



# Board Meeting December 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 Communiqué

## **PUBLIC MEETING SETS PRIORITIES**

The Board held its annual public meeting in Launceston in October and received the feedback report from facilitator Allan Jeffrey at this meeting. The public meeting heard from eight guest speakers presenting on their chosen range of issues around workforce development. The speakers were Hugh Maslin CCF, Mike Kerschbaum MBA, Angela Ayling MPAT, Barney Phillips AIB, Ross Bebbington HIA, Mark Sayer TAFE and Gabriel Barnes AIBS.

As a conclusion to the meeting the participants were asked to nominate their top four priorities for the work of the Training Board based on the day's discussions. They chose

- **Cost versus productivity of apprentices**
- **Flexibility and relevance of training**
- **Collaboration and coordination**
- **Career pathways (entry, options, etc)**

There was much discussion about the cost and relevance of apprenticeships with things like increased wages, TAFE fees, payroll tax and the falling value of Commonwealth incentives all increasing the cost to employers. In an era of aging business leadership disincentives to employ become significant barriers for small and medium enterprises. However, at the same time the future of the high skilled workforce depends on recruitment of apprentices now. Employers are saying they need their apprentices to be more productive at day 1 to offset the increase in costs. The Board sees pre-employment programs as a key part of the answer but also that training must remain relevant and the training packages flexible. The Board has an important role in working with the Associations and industry to make it happen.

The public meeting also canvassed the possibility of the Board coordinating an online training calendar for all courses. The Board has agreed to develop it.

## **HIGH ACTIVITY DRIVES TRAINING & LEVY COLLECTION**

The Board's finance and training reports reflected the buoyant nature of the industry. Levy collections to the end of November are nearly 60% above the ten year average while demand for training assistance is also very strong.

## **COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

As part of the renewal of its long partnership with Corporate Communications the Board meeting included a two hour workshop, led by Adrian Smith, examining all aspects of the Board's communications with its wide range of stakeholders. Collaboration and effective communication are seen as critical to the Board developing the programs and policies that the industry needs. The new Communications Strategy will be finalised in February but an old favourite, the Board's newsletter, will continue to be produced.

## **HERITAGE APPRENTICESHIP SUBSIDY**

In an innovative partnership with the Port Arthur Authority and TASBGAS the Board is supporting Heritage Skills development. The pilot program will see a Painting and Decorating Apprentice enjoying four three month placements on heritage sites during their apprenticeship. Valuable knowledge and skills on the methods and materials used on colonial buildings will be gained. Board support will defray the costs of the placement and provide a tools allowance for the chosen apprentice.

## **SUPPORT FOR SPRINKLER FITTERS**

A workforce development investigation by the Board revealed the need to significantly boost the number of sprinkler fitters available to deliver the installation and servicing of fire protection systems. The industry currently has 28 qualified fitters but estimated that 40 will need to be recruited over the next four years. Training is done in Melbourne so significant travel and accommodation costs are involved. The Board has allocated \$288, 000 in assistance over the seven year life of the program.