1994-5	$3.8	7.78	Not available*

TABLE 8: Summary of WELL data derived from DEST/DETYA Annual reports 1995 – 2005

YEAR	Funding	Numbers trained
1995	$11.8	45, 000*[9]
1996	$11.6m	32, 212*
1997	$11.7m	34, 316*
1998	$11.7	17 426
1999,	$11.7	20 000

TABLE 9: Summary of WELL data

Year	Funding (GST Exclusive)	Numbers trained
2001-2002	12.068M	20,474
2002-2003	12.225M	25,754
2003-2004	12.484M	23,286
2004-2005	13.906M	18,143
2005-2006	14.260M	18,025

Source: (DEST WELL FACT SHEET, 22.9.2006)

History of impact evaluation instruments

In 1995, three years into its implementation, following a post-implementation review, the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) programme commissioned a team of researchers to develop a number of initial performance indicators and data collection

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[9] *As reporting of data was not consistent year to year there are queries about available data for 1995.

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tools. The five key performance indicators developed by Pearson et al. (1996) were designed to evaluate the social and economic outcomes from literacy and numeracy training in the workplace. These indicators were identified through interviews with key workplace personnel. These were trialled using a WELL information system database in over 20 work sites that used key performance indicators (called impact evaluation instruments) to measure:

- direct cost savings through reduced wastage of time, money, resources and/or materials
- improved participation in teams and meetings
- increased participation in workplace training
- greater job flexibility and promotion
- improved worker morale.

TABLE 10:1996 Pearson WELL Impact evaluation instruments

Instrument	Description of corresponding impact evaluation instrument
Direct cost-savings	This instrument focuses on the nature and degree of savings in the workplace that can be linked to the outcomes of the programme. The instrument also includes requests for estimations of specific savings that occurred in amount of time and/or money per day or week.
Access to and acceptability of further training	This instrument collects statistical information about subsequent training enrolments, training achievements and training success rates of programme participants. The instrument also collects information on programme participants' ability to identify and apply for further training and the changes that have occurred from participation in further training.
Participation in teams and meetings	This instrument extracts information on the perceived improvement in various aspects of team and meeting participation. The instrument also requests the value of specific gains from team suggestions that have occurred after the training program.
Promotion and job flexibility	The promotion component of the instrument collects statistics on the incidence of applications for internal promotions from programme participants after the completion of the program. The promotion component also collects information on changes to the value that the workplace places on internal promotions. The job flexibility component of the instrument focuses on the estimation of improvements in the flexibility of workers to undertake workplace tasks that have a literacy component.
The value of training survey[1]	This instrument focuses on the personal and interpersonal gains of programme participants from the training. Such gains include improvements to participants' morale, confidence to communicate and attitude to training.

Note: 1. Known as 'personal and interpersonal factors' in later research.
Source: Derived Review Of Literature, WELL, NCVER, Beddie (2006): from Pearson et al. (1996):28

Some of the key return on investment findings from the trial was then included in the DETYA annual report in 1996:

- At Ajax Spurways, prior to the WELL activities, all forklift drivers were operating with provisional licences only. This cost the company $25 000[10] per worker per annum. All now have their forklift licences.
- At Reckitt and Coleman all participants in the WELL project completed modules in the Certificate of Pharmaceutical Manufacturing. Benefits to participating enterprises also include better communication in the workplace and improved teamwork.
- Evidence from research into the impact of English as a Second Language and literacy training in the workplace conducted during 1995–96 established direct links between cost savings and language and literacy training in the workplace through:

[10] All in 1995/6 $ terms.

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- improved quality of data collection and more accurate and reliable recording of information. At the Olympic 2000 site, data could be entered onto an existing computer thus achieving savings of $60 000 on crane costs.
- reduced time in communicating job orders and written instructions. Estimated savings ranged from $40 to $250 per week, with one enterprise estimating an average of four to five worker-hours saved each day by not having to explain written job orders.
- improved accuracy in calculating volumes and quantities. Estimated savings ranged from $5 to $137 per week.
- better communication with other team or crew members with savings estimated at between $25 and $100 a week.

Unfortunately, despite validation of the instruments in extensive trials, one of the main outcomes was the perceived onerous nature of data collection that industry participants reported as being a serious disincentive to participating in the programme. As a result, the impact evaluation instruments were not implemented further. That means we do not now have extensive longitudinal ROI data available from the WELL programme.

DETYA seem to have taken the policy position at the time that the trial had proved the return on investment benefits of WELL and that in order to ensure ongoing industry participation then reporting mechanisms would have to be kept to a minimum. This assessment possibly militated against over burdensome reporting—however in the longer term it has worked against the requirement by government for justification of the program's worth.

2006 WELL Review

In 2006 an evaluation of the WELL programme was undertaken for DEST by the consultancy firm KPMG. As a prior component of that evaluation the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) conducted a Review of Literature (April 2006). These outcomes are published in two separate documents (Attachment 1 and 2).

In the KPMG document findings suggests that those workplaces where WELL-funded training has occurred have had improved outcomes on a number of levels.

Clearly, a key outcome is improved communication in the workplace. When participating employers were asked what the 'major' benefits of the WELL programme had been, the top three responses were that it had improved communication in the workplace, it had led to improved teamwork and improved relationships between workers and management. All of these responses clearly relate to improved communication arrangements.

In relation to OH&S, employers cited that employees were able to understand OH&S arrangements better and that workplace safety had been improved as a result of the WELL training. In addition, the documentation of work practices could be undertaken more effectively.

Finally, improved productivity was an outcome identified by participating employers. This was a result of employees being able to communicate and undertake their work duties more effectively. (p 46/7)

The findings of the review suggest that the WELL programme works better for large businesses where in house training can be accommodated and shifts covered. The review suggests that better access needs to be made of WELL for small to medium business

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As a direct outcome of the 2006 review, the Adult Literacy Policy Section of DEST have recently created some new KPIs based on stakeholder satisfaction with program outcomes. They have set an 85% satisfaction rate for participants, Registered Training Organisations and enterprises involved in WELL Programmes. A new evaluation strategy is being developed with an emphasis on rural, regional and indigenous outcomes from the program and better uptake by small to medium business.

TABLE 11: Numbers trained—WELL

Who was trained	ATSI #	ATSI %	NESB #	NESB %	ESB #	ESB %
2001–2002	1167	5.70%	4904	23.95%	14403	70.35%
2002–2003	814	3.16%	5390	20.93%	19550	75.91%
2003–2004	1471	6.32%	4791	20.57%	17024	73.11%
2004–2005	515	2.84%	4513	24.87%	13115	72.29%
2005–2006	1082	6.00%	4189	23.24%	12754	70.76%

ATSI—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
NESB—Non-English speaking background
ESB—English speaking background

Note: The ATSI % figure can vary depending on when projects complete. As ATSI comprises a small % of the total one large project can move the percentages a lot.

It is interesting to note that the percentages of ATSI, NESB and ESB clients trained under WELL remain relatively consistent over the years with English-speaking background participants making up nearly 75% of the total number trained. In general, figures trained in WELL represent percentages of each group within the population.

4. Current literacy provision

4.1 Models of delivery

The LLNP and AMEP programmes may eventually contribute to workplace literacy by delivering individuals into employment with increased skills. However, these programmes are pre-employment and classroom-based models of provision and so are not discussed in detail in this paper (basic detail of each programme's structure is provided in Appendix K).

Delivery of training packages within vocational education and training occurs in a mix of on-the-job and on-the-job combinations that differ according to qualification level, industry and funding arrangements.

WELL Training Delivery

Training delivered under WELL must be integrated with other workplace training using approved training packages where possible and must be delivered by suitably qualified trainers from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). Training is delivered at the workplace by the RTO trainer, who works with the company's training manager to ensure the training is supported by both management and staff and becomes part of the normal workplace environment. his helps dispel the reluctance of some workers with low literacy skills to participate in training. Training can be conducted in small groups as well as one-to-one.

The benefit of WELL is that it is a flexible programme that can accommodate a variety of delivery approaches custom-built to meet the needs of the particular enterprise—for example an enterprise-based teacher working onsite 2 days a week within a factory or a

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trainer working for several hours alongside road construction teams out on the road. Training dollars are not capped per participant and will change according to the scope of the training, numbers to be trained and training environment.11

4.2   The role of the government

See also 3.1

Devolution of WELL training contracts

With regard to the WELL programme the Commonwealth's national office used to have formal delegation for approval of all WELL funds—both training and strategic and resource development projects. In 2006, following the review, the delegation for training projects was devolved to each state DEST officer. This has resulted in more autonomy for states to promote the programme independently to key industries within their state, make decisions about how the training dollars are spent, run continuous application rounds and to deal with approval of training contracts in a timelier manner. A possible risk of the devolution is that the programme may become more splintered and lose a national focus. Another is that the devolution did not come with additional resources or staffing to state offices of DEST so that state officers are now dealing with more paperwork and administration and have less time for project mentoring and associated quality issues.

