



Board Meeting December 1 2014 Communiqué

The meeting was the Board's first since the Minister for State Growth made four new appointments. These were Tracy Matthews as Chairperson, Suzette Harrison, Richard Lowrie and Ted Bell. Long serving members Bob Mirowski and Craig Edmunds were reappointed to begin a tenth year of service.

The Board elected Craig Edmunds to be the Deputy Chair. The Chairperson thanked retiring members David Hudson and Phil Sidney over lunch and noted the valued contributions of Diane Edgerton and John Short.

Competency Pay - 1st Year Apprentices

The Board received a further report on the issue of competency based pay progression whereby an apprentice who has completed the Construction Certificate 2 starts on second year wages. Combined with higher pay levels for those that complete year 12 the better trained starter can be paid up to 15% more than a starter straight out of Grade 10, making the better trained starter less attractive based on price.

The Board heard that the Tasmanian Training Agreement Committee had moderated the impact by granting six months credit for Cert 2 completion. As this was less than the nine months most of the industry had asked for the Board will write to Skills Tasmania asking for further consideration of the issue.

Strategic Planning

The Board noted that the current plan is due for replacement in the first half of next year and have asked the CEO to develop a process particularly including an Industry Engagement Plan to ensure that the new plan reflects the views of the industry as a whole. This is likely to include a major facilitated meeting of all industry associations and unions.

Public Meeting

The Board received a report from the October Public meeting in Launceston from facilitator Daniel Leesong. The issues raised were similar to the May round of consultations and focused on the cost of apprentices, red and green tape, high risk training issues and a need for more focus on business management skills.

Investing in Skills for Growth

The Board was pleased to host another visit from Skills Tasmania General Manager, Chrissie Berryman. On this occasion she was able to present on two documents recently released by the Minister for State Growth.

The first was the Minister's annual statement of Ministerial Priorities for training and workforce development. This is a requirement of the Training and Workforce Act and is a clear guide to the priorities to be pursued by the Department. Amongst the features are:

- Strategic purchasing based on industry advice and linking of training to skill and employability real jobs
- A controlled opening of the training market to allow competition to drive quality and availability while recognising the need for a strong public provider
- Improve individual and community understanding of training along with guaranteed access to places for those without qualifications and including help and opportunities for those with barriers to participation
- Boosting the number of apprentices and trainees
- Participating in national policy development to ensure that national skills reforms accommodate the interests of Tasmania.

The second was a policy statement Investing in Skills for Growth building on the priorities and setting three key goals to deliver the government aspirations. They are

- A more efficient and competitive training system
- A greater focus of delivering real skills for jobs and
- Investing in skills for growth.

The board was pleased to endorse the direction outlined.

Tracy Matthews (Chairperson), Craig Edmunds, (Deputy Chair), Ted Bell, Suzette Harrison, Allistair Lindsay, Richard Lowrie, Roz Madsen, Bob Mirowski, Noel Washington.