

# Submission

by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

to

The House Standing Committee on Employment, Workplace Relations and Workforce Participation

## Inquiry into workforce challenges in the Australian tourism sector

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is in the business of collecting, analysing and broking information about vocational education and training (VET). The organisation is responsible for collecting and managing national VET provider and New Apprenticeship statistics, and managing national surveys of graduates and students, and employers' views of training. We undertake a strategic program of research, and collect and provide VET research findings from Australian and international sources through the Vocational Education and Training Research Database (VOCED).

### RESPONSE TO TERMS OF REFERENCE

NCVER is able to provide information from our collections of statistics and our managed research work in relation to two of the terms of reference. Data tables and references to research reports that may be of interest are provided.

- **Current and emerging skill shortages and appropriate recruitment, coordinated training and retention strategies**

#### *Data*

NCVER provides tables of data relevant to this term of reference. The tables of data are presented in an Appendix to this document.

#### *Research*

There are two research studies of some relevance to this topic:

Freeland, B, 2000, Demands of training: Australian tourism and hospitality. NCVER, Adelaide.  
Available at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/445.html>

The aim of this report is to aid the development of skills and job opportunities emerging in Australia's tourism and hospitality industry by providing enterprises, planners, and training providers with information concerning, and insights into, the training and skill acquisition operations of the industry.

The report investigates three levels of training [entry-level training including basic vocational skills, vocational education and training (VET) and professional development for existing workers, and VET opportunities for the unemployed and the 'disadvantaged'], and considers the confusion surrounding the training market, its operation and how stakeholders perceive it. Topics discussed in consultations include: a) issues relating to 'user choice' developments; b) planning information; c) purpose and priorities of training; d) strategies and procedures for training; e) perception of the training 'market'; and f) barriers and impediments to training provision.

The findings of the study are discussed together with implications for training provision that will meet the skill requirements of tourism and hospitality enterprises.

NCVER, 1998, Industry training monograph: Accommodation, cafes and restaurants. NCVER, Adelaide.  
Available at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/industry/publications/178.html>

While dated, this publication may be useful in providing an historical overview of trends in the accommodation, cafes and restaurants sectors.

The publication presents a series of 18 individual monographs (including an overview) designed to provide readers with a summary of occupational trends in key skills areas, employment trends and training issues in each of Australia's 17 major industry sectors.

### *Current research projects*

There are a number of projects currently being undertaken under NCVER's managed research program in relation to current and emerging skill and labour shortages. These are at varying stages of progress, but most of them will be complete by early 2007. Links are provided to project descriptions for each of these projects, which include:

To have and to hold: the role of human resource management and high performance work systems in the utilisation and retention of skills in organisations  
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/industry/projects/10372.html>

Innovative skill shortages in health  
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/industry/projects/10353.html>

Understanding and resolving the skills shortage in the Australian printing industry  
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/industry/projects/10354.html>

A well skilled future: Tailoring VET to the emerging labour market  
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/industry/projects/10340.html>

In addition, NCVER is conducting a forum which will showcase the outcomes of the research project 'A well skilled future' - see  
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/newsevents/events/wellskilled/forum.html>

## ▪ **Labour shortages and strategies to meet seasonal fluctuations in workforce demands**

### *Research*

One recent study has relevance to this topic:

Kilpatrick, S, & Bound, H, 2005, Skilling a seasonal workforce: A way forward for rural regions. NCVER, Adelaide.  
Available at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1567.html>

Many industries that employ large numbers of people in rural and regional Australia employ casually on a seasonal basis, notably in tourism and hospitality, agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, silviculture and food processing. As a group, seasonal workers fall through the formal training net.

This study investigates provision of training to meet the needs of seasonal workers within two geographic regions – Circular Head, Tasmania, and Wide Bay – Burnett, Queensland. It examines barriers and enhancers to the provision of training by employers, industries and regions, as well as barriers and enhancers of participation for employees. The 'fit' between current vocational education and training (VET) provision and needs is also investigated. The objectives of the study are to: a) identify the training that is delivered to/undertaken by seasonal workers over a

12 month period, with the assistance, or not, of their employers; b) identify the training needs of employers and seasonal workers; c) examine the factors that enhance and inhibit use of structured training to meet the training needs of seasonal workers; d) prepare two case studies of good practice in the use of structured training to meet the needs of seasonal workers; and e) investigate the roles that regional industry, government and providers can play in meeting training needs of these workers.