The role of the state/territory governments

State and territory governments contribute about 65% of the cost of recognised training. The training authorities are responsible for the delivery of recognised training, whether done on or off the job, or whether delivered by public or private training organisations, in that they apply the standards required in the Australian Quality Training Framework.

Of the approximately $4 billion of public funding for training, a proportion is allocated to the delivery and development of adult literacy training or related activities (see 3.2 above under 'Stand-alone courses' for details of the nature and extent of this activity). A probably larger, but unknown, proportion would be indirectly allocated to adult literacy via the integrated teaching and assessment of units of competency through national training packages. As outlined above, we do not yet have quantified evidence of the extent of this approach.

Other literacy activities

Recently the Commonwealth government commissioned a report on the current state and potential for development of the Adult Community Education sector (ACE)). The report found that the ACE sector was responsible for the provision of 123,000 Employment Skills and 68,000 adult literacy subject enrolments in *2005 Community Education and National Reform—A Discussion Paper* (Bardon, 2006:5).

The paper called for greater funding for and coordination of this sector nationally. Critics argue that it is the idiosyncratic and informal nature of ACE that makes it so attractive to learners and to formalise it or regulate it would defeat this.

In addition to the formal accredited outcomes counted by Commonwealth and states there is also an unquantified amount of informal language, literacy and numeracy activity that takes place in the community, often in ACE providers. An NCVER research project

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[11] See case studies in Appendix XX

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is underway to quantify and describe this activity. The purpose of *How's it Going? Monitoring Progress in Non-accredited Community Language, Literacy and Numeracy Programs* (release date 2008), is to identify individual needs and the range of outcomes that accrue from participation in non-accredited community adult language, literacy and numeracy programmes across a variety of client groups. The research does not have any explicit intention of investigating workplace literacy issues however it may uncover informal activity that supports the skills development of existing workers or job seekers as it builds a picture of existing programs.

4.3   Company engagement with workforce literacy

The extent of enterprise engagement with literacy outside WELL and other government-funded programs is impossible to determine. We know that enterprises spend considerable sums on training within the enterprise. In a survey undertaken by the ABS for the period 2001/2, 41% of all employers spent $4.118 billion on providing structured training to their employees (that is, training with a specified content or predetermined plan). We can reasonably assume that at least a small (perhaps very small) proportion of these funds would be directed towards improving aspects of literacy in the workplace although the survey did not breakdown the stats to ensure literacy related training.
Source: (ABS 6362.0 Employer Training Expenditure and Practices, Australia 2001-02).

Participation in the WELL programme generally reflects the identification of a particular 'business' need in a specific enterprise, which in turn is influenced by how much particular industries are impacted by government regulation and industry standards. This identification of need is generally connected to how effectively the WELL programme is marketed to enterprises by a training provider.

Employers are more likely to be interested in participating in a WELL programme when they are convinced that the programme will deliver:
• improved teamwork
• better employer-employee relations
• improved quality outcomes
• quicker training
• reduced time and error in the production process
• improved health and safety
• reduced wastage (WELL Literature review 2006).

Crucial elements that contribute to quality in workplace programs that were identified in the WELL review of Literature are:
• good-quality partnerships between enterprises and providers
• adequate funding
• flexibility in approach to delivery arrangements
• qualified trainers
• effective marketing and sensitivity (in relation to participation which should be voluntary)
• a long-term commitment and effective evaluation.

Barriers to effective programs were identified in the literature as:
• a lack of awareness of potential benefits

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- perceived cost
- poor communication between participants (enterprises and providers)
- inadequate brokerage between trainers and employers
- insufficient professional development for trainers.

The KPMG evaluation report on WELL included a number of recommendations that reflected the major findings of the study. The most important of these that related to enterprise engagement included:

- the need to increase the participation of small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) by better promoting the program and its benefits to these enterprises
- improving information to employer bodies and targeting the program more effectively to overcoming skills shortages
- developing tools for training providers to market WELL, especially to SMEs.

4.4   Profile and roles of main stakeholders

Registered Training Organisations (providers)

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are providers and assessors of nationally recognised training. Only RTOs can issue nationally recognised qualifications.

In order to become registered, training providers must meet the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards. Training organisations register to provide nationally-recognised training with its relevant state or territory registration authority. This ensures the quality of Vocational Education Training (VET) services throughout Australia.

When registering the RTO must state its scope of registration detailing:

- the training or assessment it intends to deliver
- the fields or industries in which it may deliver training or assessment
- the maximum level of qualifications it may issue.

To ensure an RTO continues to deliver quality training or assessment, its registration must be renewed with the relevant state or territory registering authority at least every five years. The registering authority can audit the RTO at any time during its period of registration.

RTOs include TAFE colleges and institutes, adult and community education providers, private providers, community organisations, schools, higher education institutions, commercial and enterprise training providers, industry bodies, and other organisations that meet registration requirements.

All registered training organisations are entered into the National Training Information Service (NTIS) (www.ntis.gov.au)

ACAL and state literacy councils

The Australian Council of Adult Literacy was established in 1977 to promote issues regarding adult English language, adult literacy and numeracy policy and practice. It is the national body representing the adult literacy teaching workforce. ACAL maintains a strong interest in community-based approaches to delivery and social justice issues. It is funded by DEST to provide PD for the workforce through its LiteracyLink publication and

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its annual conference. ACAL has also tendered for and received funding to undertake NCVER research. Their NCVER report, *Social and Economic Benefits of Improved Adult Literacy: Towards a Better Understanding* (Hartley and Horne), attempted to look at the social and economic costs of poor adult literacy and numeracy skills, and the benefits of investing in such skills. The report suggested possible models for measuring outcomes but did not provide new data. However, the Hartley and Horne report contributed an important point that it is not always possible to value costs and benefits in monetary terms in the education and training field, as many of the outcomes do not have a direct monetary value attached to them.

Each state has an Adult Literacy Council that provides PD opportunities for the LLN workforce. Both ACAL and state-based councils have websites, electronic, and print-based publications that inform the LLN field of issues, events, research and upcoming publications. ACAL and state-based councils also run annual conferences.

DEST has invited representatives from ACAL onto the advisory committee for the NCVER Adult Literacy Research (now defunct) and a number of other project selection panels.

Some members of ACAL work in WELL projects although there is no formal special interest group relating to workplace literacy in ACAL.

National Industry Skills Councils

Industry has a voice in Australia's vocational education and training (VET) system through a national system of industry advisory arrangements.

Since the national VET system was formed, a range of industry advisory bodies have been the key conduits of advice and information between the VET system and industry. They provided a way for industry needs to be identified, communicated, and serviced and they have had primary responsibility for the development and maintenance of training packages.

In 2003, the ANTA Board decided to take a new approach to exchanging advice and information with industry through the establishment of 10 new Industry Skills Councils, which have progressively replaced existing industry advisory bodies.

The Industry Skills Councils have two key roles:
• providing accurate industry intelligence to the VET sector about current and future skill needs and training requirements
• supporting the development, implementation and continuous improvement of quality nationally recognised training products and services, including training packages.

The Skills Councils are:
• Agri-Food Industry Skills Council
• Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council
• Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council
• ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industry Skills Council Ltd (EE-Oz Training Standards)
• Government and Community Safety Industry Skills Council

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- Innovation and Business Industry Skills Council (Innovation and Business Skills Australia)
- Manufacturing Industry Skills Council
- Resources and Infrastructure Industry Skills Council
- Services Industry Skills Council
- Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council.

National industry WELL network

The ISC WELL network is a strategic national project to promote cross-industry sharing and collaboration on issues relating to essential skills, including language, literacy and numeracy, in workplace training and development.

Through WELL strategic funding, DEST has funded the network over the last 3 years. Previous to this the network was funded through ANTA initiatives. The network receives approximately $250,000 per year to:
- provide a forum for Industry Skills Councils and DEST to discuss issues and exchange information relating to the WELL programme and the inclusion of essential skills, including LLN, vocational education and training
- explore national and international research findings to build ISC understanding of essential skills and their role in workforce development
- consider implications from the outcomes of the International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey and propose appropriate responses from ISCs and the VET sector
- continue to raise awareness across industry of the value of LLN skills to the workplace and the availability of WELL resources and training opportunities
- help build LLN skills in the VET sector including through the take up of DEST's Essential Skills Framework (revised NRS).[12]

The network meets regularly and has been responsible for a promotional publication *Up to Speed* (Attachment 3) containing a series of industry-specific LLN case studies. It has also organised and facilitated a series of industry breakfast WELL information sessions in three states.

The network is coordinated by the Innovation and Business Skills Council which, as lead agent, pays a facilitator who is the primary driver of the activity to manage the network and draw together information and issues. Each ISC is paid an amount to contribute to the project outcomes, such as publication content and their participant's travel costs. However, participants are not paid for their time. Despite this, representation on the group remains strong and the impact of the network's activities is growing across time. The evaluation of the network's activity has resulted in Industry Skills Council representatives reporting that LLN issues were better represented in broader ISC projects. The recent evaluation of the WELL industry breakfasts was positive, with a high proportion of attendees indicating their intention of following up on the WELL programme.

