

# TAFELINK

# Customised Solutions

THE TAFE PLUS NEWSLETTER FOR INDUSTRY

THIS ISSUE

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

CHILD CARE

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CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



## this issue

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Developing and delivering training in response to specific goals that organisations have for their staff is a TAFE NSW speciality, as most of the stories in this issue demonstrate.

For example, when vehicle manufacturer Custom Coaches identified a need to upskill current workers so they could weld stainless steel bus bodies, they approached TAFE NSW – South Western Sydney Institute to train operators in Welding (Gas Metal Arc Welding). The program has been so successful it has been developed into a national program for Custom Coaches with the course now delivered in three states – Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia.

Sydney Water is undertaking a comprehensive audit to ascertain which training packages best reflect the work undertaken by staff in its business units. By doing so, it hopes to reinforce the long-standing training culture of the organisation and provide a range of skill development opportunities for staff. The company engaged TAFE NSW – South Western Sydney Institute to undertake this assessment of its long-term training needs.

Power supplier Country Energy needed a training provider which could deliver the Diploma of Electrical Engineering across NSW as part of its Trainee Technical Officer program. The resulting delivery model combines face-to-face and distance education delivered by three TAFE NSW Institutes – North Coast, Western, and Riverina.

In response to a shortage of qualified workers in the child care industry, TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute has developed an innovative course, the Family Day Care Course. This course offers a comprehensive introduction to the family day care industry, and gives students access to community resources, and employment and networking opportunities.

The Royal Australian Navy needed training for its staff that would result in a nationally-accredited qualification in Alcohol and Other Drug Work at Diploma level. TAFE NSW – Riverina Institute customised a course to meet their requirement. The resulting course is now also delivered as a mainstream, flexible delivery course.

And Australian-owned construction company Kell&Rigby, which considers staff training a very important part of the company philosophy, asked TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute to deliver the Certificate III in Waterproofing (Wall and Floor Tiling). The Tiling Section at the Institute is an industry leader in this area, and has worked with the Master Builders Association to produce a Best Practice Guide for waterproofing internal wet areas in residential dwellings.

### Janet Stewart

Director, Corporate Marketing



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## Timely training boosts morale and productivity

Vehicle manufacturer Custom Coaches identified a need to upskill current workers so they can weld stainless steel bus bodies. The company approached TAFE NSW – South Western Sydney Institute to provide training to operators in Welding (Gas Metal Arc Welding).

The partnership is a commercial venture between South Western Sydney Institute and Custom Coaches. It stems from a previous association between the two organisations through the manufacturing & engineering and automotive sections of the Institute.

It has been developed into a national program for Custom Coaches in co-operation with their factories in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia. Benefits to the company include a continual upskilling of existing mature age workers in Gas Metal Arc Welding technology and testing, and all participants being accredited to Australian welding standard AS-1554.

Head teacher, Vince Aranda, said Custom Coaches wanted the training to be undertaken on-site, using specialised equipment only available on company premises.

‘By using their own equipment and training in a familiar work environment, we were able to customise the course to suit their needs,’ he said.

The training was conducted for several groups who attended one day a week for four weeks.

‘They were unable to release everybody every day, so we broke participants into small groups, which minimised impact on production,’ Mr Aranda said.

Michael Norris, Production Engineer, Custom Coaches, said the course was comprehensive and has had an impact on the bottom line.

‘The training enabled our staff who already had

qualifications, as well as those who have learnt on the job, to refresh their skills,’ he said.

He said the company had already seen an increase in productivity due to an improvement in the welding process.

‘The staff are more conscious of what documentation and procedures they should be looking at and following, and doing things in a smarter way. This has meant less touching up with grinders after the initial weld, which saves time and money.

**Q: Specialised equipment on company premises?**

**A: TAFE NSW can deliver a course on-site.**

‘It’s also been a way of boosting morale in the welding team,’ Mr Norris said. ‘Many of them haven’t been in a classroom for 20 or 30 years, and now they can build on that training and in the process help their careers and progression within the company and the industry.’

In April 2006, Custom Coaches saw the opening of their new Sydney production line by NSW Deputy Premier, The Hon Mr John Watkins, who presented the recent course graduates with their certificates.

‘We are pleased with the results of the training package we developed with TAFE NSW,’ said Mark Burgess, Chief Executive, Custom Coaches. ‘It is delivering sustainable value to our business and our industry.’

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Custom Coaches has been building quality buses and coaches since 1955, with an emphasis on research and development and modern design.

*This course provides welding training for people who want to acquire skills to progress in the metal and engineering industry. It is also relevant for those in manufacturing, construction and transport.*



**Sydney Water wants to provide a range of skill development opportunities for staff.**

# Comprehensive training program for Sydney Water

Sydney Water needed to identify one or more training packages which best reflect the nature of work undertaken in each of their business units. Initially, four business units were selected for assessment: Asset Solutions, Water Services, Treatment and Operations, and Customer & Community Relations.