The network provides the strongest link between industry and government specifically on LLN in the workplace. However it has to be said that some ISCs remain more engaged than others. There are mixed definitions of literacy at play within its discourse and

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[12] Excerpt from ISC Network work plan 2007-8.

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several issues such as the importation of foreign workers under specific visa arrangements remain off the agenda and regaled to the 'too hard basket'.

State-based industry bodies MESAB network

The State ITAB network complements the national body in each Australian state. The state ITABs work in partnership with employers, employees, vocational education and training providers, and the government to identify training needs. They then facilitate and promote training activity for the benefit of the industry in that State.

The Manufacturing and Engineering Skills Advisory Board (MESAB) in Victoria runs a WELL network that meets regularly. It also has a strongly committed facilitator who has run the network over several years using a mix of funding options (and in some years unfunded).

In 2007 MESAB have three projects running funded from two different sources. The three projects are:

1. Reframing the Future project

MESAB as been funded to facilitate the Victorian WELL Practitioners Network as a Community of Practice under the national Reframing the Future PD initiative. This means that participants will not have to be invoiced for attendance. This group has been responsible for a NCVER research project, *The Professional Development Requirements of Workplace English Language and Literacy Programme Practitioners.*

2. A Professional Development Guide for WELL Practitioners

DEST has approved the MESAB Funding Application to develop a Professional Development Guide for WELL practitioners as a follow-on from recommendations in the NCVER Research Project Report.

3. National WELL Practitioners Conference

DEST have provided funding support for the first National WELL Practitioners Conference to be conducted on 2007.

It is interesting to note that the interest and commitment from one state industry group is leading the way in the development of PD options nationally.

Australian Industry Group and Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Two major employer organisations, the Australian Industry Group and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry have both supported WELL during its review and the Skills for the Future initiative. The Australian Industry Group (AiG) is currently undertaking a project—*Skilling the Existing Workforce*. The *Skilling the Existing Workforce Project* is a Commonwealth-State Skills Shortage initiative. It is funded through the Strategic National Initiatives component of the 2005–08 Commonwealth-State Agreement for Skilling Australia's Workforce. The research includes:

• consultation to inform industry
• training organisation and government approaches to workforce skilling, and as an input to the development of specific approaches
• models for workforce skilling that will be tested and evaluated through enterprise level trials in 2007.

Two recommendations from the discussion paper include a call for government to:

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- adopt strategies to broaden participation in workforce development strategies at the enterprise level by:
  - specifically targeting low-skilled and employees with language literacy and numeracy needs
  - developing highly relevant accessible and 'non threatening' programs employing informal and non-formal learning techniques.
- further target investments aimed at building literacy and numeracy, and learning foundations skills among the low-skilled to boost participation in formal and non-formal learning amongst the low-skilled in workplaces. These investments include:
  - the Workplace English Language Literacy programme
  - the Australian Skills Vouchers programme
  - state programmes

It will be interesting to see if the enterprise trials continue to specifically foreground language, literacy and numeracy or whether these will be swallowed up into broader terms such as Employability Skills.

4.5   Workforce literacy data

See Section 2.

4.6   Uptake of workforce training

Over the years DEST national office has funded a number of projects that have developed generic promotional materials for WELL. They include information packs and specific industry-based products such as *WELL ... On Track: All You Ever Wanted to Know About Managing your WELL Program: Your Guide to Accessing, Implementing and Administering Workplace English Language and Literacy Programs (in the manufacturing industry),* (Tina Berghella, 2003). More recent examples include *WELL Worthwhile*, (Agrifood Industry Skills Council, 2006) and *Up to Speed*, national ISC WELL Network case studies, 2007.

The national ISC WELL Network has also been funded through WELL national strategic project funds to run a series of breakfast forums in Adelaide, Sydney and Brisbane to promote the benefits of WELL to interested industry partners (see Attachments X and Y). These involved speakers from DEST, MESAB and participants of WELL-funded training programmes. Evaluations showed that the most engaging and effective speakers were not the DEST officers, RTO representatives or the employers, but rather the employees who had taken part in WELL training and who articulated the benefits from a personal and organizational perspective. (See Rosilind's story, Attachment 5.)

Currently the national DEST WELL section has a set of promotional 'shells' under development that will allow for a range of WELL information to be collated and distributed by the national WELL office.

Despite the need for engaging glossy brochures and clear guideline material, a central key factor that is crucial to the marketing of WELL is the individual in the RTO who makes contact with the enterprise and either markets the programme or answers an enterprise's inquiry and converts it into a training solution.

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4.7 Provider capacity and related issues

General provision

Because of the integration of LLN content into training packages, vocational trainers across the training system need to be able to recognise it and 'unpack' it from units of competency. WELL resource funding is available for resources to assist with this. *The Get Real Factor* (http://www.agrifoodskills.net.au/well_main.php) is one such resource. It is produced by the Agri-food industry Skills Council and provides a methodology and tools to assist vocational trainers and assessors to address LLN issues in their training and assessment.

In addition to the generalist vocational trainers delivering vocational courses or training package qualifications, literacy specialists and experienced WELL trainers also need to fully understand how to 'unpack' the LLN content built into units of competency.

Research by McKenna and Fitzpatrick (NCVER 2004) found that with appropriate support vocational trainers could successfully deliver a 'built-in approach to LLN.

> *… provided they have a framework for conceptualising linguistic practices in the workplace context and within the training package, and can facilitate strategies and activities to develop critical workplace communication. The specialist language, literacy and numeracy teacher needs to have a sound knowledge of the requirements of the specific industry and workplaces, as well as of the relevant industry competencies to understand the reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy skills required by learners in their programs.*

However, the research also found that restrictive funding models that do not provide for specialist professional development leave registered training organisations to make commercial decisions about levels of support required by learners. The provision of PD for both vocational and specialist teachers is often lacking and attention to LLN issues is sublimated by a variety of other training and assessment issues.

WELL providers

One of the key documented components of a successful WELL programme is the capacity of the RTO to provide qualified staff. Therefore an RTO that seeks to offer the WELL programme to and enterprise needs to have staff who are trained to deliver an integrated approach.

Within each state and territory there are a number of key private and public providers who have built up reputations and experience with WELL provision. Often certain industries will have an informal allegiance to particular RTOs. Successful programmes gain industry credibility and word of mouth remains a strong component of an RTO building a market share of delivery.

The most successful RTOs are those that have developed personalized relationships with industry, can offer trainers with not only LLN expertise but also a good working knowledge of the industry and the ability to be flexible with delivery.

4.8 Quality assurance mechanisms

AQTF

The Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) is the quality assurance mechanism applying to the delivery and assessment of all recognised qualifications in the VET

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sector. As explained above, VET qualifications are defined by industry national training packages or accredited courses. Organisations wishing to deliver any VET qualification are required to register as a training organisation with a defined scope of registration—that is, which qualifications they are allowed to deliver and assess.

WELL programme management and quality assurance

WELL training projects are primarily looked after by DEST state officers. These state officers also coordinate applications, monitor projects, follow up outstanding reports, promote the programme to local industry and chair the local State Advisory Committees (SACs).

Incoming applications are assessed by a State Advisory Committee which evaluates on a case-by-case basis the scope, duration and rationale for each project and assesses the budget accordingly. SACs then recommend projects to be funded to the DEST State delegate. Applications must show the capacity of the RTO to deliver (within the AQTF), an outline of the qualifications of the trainers and assessors, and provide a letter of support from the enterprise receiving the training.

The programme has been audited a number of times during its period of operation, both internally and by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), The programme is considered low risk as the application process and the addition of the employer contribution requirement helps ensure that funds are spent appropriately and effectively.

The funding recipient must provide a three-month and six-month report on progress. The final report contains detailed reporting on training outcomes, as well as detailed financial statements and an audit from a licensed auditor for total expenditure on the project including the employer contribution.

Because of these reporting and accountability requirements it is rare for an RTO to seek WELL funding simply as a revenue stream because they have to have infrastructure and capable staff and a legitimate relationship with an RTO to get the training off the ground. Weaknesses of any kind are picked up at application and SAC selection process level.

4.9   Funding models

WELL funding requirements

Employers must contribute 25% (in the first year) to 50% (for the second and third years) towards the cost of the training, as well as provide in-kind support such as training facilities, and wages for workers while they are being trained.

4.10 Evidence of relative cost-

See above.

4.11 Current issues and planned development

See above.

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5. Outcomes of literacy provision

5.1 Transfer of knowledge into workplace practices

Apart from the general benefits of literacy for the workplace identified in the WELL Review of Literature study (see above), there is no recent quantifiable Australian evidence linking literacy per se directly with improvements in enterprise effectiveness or productivity.

More generally, in a report *Building Sustainable Adult Literacy Provision—A review of International Trends in Adult Literacy and Policy* (NCVER 2004), McKenna and Fitzpatrick identify four types of literacy within the context of the new economy:

- lingering basics—for understanding school work
- new basics—for participating in the workplace
- elite literacy—for higher order skills
- foreign language literacy—for participating in the global workplace.