TAFE NSW – South Western Sydney Institute was engaged to address Sydney Water’s needs. Maria Steel, Manager for Organisational Capability, Sydney Water, said one of the aims of the project was to outline a training program for staff at various levels in the four business units, with training expected to be delivered across Certificate III, IV and Diploma levels.

**Q: Looking to foster a training culture in your organisation?**

**A: We can work with you to identify opportunities.**

‘The project is part of Sydney Water’s desire to reinforce the long-standing training culture in the organisation and provide a range of skill development opportunities for staff,’ Ms Steel said. ‘Our staff will be given access to Recognition of Prior Learning as well as being provided with gap training to help them develop competencies to the level required for their roles.’

Peter Rappo, Project Manager, South Western Sydney Training Services Unit, said the Institute will also train more than 30 Sydney Water staff to undertake training and assessment in the workplace. This will enable the roll out of gap training to be fast-tracked across the organisation.

‘Institute staff are in the process of visiting many of the Sydney Water work sites in the metropolitan area including reservoirs, dams and treatment works to meet staff, get a good understanding of the work performed and determine the most appropriate training package for the company,’ Mr Rappo said.

Terry Crotty, Manager Training Services, South Western Sydney Institute, said the project is not TAFE NSW’s typical delivery model but that the Institute was chosen because staff are well-equipped to manage the challenge.

‘The benefit to Sydney Water is in finding out what their overall training needs are by determining a core set of capabilities that staff ideally would possess before they enter a job or soon after,’ he said. ‘For example, for someone working in the Asset Solutions unit, project management skills would undoubtedly be useful.’

Mr Crotty said Sydney Water approached TAFE NSW because ‘they knew that we had a credible history of delivery of training and assessment and could contribute significantly to this project’.

‘This is a major organisational change project for a company with a critical role in the state. It’s important that we work closely with them to produce the best outcome,’ he said.

The first stage of the project is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of June. Once the first phase is complete, South Western Sydney Institute will also look at four additional business units from July to November, including Human Resources, Information Technology and Finance.

*TAFE NSW offers many courses which enable students to achieve Training Package qualifications. Training Packages specify the skills and knowledge (competencies) required for different jobs within an industry, as well as how competencies are to be assessed.*

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## Unique collaboration delivers statewide training program

A unique collaboration between power supplier Country Energy and TAFE NSW has led to statewide delivery of the Diploma of Electrical Engineering as part of Country Energy's Trainee Technical Officer (TTO) program.

The program combines six one-week block releases with distance education between blocks and Essential Knowledge and Skills (EKAS) modules delivered by TAFE NSW – North Coast, Western, and Riverina Institutes.

The distance education modes vary, ranging from individual telephone consultations and group teleconferences to email and CD ROM delivery. Competency assessment is undertaken on-the-job by Country Energy.

The TTO program started in January 2006 and will take three years for students to complete. TAFE NSW's delivery of the EKAS modules for each course will cover the first two years. The 40 students comprise those who have been employed under the TTO program and those who are completing the course as part of their professional development.

Rex Davies, head teacher, North Coast Institute, Port Macquarie Campus, said the project started over two years ago with three Country Energy students. It combined mainstream delivery and flexible distance education to meet the company's needs at that time, and 'demonstrated we could run a Diploma course for them'.

When the organisation decided they wanted to expand the program, Mr Davies presented a commercial proposal to Country Energy management.

'It took several months of negotiation and development to put a timetable together,' he said. 'We convinced Country Energy that the staff at North Coast, Western and Riverina Institutes

could work together effectively and deliver the same course in three sites across NSW.'

Paul Brazier, General Manager Network Services, Country Energy, said that everyone had worked well as a team to deliver the program to a very tight deadline.

'Our business requirement was challenging in needing to deliver a course to staff across NSW and in a format that minimised disruption to productivity,' Mr Brazier said.

**Q: Need to train staff across regions?**

**A: TAFE NSW can meet the challenge.**

'However, TAFE NSW was able to meet that challenge and deliver a course that met our needs. This course will deliver the specialist training to support the future of our business in providing electricity system infrastructure for the benefit of the regional communities that we service.'



**Rex Davies, TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute (far left) with Paul Brazier and Bob Lowe from Country Energy.**

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*This course is being delivered as a mix of face-to-face and distance education. Competency assessment is undertaken on-the-job by Country Energy. Can also be tailored to organisations in the manufacturing, engineering, construction and transport industries.*

## Child care worker shortage prompts innovative course



**TAFE NSW is working to increase the number of qualified child care workers in the inner west area.**

The inner west area of Sydney is experiencing an acute shortage of qualified child care workers along with increasing demand for places. TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute has responded with an innovative course, Family Day Care, designed to provide training for child care workers re-entering the workforce who want to operate family day care businesses.