On this basis it can be argued that the 'new basics' constitute the main emphasis of literacy skills as delivered and assessed through national industry training packages, while the more general accredited courses for adults would deliver predominantly 'lingering basics' together with some elite literacy skills. These latter skills would also be delivered in some of the higher (diploma) qualifications in training packages.

To the extent that units of competency with required levels of literacy/numeracy are assessed in either the workplace or a simulated workplace environment, some evidence is available concerning the transfer of these skills to the workplace.

Another perspective on this issue relates to Australia's national training system recently identifying and adopting eight employability skills that are now being incorporated in Training Package qualifications. The skills are:

- **communication** that contributes to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers
- **teamwork** that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes
- **problem solving** that contributes to productive outcomes
- **initiative and enterprise** that contribute to innovative outcomes
- **planning and organising** that contributes to long-term and short-term strategic planning
- **self-management** that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth
- **learning** that contributes to on-going improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes
- **technology** that contributes to effective execution of tasks.

Important points to note here are that:

- most of these skills rest on the new basics for participating in the workplace category of literacy
- these employability skills are defined in terms of contributing to the enterprise.

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Given that these skills will be incorporated in training packages and will be assessed in the context of a unit of competency or qualification, it would be possible to say that literacy linked skills should be transferred into a workplace setting.

5.2   Resulting changes in productivity measures

See WELL Worthwhile case study in Golden Circle as Attachment 4and Scalabrini Aged Care PP slides Attachment 5.

5.3   Relative cost-effectiveness of different approaches to upskill the workforce

See WELL review section.

5.4   Other outcomes

The WELL literature review noted the view of the OECD concerning the importance of dealing with the needs of lower skilled workers, such as those with low levels of literacy, in periods of strong employment. The generation of 'social capital' in these terms is said to lead to the development of new social networks and improved education, training and employment outcomes.

Anecdotally (from state DEST officers and speakers at ISC WELL information breakfasts) there are a multitude of stories about the personal and social benefit from participation in the WELL programme (incidental to the workplace outcomes.)

Stories include that of workers who have taken holidays out of their home state for the first time after participating in a WELL project due to increased confidence in reading maps and directions. Others have begun to write birthday cards to family members for the first time. These stories have not been formally documented over time, however examples such as the Scalabrini Village presentation at the ISC WELL breakfasts indicates the type of personal benefits of the programme that are being reported alongside enterprise outcomes (Attachment 5.

Emphasis on human capital development has tended to dominate Australian literacy policy discourse. However notions of social capital measures and outcomes have recently been investigated through a number of NCVER studies such as *Reframing Adult Literacy and Numeracy Course Outcomes: A social Capital Perspective,* (Balatti et al, 2006) and in Black's article on the development of social capital in Literacylink Volume 27, no 5 , September 2007.

The Balatti study investigated whether adult literacy and numeracy courses produced social capital outcomes, which are changes in students' connections with networks of people. The study found that 80% of the students improved the structure of their networks and the way they communicated, as well as contributing to positive socioeconomic benefits in the areas of education and learning, employment and the quality of working life, and access to goods and services. The study used OECD measurement tools to reporting on broader outcomes and benefits of literacy and numeracy courses, emphasising that these courses are about more than the acquisition of a set of technical skills.

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6. Literacy capacity building

6.1 Tutor profiles

The issue of appropriate formal qualifications, accredited PD options and funding for professional development remains a vexed issue.

In her research, McKenna et al (2005) identified key features that assist integrated approaches to language, literacy and numeracy teaching within vocational programs. These include:

- using a constructivist approach, which acknowledges that learning is affected by the context in which it is taught, as well as by students' beliefs and attitudes
- developing an explicit model of language appropriate to the context of the industry
- using a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching
- providing a framework for describing language, literacy and numeracy
- conducting an analysis of the specific training package and workplace context
- ensuring there is capacity to identify critical points of intervention
- considering the needs of learners.

Generalist unit

An elective (not compulsory) unit within the mandated qualification for VET trainers and assessors is "TAALLN401A Address language, literacy and numeracy issues within learning and assessment practice" was developed to cover the basic knowledge and skills a general trainer and assessor would need to know to address language, literacy and numeracy issues within their training an assessment practice. It does not constitute a specialist qualification.

It is a positive that this unit exists at all in this qualification because at the time of endorsement for the qualification (ANTA 2005) there was not much advocacy (by the states and territories) for the unit. In the meantime, however, several industry associations (such as Construction Queensland) have made this unit a primary focus for the professional development of industry trainers and assessors. Anecdotally, there is a call by a number of industry associations and RTOs for this unit to be made part of the core (compulsory) of the Training and Assessing (TAA) qualification. However, there is at present no formal driver at a state or Commonwealth policy level or within the Innovation and Business Skills Council (IBSA) (the ISC responsible for the Training and Assessment Training Package) to see this occur.

Specialist qualifications

In 2004/5 DEST funded the development of an Advanced Diploma in LLN in VET practice in an attempt to create a benchmark qualification for language and literacy specialists that would be mandated for WELL trainers. At present WELL guidelines specify that:

> *Trainers must have a Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment as required by the AQTF and appropriate qualifications to deliver language, literacy and numeracy training to adult learners. The Advanced Diploma in Teaching LLN in VET was recently released in South Australia. This course will be DEST's preferred qualification for WELL trainers in the future.*

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However, there is no nationally accepted and applied definition of what constitutes appropriate qualifications to deliver language, literacy and numeracy training to adult learners.

There is a plethora of state-based undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications available in the teaching English as a second language and adult literacy fields, but there is currently no agreed minimum national benchmark for entry as a WELL practitioner (see Appendix G).

To date there has not been a strong uptake of the advanced diploma and at least two states have subsequently developed and accredited Graduate Vocational Certificates in LLN. DEST to date has still not mandated any qualification as the benchmark for WELL provision nationally.

WELL practitioner profiles

In 2006 MESAB researched the profile of WELL practitioners nationally and found that:
- practitioners are predominantly female (71%) and mature-aged (81% over 40 years of age and 0% under 30 years of age)
- practitioners have two or more qualifications; most of them (79%) had an undergraduate teaching qualification
- 48% of respondents came to the WELL programme after some other form of primary or secondary school teaching.

The apparently low number of young new practitioners was evidenced by the age range of current practitioners. In the absence of a recognised qualifications pathway, new entrants are being severely limited by an entry pathway based on experience.

Practitioners and managers identified a number of key skills and attributes required by a WELL practitioner over and above language, literacy and numeracy qualifications. These include:
- experience working with adults
- understanding of workplace culture
- flexibility
- integrity
- empathy
- ability to work independently
- ability to deal with a range of stakeholder needs
- good communication skills.

The research found that WELL practitioners are required to use these skills and attributes in a number of roles in:
- face-to-face delivery
- the provision of advice to non-WELL practitioners and industry personnel
- the development of learning and assessment resources
- negotiation
- writing WELL Programme reports and submissions
- the capacity of a representative of the registered training organisation.

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6.2 Tutor professional development

The WELL PD research noted that practitioners thought that there were few professional development opportunities available to them, either as entry-level practitioners or accessible on an ongoing basis. They noted that they were largely responsible for their own learning and development.

Key issues relating to the provision of current professional development activities included:

*   decreasing opportunities to achieve adult literacy qualifications through the higher education sector
*   lack of consistent induction training for entry-level WELL practitioners
*   lack of opportunities for collegiate networking
*   lack of opportunities to share experiences and resources
*   inconsistent nature of current professional development for WELL practitioners
*   lack of professional development specific to language literacy and numeracy. The most common forms of professional development were VET-related workshops, such as occupational health and safety (38%)
*   lack of ongoing professional development; 36% had undertaken no professional development over the past two years.

When questioned about the possible changes to roles of WELL practitioners in the next five years and the professional development implications, respondents noted the following issues:

*   It is likely that there will be a continuation of the multiplicity of changes that have occurred over the past five years, such as integration of language, literacy and numeracy and vocational training, and the broadening of the language, literacy and numeracy skills covered by the WELL Programme.
*   There is growing emphasis on the need for flexible delivery.

6.3 Assessment tools

The WELL funding guidelines state that:

> The language, literacy and numeracy proficiency and training needs of workers must be assessed. The assessment should only address training issues and should only be used to meet training and employment requirements.

> The National Reporting System (NRS) must be used to report the final language, literacy and numeracy outcomes of WELL participants (refer Section 3.7 of guidelines).

The National Reporting System was developed in 1996 as a tool for measurement of LLN competence in adults. It is currently under review, and a draft copy of the revised document is available for download at www.lwa/au.com

The revised NRS was trialled under the title Essential Skills Framework (ESF) but this was considered too much like the Employability Skills Framework. The current working title is the Australian Literacy and Language Framework (ALLF). A final draft will be released in September 2007 and implemented in 2008.

Reporting using the NRS has been a somewhat controversial issue for WELL as the contract calls for NRS assessments of individuals at pre assessment, but reports of

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group outcomes for post assessments. This is completely unlike the reporting for the LLNP that requires individual reporting of progress against NRS macro-skill indicators on each student per 160 hours.

Given the industry resistance to the use of the Pearson Impact evaluation instruments in 1996, and the recent feedback from an industry participant at one of the ISC WELL information breakfasts—'(I am) concerned about the amount of reporting involved'—it remains to be seen if DEST will decide to tighten the reporting requirements on individual LLN skill gain or maintain their allowance of a degree of 'broad analysis' of LLN gain against the Training Package competencies.

6.4   Resource development

Each year a percentage of WELL funding (approx 10–15%) is assigned to resource and strategic project development. These projects can be for the development of:

- whole industry strategies such as *WELL Communicated: A National Strategy for the Transport and Distribution Industry* (2000)
- a specific literacy information and PD resource such as the Services Industry *Taking the Lead* website (www.takingthelead.com.au)
- a practical learning resource that embeds literacy learning into a vocational course (such as the Certificate II in Racing, for jockeys and stablehands, www.staff.vu.edu.au/racing/index.html).

All WELL resources are listed on the DEST Literacynet site, (http://literacynet.dest.gov.au/), and on the 'WELL database' search option on the VocEd database (www.voced.edu.au/search/index.php?well=1).

At present there are 485 items available on the database representing WELL resource development activity since 1998. (Pre-998 resources are now considered out of date, as they predate training packages and will not have undergone any formal quality assurance). An ongoing issue has been the availability of the resources once they are produced, and related distribution and marketing. DEST, NCVER and the national ISC WELL network are collaborating on a solution to this. The topic of WELL resources (both their quality and uptake) is the focus of an evaluation project currently underway by DEST and part of the ISC WELL network 2007/8-work plan.

6.5   Current issues and planned development

The key issues that require a watching brief in coming months are the outcomes of:

- Australia's general election and possible changes to public service departments
- Australia's ALLS data and subsequent media attention
- implementation of new WELL KPIs
- WELL resources evaluation strategy
- Skills Vouchers uptake
- IDC recommendations on AMEP review
- review of NRS (new Australian Literacy and Language Framework (ALLF)).

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Appendix A: Improvements to Australian Government-funded English-language training

Invitation to Stakeholder Forums

Background

Australian Government funded English language training has for many years been administered on the basis that there were distinct target groups—new arrivals and jobseekers. Clearly, in a climate of high employment and significant labour shortages in some sectors, this distinction no longer holds. We need to find ways to deliver English language training in more flexible, vocationally-focused, employment-friendly and accessible formats. Previous feedback from service providers, students and other stakeholders supports the need for a new approach.

Learning English is one of the first and most important steps that migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds can make towards successful settlement in Australia. English language is important because it gives new migrants access to more of the opportunities that are available to those living in Australia including study, rewarding employment, easier access to services and activities, as well as the personal social benefits that come from engaging with the Australian community more broadly.

Programmes

As noted above, the Australian Government funds a range of adult English language programmes, including the Adult Migrant English Programme (AMEP), the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Programme (LLNP), Workplace English Language and Literacy Programme (WELL) and English as a Second Language—New Arrivals. These programmes are administered by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

Recent Interdepartmental Committee (IDC)

Some of the issues related to the provision of English language training and employment were canvassed in the recent IDC on Humanitarian Settlement, which resulted in the $209.2 million dollar package announced as part of the 2007-08 budget.

Current IDC

A new IDC has been established to consider options for better integrated, flexible, vocationally focused and employment-friendly English language training programmes to meet the diverse needs of clients. This IDC is chaired by DIAC and involves DEST, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of the Treasury, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Human Services and Centrelink. The IDC will be presenting its recommendations to Government in the second half of 2007.

Seeking your Views

We are seeking your views on how the Australian Government can improve the delivery of English language training to best meet the needs of clients and employers. Your input will be taken into account in the formulation of policy options.

You are invited to participate in a stakeholder forum. We are interested in your views on:

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1. What is working well in the current programmes?
2. What are the things that need to be addressed to improve the outcomes of the suite of the ELT programmes?
3. We are particularly interested in English and employment:
    – How could the vocational focus of current programmes be improved?
    – How can simultaneous English language study and employment be encouraged / facilitated?

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Appendix B: The role of the Industry Skills Council

Industry Skills Councils help employers make the most of Government funding

'Industry Skills Councils (ISC) are working together to help employers find effective ways to skill their workforce,' says Sharon Coates, CEO of Innovation and Business Skills Australia.

'ISC collaboration is a powerful way to tackle skill development issues that apply across all industries,' says Ms Coates.

One major issue that affects all industries is the level of language, literacy and numeracy skill in the workforce. According to a recent report commissioned by the Ai Group, 'many adults fall short of functional levels of literacy and numeracy which are now essential for just about all jobs.'

The report, *Skilling the Existing Workforce Background Report,* identifies key issues associated with workforce skilling. It goes on to claim that employers believe literacy issues are not limited to the skilling of low skilled workers, but that they also apply to moderately and well-skilled staff.

'Productivity, workforce flexibility and quality processes are of critical importance to the business bottom line. Workplace training that integrates language, literacy and numeracy skill development has the potential to deliver significant business benefits, but only if the training is effectively tailored for the needs of the business and it employees,' says Ms Coates.

For more than a decade the Australian Government's Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Programme has provided funding to employers for tailor-made workplace training that does integrate language, literacy and numeracy skill development. However, many employers are still unaware of the opportunity it offers for making beneficial and lasting change to workforce capability.

Businesses have used the WELL training programme to support productivity and efficiency initiatives, improve health and safety in the workplace, foster workforce confidence and responsibility and introduce new processes and quality systems.

Examples included in a new booklet compiled by ISCs include a supermarket franchisee who used the programme to build the staff capability and commitment necessary to expand from three to seven stores; the electronics manufacturing firm that supported rapid business expansion by capturing and extending the loyalty and industry experience of assembly line employees; the printing company improving productivity by enabling better communication between all levels of the organisation.

To tell employers about these, and other, success stories ISCs are hosting a series of information seminars around the country. Participants will hear first hand from employers who have run successful WELL programmes and find out how to access funding. Breakfast sessions will be held in Sydney (22 May), Adelaide (29 May) and Brisbane (12 July) and an afternoon session will be conducted in Parramatta (22 May). To register interest in the seminars contact Anita Roberts anita@techcentric.com.au

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For further comment: Sharon Coates, CEO, Innovation and Business Skills Australia –
03 9815 7000

May 2007

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Appendix C: Structure of the Workskills Vouchers

Work Skills Vouchers worth up to $3000 are available to interested Australians aged 25 and over who do not have Year 12 or a certificate level II qualification.
The voucher may be used for:

- Year 12 (basic education courses);
- vocational certificate level II courses; and
- accredited literacy/numeracy courses.

Description

Australians aged 25 years and over who do not have Year 12 or equivalent or certificate level II or higher qualifications are now eligible for Work Skills vouchers to help them improve their qualifications. The vouchers will be worth up to $3,000. Once fully implemented up to 30,000 vouchers will be available each year.

The vouchers can be used in public, private or community colleges. They may be used for all accredited literacy/numeracy and basic education courses and all vocational certificate level II courses.

Some examples of courses where the vouchers could be used are:

- certificate II in adult general education
- certificate II in automotive (mechanical—vehicle servicing)
- certificate II in community services (children's services)
- certificate II in hospitality (commercial cookery).

Need identified

This measure will improve the basic skills of the Australian workforce and assist those without Year 12 or equivalent or certificate level II or higher qualifications. Improvements in basic skills will help people who are already in employment to move into higher-level positions and assist those who are looking for work to find jobs.

Who will benefit?

Australians aged 25 years and over without Year 12 or equivalent or certificate level II or higher qualifications will be the beneficiaries. Priority will be given to applicants in the following order:

- unskilled workers wishing to acquire qualifications
- income support recipients, such as parents and carers returning to the workforce, who will face active job-search requirements in the next two years
- unemployed job seekers in receipt of income support and participating in the Job Network who are undertaking active job search
- people not in the labour force, either voluntarily or because of carer responsibilities, who intend to seek work after achieving their qualification.

How will it work?

Individuals are able to check their eligibility for a voucher through the website

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www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au or telephone hotline 13 38 73 operated by the Department of Education, Science and Training.

Financial implications

Work Skills Vouchers	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	Total
Cost ($m)	38.6	80.5	96.1	96.1	96.3	**407.6**

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Appendix D: WELL programme case studies

Case study 1: Small scale aged care IT training for staff

Basic ICT training needs have been identified from a new information technology system to be used throughout the organisation in aged care. The system involves staff input in facilitating assessment, care plans, progress notes, forms, and appointment management and reporting. Workplace training is proposed integrating LL&N skills with the ICT training using the competency: 'BSBCMN 206A Process and Maintain Workplace Information'. High numbers of staff require additional LLN assistance.

It involves 32 hours direct teaching time and two trainers—one an IT expert, the other an LLN expert

Total budget: approx $16,000 ($12,000 WELL, $4000 aged care facility).

Approximate cost per participant: $350

Case study 2: Large WELL project $200,000+

An enterprise-based teacher was onsite at a manufacturing workplace two days a week for a year. Support given by the EBT included:

Plain English workshops

Plain English workshops were delivered across the factory from supervisory staff to senior management in order to improve the communication flow from the top down. This strategy is an extremely important one so that memos, notices, flyers, reports and instructions etc are written in a clear, concise and interesting format to assist those with limited language and literacy skills. Staff who attended the workshops have stated that they now think very carefully before typing their message. Some feedback was 'It changes the way you think' and 'Everyone should attend the workshop.'

'Language of instruction' workshops

'Language of instruction' workshops were held to assist those writing instructions using a new procedure writing computer program. Operators needed support to write clear and succinct instructions. Staff are now writing more effective instructions.

New noticeboard layout

The EBT set up a new noticeboard layout which informs employees about their performance in the areas of quality, cost and service information. Training was also delivered to the team leaders to assist them to communicate the noticeboard information to their team members by breaking the information up into smaller chunks, explaining and involving their team members in weekly discussions and checking for uinderstanding.

The EBT made sure complicated productivity headings had a plain English version (for example 'Customer DIFOTQ—Giving our customers what they want'. All graphs on the noticeboard followed a graph template in order to display the graphical information in a simple way. The graph also included a summary of the issues, wins and action plan to assist employees who find graphs difficult to read. Team members commented on how

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the graph summaries helped them understand the graph and clearly showed what they could do to improve productivity.

Workshops on effective written communication

Delivery of workshops on effective written communication to operational staff, focusing on writing emails. Most operational staff have limited written skills and all benefited from the workshop, which focused on the principles of effective communication—purpose, audience, content, staging, language choices, layout and surface features.

New assessment documents

The EBT developed three new assessment documents with the area leaders, using plain English principles, to improve the area leaders' assessment documentation.

Individual computer support

The EBT has developed the computer skills of employees by providing individual computer support at times convenient to the employee. Many operational staff have very limited computer skills but are being required to use computers more and more in order to participate in continuous improvement teams. In the teams they are required to create complicated Excel spreadsheets using formulas, send emails, book meeting rooms etc

Developing team leader skills

The EBT has supported NESB operational staff to develop team leader skills in Continuous Improvement Teams called Team Charters. The EBT worked with the team leaders to develop the following skills:

- running effective meetings/writing minutes
- leading problem-solving sessions using a tool called 5 Why Analysis
- creating graphs and spreadsheets to display productivity data
- verbally presenting continuous improvement information to auditors in a clear logical manner

The EBT also supported NESB operational staff who attending accredited training in certificate 11 in Engineering. The EBT assisted with:

- the understanding of complicated workplace, health and safety information
- completing workbooks
- discussing topics
- spelling
- writing short answers and instructions
- exam preparation

Participant case study: Rosalind's story

Rosalind Stiffle is a carer who works for Scalabrini Village. Scalabrini is an aged care facility that specifically caters for Sydney's Italian migrant population. Rosalind had worked for Scalabrini for about 30 years since she moved to Australia from India. (I think she had done some sort of nursing training in India as a nun.)

In her presentation Rosalind reported being terrified when she was told that computers would be introduced to the workplace as a means of recording all of the information that carers and other staff had previously put into written reports. She said she was 'doubly terrified' when she was offered computer training. But the WELL trainer soon made

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everyone feel comfortable and encouraged by their ability to make progress. They were shown how the new system, wasn't really that different to the old one, and that they already had a lot of the skills they needed to complete the reports.

Now Rosalind has rediscovered her love of learning, something that she hadn't expected at her age. She loves using the computer to find new information. She often prints out things she has found online to share with other members of staff. She also mentors new staff and helps them with using the computer. Her revitalised interest in learning has inspired Rosalind to start learning Italian so that she can communicate with Scalabrini's residents in their own language. (People from NESB tend to revert more and more to their first language as they age, and so even residents who could speak English well can be more comfortable speaking Italian in the aged care facility.)

Scalabrini Village used the WELL programme to support training in a wide range of nationally accredited qualifications. In January 2005, 47% of direct-care staff had a basic industry qualification, one lifestyle/recreational staff member out of a total of 17 had an appropriate qualification, and 12% of catering staff had a basic industry qualification. In January 2007 these numbers had changed:

- 78% of direct care staff have the basic industry qualification (certificate 3 in aged care work)
- 90% of lifestyle/recreational staff have completed, or are completing a certificate 4 in lifestyle and leisure
- 84% of catering staff have completed a basic industry qualification (certificate 3 in catering operations).

Rosalind explained during the presentation that sometimes residents would ask her where she had been when she was away at training. She said that when she tells them about the training it makes them very happy and proud. Knowing that staff are well-trained and keen to improve their skills makes the residents feel secure and well-looked after which is very important for their peace of mind. 'It means they don't need to worry about anything because they know we will give them the best care.'

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Appendix E

Excerpt from *Current and Future Professional Development Needs of the Language and Literacy Workforce*, Mackay et al , NCVER 2006

A number of studies, including the recent NCVER publication *Profiling the National Vocational Education and Training Workforce* (NCVER 2005), remark on the lack of reliable, centrally collected, quantitative data on the VET and ACE workforce. Accurate statistics on the language, literacy and numeracy workforce do not exist, but demand for language, literacy and numeracy courses remains high and indicates a sizeable workforce (ANTA 2003; McGuirk 2001; NCVER 2005; Harris et al. 2001; McKenna & Fitzpatrick 2004).

The most comprehensive recent snapshot of literacy and numeracy specialists in Australia is that provided in the TAFE New South Wales Access Division project, *Adult Literacy and Numeracy Practices 2001: A National Snapshot* (McGuirk 2001). This research covers workers from TAFE, ACE and not-for-profit sectors. The sample of language, literacy and numeracy workers (n=642) reported on by their managers portrays a workforce that is largely casual or sessional (70%), female dominated (85% female), ageing (50% of the total workforce between 40 and 50 and with only 2% of language, literacy and numeracy educators under 30).

Demographic data on vocational trainers is provided by the human resources and teachers' surveys conducted by Harris et al. (2001). Of the 11,084 teachers and trainers reported on, 51.5% were male and 48.5% were female and more males than females held permanent positions. Only 40% of VET teachers/trainers were permanent staff. Seventy-five per cent of teachers were between 35 and 54, and only 13% under 30 (Harris et al. 2001, p.99).

In Australia in 2000 between 1.1 and 1.3 million people took part in ACE learning (NCVER 2001, cited in Harris et al. 2001, p.5). It seems that given the strength of its contribution to the adult language, literacy and numeracy field, community provision remains somewhat 'under-conceptualised, under-researched and under-theorised and possibly insufficiently appreciated in the current policy context' (Hannon et al. 2003, p.5).

What is known is that many thousands of volunteer tutors work in the adult literacy field through government and not-for-profit providers, such as TAFE, the New South Wales Adult Migrant English Service, The Smith Family and Mission Australia (McKenna & Fitzpatrick 2004).

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Appendix F: NCVER breakfast briefing

Reading between the lines

Summing up adult literacy and numeracy research (2006) Excerpt Exhibit 20:   Professional development activities and programs (p62)

There are currently no national databases which record the professional development activities of language, literacy and numeracy practitioners in Australia. It is also difficult to get information on engagement with professional development of the VET workforce in general. Some information is available from the New South Wales TAFE Access Division study (New South Wales TAFE Access Division 2001) and more current research of the professional development activities of the adult literacy and numeracy workforce. The New South Wales study indicates that managers and teachers keep up with what is happening in their field through the accessing of informal networks, conferences and professional reading. In addition, teachers' most recent involvement in professional development activities included moderation workshops for the Certificate of General Education for Adults (CGEA), National Reporting System training or moderation workshops and computer training sessions. In the main, these courses lasted one day or less and were delivered by external providers. This often provided difficulties for teachers in remote or regional locations in terms of cost and distance.

However, the Australian government has funded and continues to fund a number of national professional development initiatives to assist practitioners in the VET system to participate in professional development activities.

National frameworks and programs

The provision of specific professional development activities for adult literacy and basic education practitioners can be traced back to the early 1990s with the implementation of the Training Reform Agenda. The principles which underpinned this provision continue to be important for the provision of professional development in the VET system.

Frameworks

In 1991 the National TAFE Staff Development Committee undertook a study to explore the professional development needs of this group. The findings of the study led to the development of the *National Framework for the Professional Development of Adult Literacy and Basic Education Personnel* (TAFE Staff Development Committee 1994).

The main aim of the framework was to provide a nationally consistent approach to planning, developing and evaluating professional development for this group for 1993 and 1994. The framework also aimed to ensure the development of processes for the recruitment and induction of personnel and promotion of opportunities for practitioners to develop additional competencies. Other aims were to increase the competencies of practitioners so that they could deliver training in a broad range of situations and contexts, and to ensure that current teaching practice was informed by relevant research and theoretical developments.

A set of 13 principles to be applied to the provision of professional development for this group underpinned the framework. They highlighted the importance of providing learning activities which mirrored the main features of the new VET training system (for example,

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competency-based training, recognition of prior learning, flexible delivery, technology and resource-based learning, open learning, choice of learning activities). In addition, programs should focus on a combination of theory and practical experience. In particular, they should help practitioners develop additional knowledge on how 'people become literate and numerate ... and apply 'the most advanced knowledge of how language and mathematics should be taught' (TAFE Staff Development Committee 1994, p3.).

Although the framework does not specifically talk about the need for practitioners to develop their knowledge of assessment, including formative assessment, the strategies associated with appropriate induction included the use of mentors and peer review and support groups which are often used in formative assessment.

National Programs

There are three major programmes that provide for the professional development of trainers and assessors in the VET system. These are:

- Reframing the Future
- Flexible Learning Initiatives
- Professional Development for Equity

Reframing the Future

Currently, there are a two small projects being funded under the Reframing the Future programme which are aimed at improving the skills of vocational trainers to embed language, literacy and numeracy within their training package programs, and to meet the needs of the AQTF. One project uses an action-learning methodology and the development of a 'community of practice' and is being run by South Bank TAFE in Queensland. Another uses a work-based learning methodology and is being run by RMIT University Post-Compulsory Education and Training Research Centre. Both use coaching and mentoring techniques as main professional development tools (techniques which use 'a community of practice' approach to mentoring and coaching). There is also 'increasing diversity' in the types of professional development activities being funded and accessed (Mackay, Burgoyne, Warwick and Cipollone forthcoming).

The Flexible Learning Framework

The Flexible Learning Framework for 2005 is collaboratively funded by Commonwealth Government and state and territory governments, and is concerned with providing the VET sector with e-learning skills, professional development opportunities, resources and support networks. In 2005 it also aims to meet the e-learning needs of industry groups, students and communities, indigenous Australians, and those with a disability.

Professional Development for Equity

The Professional Development for Equity programme comprises a set of nine government-funded projects which are aimed at supporting equity issues in a wide variety of contexts. These include developing resources to support equity issues in the delivery of training in the Training and Assessment training package, and monitoring changes in professional development practices relating to training people with a disability. There is also a project which provides examples of how to advance equity issues in the National VET system, and another aimed at helping industry skills councils to build Indigenous issues into their strategic planning.

Three guides for working with equity groups were also developed under this program. These are:

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- Working with Diversity: A guide to Equity and the AQTF
- Working with Diversity: Quality Training for Indigenous Australians
- Working with Diversity: Quality Training for People With a Disability.

The project also provides funding for recognition of prior learning (RPL) and recognition of current competency for Indigenous VET practitioners. The Billabong website <http://www.billabong.gov.au> was also created to support professional development for Indigenous VET staff.

The use of volunteers

The use of volunteers is common across Australia in the federal government-funded Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). The Home Tutor Scheme matches trained volunteers to migrants or refugees who want to learn English in their own home. Providers of AMEP programs in all states and territories will provide or make arrangements for the training of volunteer tutors.

In addition, the TAFE Tasmania Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE) program has delivered volunteer tutor training sessions for those interested in becoming adult literacy volunteers. The South Australian government funds an adult literacy tutor training programme which addresses the skills and knowledge required by tutors of adults with low levels of basic skills. The programme is for volunteer tutors working in community centres, those who develop individual teaching plans for students, and those who have the time to spend improving their own learning.

South Australia has also introduced a qualification for literacy professionals—the certificate IV in language, literacy and numeracy assessment and training. It is directed at those who train or tutor in the community, supervise or mentor others, or work as:
- a language, literacy and numeracy trainer or tutor
- a workplace vocational trainer
- a specialist tutor working with adults with disabilities.

There is also a course in adult numeracy teaching for practitioners in the adult literacy and basic education sector to improve their understanding of methodologies teaching numeracy and basic mathematics to adults.

The Western Australian government also provides support to the Read Write Now organisation which provides free literacy and numeracy tutoring for adults. Training is provided by volunteers in local libraries, neighbourhood learning centres and community centres.

Key providers of professional development

Key providers of professional development for language, literacy and numeracy practitioners include:
- national, state and territory-based conferences
- workshops and seminars held by national bodies, education and training institutions
- industry stakeholders.

Key providers of professional development for the general VET workforce dealing with adult basic skills are the TAFE institutes themselves, industry associations, industry

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skills councils, and various agencies connected with the provision of employment services.

Key providers of professional development (identified in four states by Mackay, Burgoyne, Warwick and Cipollone forthcoming) for the language, literacy and numeracy workforce include:

- the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research
- the Australian Council for Adult Literacy
- the Australian Council of Teachers of English as a Second Language Associations
- the Victorian Adult Learning and Basic Education Council
- the Queensland Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
- the New South Wales Association of Teachers of English as a Second Language Delivery Support Service Workplace Education TAFE SA
- Dare to Lead South Australia

Source: Country background report: *Addressing the training and assessment needs of adults with low basic skills in Australia*, Josie Misko, (forthcoming), NCVER

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Appendix G

A list of literacy related courses excerpted from The Professional Development Requirements of Workplace English Language and Literacy Programme practitioners: Support Document

Certificates and Graduate Certificates

1. Certificate III in TESOL
2. Certificate IV in TESOL
3. Graduate Certificate in Adult TESOL
4. Graduate Certificate in Applied Linguistics
5. Graduate Certificate in Education (ALBE)
6. Graduate Certificate in Education (TESOL)
7. Graduate Certificate in Language Teaching (TESOL)
8. Graduate Certificate in Languages Education (TESOL)
9. Graduate Certificate in Literacy
10. Graduate Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
11. Graduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
12. Graduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and FLT
13. Graduate Certificate of Professional Education and Training (Adult Education and Training)
14. Graduate Certificate of Professional Education and Training (TESOL)

Institute	Course													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Adelaide Institute of TAFE		✔												
Australian Maritime College														
Australian Catholic University											✔			
Australian National University														
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education														
Bond University											✔			
Brisbane North Institute of TAFE		✔												
Central Queensland University														
Charles Sturt University											✔			
Christian Heritage College											✔			
Curtin University of Technology											✔			
Deakin University						✔							✔	✔
Edith Cowan University						✔								
Flinders University														
Griffith University				✔							✔			✔
Holmesglen Institute of TAFE											✔			
International House Sydney		✔												
James Cook University														
La Trobe University					✔	✔								
Macquarie University														

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Institute	Course													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Melbourne College of Divinity														
Monash University														
Murdoch University														
Open Learning Agency of Australia														
Queensland University of Technology						✔								
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)														
Southbank Institute of TAFE		✔												
Southern Cross University														
Specialised Training Services (QLD) P/L		✔												
Swinburne University of Technology														
Tabor College NSW	✔	✔									✔			
The University of Notre Dame														
The University of Queensland														
Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE		✔												
University of Adelaide				✔										
University of Ballarat														
University of Canberra												✔		
University of Melbourne														
University of Newcastle				✔										
University of New England											✔			
University of New South Wales														
University of South Australia								✔						
University of Southern Queensland														
University of Sydney										✔				
University of Tasmania														
University of Technology, Sydney							✔				✔			
University of the Sunshine Coast														
University of Western Australia														
University of Western Sydney			✔											
University of Wollongong									✔		✔			
Victoria University									✔		✔			
Total courses offered	**1**	**7**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**12**	**1**	**1**	**2**

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Graduate Diplomas

1. Graduate Diploma in ALBE
2. Graduate Diploma in Applied Linguistics
3. Graduate Diploma in Educational Studies (TESOL or LOTE)
4. Graduate Diploma in Literacy and Numeracy Education
5. Graduate Diploma of Educational Studies (TESOL)
6. Graduate Diploma of Language and Literacy
7. Graduate Diploma of Language Teaching (TESOL)
8. Graduate Diploma of TEFL
9. Graduate Diploma of TESOL
10. Graduate Diploma of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and Literacy
11. Graduate Diploma of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages or FLT

Institute	Course										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Adelaide Institute of TAFE											
Australian Maritime College											
Australian Catholic University											
Australian National University		✔									
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education											
Bond University											
Brisbane North Institute of TAFE											
Central Queensland University											
Charles Sturt University									✔		
Christian Heritage College									✔		
Curtin University of Technology								✔	✔		
Deakin University											
Edith Cowan University											
Flinders University											
Griffith University											
Holmesglen Institute of TAFE											
International House Sydney											
James Cook University											
La Trobe University	✔								✔		
Macquarie University											
Melbourne College of Divinity											
Monash University											
Murdoch University											
Open Learning Agency of Australia											
Queensland University of Technology											
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)											
Southbank Institute of TAFE											
Southern Cross University											
Specialised Training Services (QLD) P/L											
Swinburne University of Technology											
Tabor College NSW									✔		
The University of Notre Dame											
The University of Queensland											

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Institute	Course										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE											
University of Adelaide		✔									
University of Ballarat											
University of Canberra											✔
University of Melbourne											
University of Newcastle											
University of New England			✔		✔						
University of New South Wales											
University of South Australia											
University of Southern Queensland											
University of Sydney											
University of Tasmania											
University of Technology, Sydney				✔			✔		✔		
University of the Sunshine Coast											
University of Western Australia						✔					
University of Western Sydney											
University of Wollongong									✔		
Victoria University									✔	✔	
Total Courses	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	1	1

Post Graduate Certificates and Diplomas

1. Postgraduate Certificate in Education (TESOL)
2. Postgraduate Certificate in English Language Teaching
3. Postgraduate Certificate in Literacy
4. Postgraduate Certificate in TESOL
5. Postgraduate Certificate of Education (Literacy Studies)
6. Postgraduate Certificate of Education (TESOL / LOTE)
7. Postgraduate Diploma of Applied Linguistics (TESOL)
8. Postgraduate Diploma of Education (Literacy Studies)
9. Postgraduate Diploma of Education (TESOL / LOTE)
10. Postgraduate Diploma of Education (TESOL)

Institute	Course									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Adelaide Institute of TAFE										
Australian Maritime College										
Australian Catholic University			✔	✔						
Australian National University										
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education										
Bond University										
Brisbane North Institute of TAFE										
Central Queensland University										
Charles Sturt University										
Christian Heritage College										

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Institute	Course									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Curtin University of Technology										
Deakin University										
Edith Cowan University										
Flinders University										
Griffith University										
Holmesglen Institute of TAFE										
International House Sydney										
James Cook University										
La Trobe University										
Macquarie University					✔		✔			
Melbourne College of Divinity										
Monash University	✔				✔	✔		✔	✔	✔
Murdoch University										
Open Learning Agency of Australia										
Queensland University of Technology										
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)										
Southbank Institute of TAFE										
Southern Cross University										
Specialised Training Services (QLD) P/L										
Swinburne University of Technology										
Tabor College NSW										
The University of Notre Dame										
The University of Queensland										
Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE										
University of Adelaide										
University of Ballarat										
University of Canberra										
University of Melbourne										
University of Newcastle										
University of New England										
University of New South Wales										
University of South Australia										
University of Southern Queesland										
University of Sydney										
University of Tasmania										
University of Technology, Sydney		✔								
University of the Sunshine Coast										
University of Western Australia										
University of Western Sydney										
University of Wollongong										
Victoria University										
Total	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**

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Masters

1. Master of Applied Linguistics
2. Master of Applied Linguistics (TESOL)
3. Master of Arts (Applied Linguistics)
4. Master of Arts (English Language Teaching)
5. Master of Arts (Language Teaching Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages or LOTE)
6. Master of Arts (TESOL)
7. Master of Arts in Language and Literacy
8. Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and FLT
9. Master of Education (Applied Linguistics)
2. Master of Education (Literacy Studies)
3. Master of Education (TESOL)
4. Master of Professional Education and Training (Adult Education and Literacy)
5. Master of Professional Education and Training (TESOL)
6. Master of TESOL
7. Master of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and Literacy

Institute	Course														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Adelaide Institute of TAFE															
Australian Maritime College															
Australian Catholic University	✔														
Australian National University															
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education					✔										
Bond University															
Brisbane North Institute of TAFE															
Central Queensland University															
Charles Sturt University															
Christian Heritage College															
Curtin University of Technology															
Deakin University											✔	✔	✔		
Edith Cowan University	✔														
Flinders University															
Griffith University			✔												
Holmesglen Institute of TAFE															
International House Sydney															
James Cook University															
La Trobe University	✔														
Macquarie University	✔	✔													
Melbourne College of Divinity															
Monash University	✔									✔	✔				
Murdoch University															
Open Learning Agency of Australia	✔														
Queensland University of Technology											✔				

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Institute	Course														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)															
Southbank Institute of TAFE															
Southern Cross University															
Specialised Training Services (QLD) P/L															
Swinburne University of Technology															
Tabor College NSW															
The University of Notre Dame															
The University of Queensland															
Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE															
University of Adelaide			✔												
University of Ballarat															
University of Canberra								✔							
University of Melbourne	✔													✔	
University of Newcastle	✔														
University of New England			✔												
University of New South Wales									✔						
University of South Australia															
University of Southern Queensland	✔														
University of Sydney															
University of Tasmania															
University of Technology, Sydney			✔	✔		✔	✔								
University of the Sunshine Coast															
University of Western Australia									✔						
University of Western Sydney						✔									
University of Wollongong															
Victoria University														✔	✔
Total	**9**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**

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Appendix H

Advanced Diploma of Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice in VET Course Information

National Course Code 40499SA - Course Title Advanced Diploma of Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice in VET - Nominal duration 830 minimum hours – 1080 maximum hours

Course Structure

The Advanced Diploma of Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice in VET comprises nine units packaged as:

- (4) four core LL&N units; plus
- Minimum (1) one elective unit from Group A; plus
- Minimum (2) two elective units from Group B; plus
- (2) two additional elective units from Groups A, or B, or C.

All four (4) core and five (5) elective units must be undertaken to be awarded with the Advanced Diploma of Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice in VET.

Units

Core
- Conduct initial assessment for placement within an adult English language, literacy and/or numeracy.
- Apply adult literacy methodologies to develop literacy skills.
- Apply adult numeracy methodologies to develop numeracy skills.
- Apply adult TESOL methodologies to develop English language skills.

Electives
Group A (select one minimum)
- Address language, literacy and numeracy issues within learning and assessment practice
- Coordinate adult English language, literacy and numeracy tutors

Group B (select two minimum)
- Design courses for adult English language, literacy, numeracy and general education
- Design workplace strategy for adult English language, literacy and numeracy
- Provide specialist adult English language, literacy and numeracy services in a workplace learning environment
- Provide specialist adult English language, literacy and numeracy services in an institutional learning environment
- Develop general education through an accredited course

Group C: units from the Training and Assessment (TAA) 04 Training Package
- Design and develop learning resources
- Research and design e-learning resources

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- Provide advanced facilitation to support learning
- Lead and coordinate assessment systems and services
- Prepare a bid
- Lead and conduct training/assessment evaluations

There are no formal workplace assessment requirements. However, it is expected that students of this course will undertake practical workplace experience (a minimum of 60 hours) in a teaching/education context as part of their studies towards this qualification.

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Appendix I: The National Reporting System

The NRS is based on five levels of competence, each level signifying an increase in the complexity of the language, literacy and numeracy involved, the broadening of contexts in which these skills are used, and the increasing independence with which a person tackles a range of tasks.

The NRS also identifies five distinct skill areas: reading, writing, oral communication, learning strategies and numeracy.

To help establish the level a person is working at in each of the skill areas, a number of indicators of competence are given for each level. There is additional information at each level (conditions of performance, workplace and social contexts, assessment principles, language, literacy and numeracy features and performance strategies) that assists you to confirm the appropriate level.

There is also a wealth of sample activities which help to identify what a person could be expected to do at each level. These activities are grouped into six different aspects of communication.

Therefore, an NRS report is based on five levels of competence, five skill areas and six aspects of communication.

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Appendix J: Reading and writing hotline statistics

Of the callers in 2005:

- 62% were male (background notes: Callers by sex has not changed. Since the Hotline's inception in 1994, every year approximately three persons out of every five callers helped by the Hotline have been male)
- 22% were aged 16–24 years, 33% were aged 25–34 years, 35% were aged 35–54 years and 10% were aged 55 years and over
- 85% did not complete year 12 (background notes: 8% completed year 7 or less, 44% completed years 7-9, 28% completed year 10, 5% completed year 11)
- 17% were from non-English speaking backgrounds
- 3% were indigenous
- 42% were from a regional city, country town or rural area
- 2% were employers
- 59% were employed.

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Appendix K: Commonwealth LNN Programme details

Language Literacy Numeracy Programme

The Language Literacy Numeracy Programme provides training of 10 to 19 hours a week and an additional 7,300 places will be targeted at migrants who need English language training for employment purposes. The LLNP delivers state-based accredited course content that is mapped to the indicators of the National Reporting System. All clients receive a pre-training assessment and NRS ranking against 5 macro-skills—reading, writing, oracy, numeracy and learning strategies. At the completion of 160 hours of training they are expected to have raised a level across two indicators. The programme has a national verification process that monitors consistency of effort and reporting.

Adult Migrant Education Programme

Refugee and humanitarian entrants under the age of 25 with low levels of schooling are eligible for up to 910 hours of English language tuition. Those over 25 are eligible for up to 610 hours of tuition, and other migrants are eligible for up to 510 hours of tuition.

The programme seeks to provide vocational level English language skills to participants. The programme is under review, with critics calling for more targeted vocational outcomes and a possible change of curriculum. A paper and face-to-face consultations are scheduled for June 2007.

Skills vouchers

In October 2006 the Commonwealth announced a range of skills initiatives worth $837m.over five years, beginning January 2007. In its announcement of these measures the Commonwealth stated that a major element in the package is Work Skills Vouchers, which will enable people aged over 25 years who do not have year 12 or equivalent qualifications to be eligible for vouchers valued up to $3,000. This will assist them to cover the costs of studying year 12 or equivalent courses, or vocational and technical education courses at certificate II level. Up to 30,000 vouchers will be provided each year, which will be redeemable at public, private or community training providers. The certificate II vocational courses to be funded will include all accredited literacy/numeracy and basic education courses.

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