Ros Walker, Course Coordinator, Sydney

Institute, said the Family Day Care Course 'not only offers a comprehensive introduction to the family day care industry, it is also designed to support students in accessing community resources to assist them in establishing their own businesses.'

**Q: Experiencing a shortage of staff in your industry?**

**A: TAFE NSW develops courses in response to industry needs.**

The course also equips students with skills and knowledge in child care studies, first aid and computing as well as providing an avenue to explore employment and further education options.

Ms Walker said the course has been attracting students from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, with students working together as a group to

widen community networks, as well as develop valuable communication skills.

Students also refine their skills and knowledge during work experience which is guided by child care workers from established day care centres in the inner west area.

'Participants also heard from guest speakers from child care centres in Sydney which gave them a good opportunity to meet and learn from other people working in the industry,' Ms Walker said. 'This was particularly helpful for students forming contacts and gaining employment.'

Marissa Nicolaou, of Marrickville, who will open her own child care business later this year, said the course was very helpful. 'Although I've raised two children and five grandchildren there were things I didn't know; and it's never too late to learn,' she said.

Ms Nicolaou said the classes are also a great opportunity for the students, who are mostly from non-English speaking backgrounds, to learn in a supportive environment.

Some of last year's students, like Kwang Bok Chung, are continuing their studies at TAFE NSW in Certificate III in Child Studies. Mr Bok Chung would like to set up his own child care centre in the Campsie area.

Another student, ThuyThanh Van Nguyen, a sole parent with two young children, has found work in a child care centre in the inner west. 'The course gave me the skills and confidence to find work I enjoy,' she said.

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*The Family Day Care Course is for child care workers re-entering the workforce who want to operate family day care businesses from home.*

# Navy turns to TAFE NSW for national qualification

A need for nationally-accredited training in Alcohol and Other Drug Work at Diploma level for the Royal Australian Navy has resulted in commercial training which can also be delivered as a mainstream, flexible delivery course.

The Royal Australian Navy turned to TAFE NSW – Riverina Institute to deliver training in Alcohol and Other Drug Work to its personnel working in the area. The first of several groups, consisting of three Navy personnel from Perth, Melbourne and Sydney, took part in a pilot program which involved intensive training at Kuttabul Navy Base in Sydney. All three participants are Naval Officers charged with implementing and managing the Navy’s Alcohol and Other Drug policies, and working with affected personnel.

The Institute was able to provide the officers with gap training and recognition of their prior learning in order to achieve the Diploma qualification. The course was delivered by Jo Fennessy, Alcohol and Other Drug Program Facilitator, Riverina Institute, Narrandera campus.

‘My brief was to develop the Diploma of Alcohol and Other Drug Work using available modules from TAFE NSW and other external sources,’ Ms Fennessy said. ‘The delivery was then tailored to meet Navy needs.’

The initial gap training of three months consisted of two weeks’ face-to-face delivery, assessment events and a two-week practicum placement in rural NSW. Training for further groups will consist of four weeks of face-to-face delivery in two-week blocks; two weeks metropolitan and two weeks rural; and one week of Navy practicum placements and ongoing assessment events over a six-month period.

The first three course participants, Lieutenant Commander Morag Ferguson, Lieutenant



Commander Samantha Thompson and Lieutenant Rod Gillies, all undertook two-week placements at local health services in Leeton, Narrandera, and Wagga Wagga.

Lieutenant Commander Ferguson, who is also National Alcohol and Drug Program Coordinator with the Navy, said the Diploma qualification is essential for people working in the area of Community Services as an Alcohol and Other Drugs Coordinator.



**The Royal Australian Navy approached TAFE NSW to develop a nationally-recognised qualification for personnel working in the Alcohol and Other Drugs area.**

**Q: Staff need a nationally-recognised qualification?**

**A: TAFE NSW courses are fully accredited.**

‘It has made me more aware of what happens in this area within the wider community, which I was able to compare to what happens in Defence,’ she said of the training. ‘While there are many similarities, there are also community-specific differences such as the isolation of the workers who are often the sole provider of this type of care.’

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*The Diploma of Alcohol and Other Drug Work developed for the Royal Australian Navy can also be delivered as a mainstream, flexible delivery course for any Community Service organisation.*

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## Company philosophy embraces employee training

Australian-owned construction company Kell&Rigby insists that all staff learn the construction business from the ground up, even if they already have a degree in engineering or architecture.

As such, training is a very important part of the company philosophy, and nearly all of their 220 staff have done a construction apprenticeship or building cadetship with the company. Recently, Kell&Rigby approached TAFE NSW to train their foremen in waterproofing.

The Certificate III in Waterproofing (Wall and Floor Tiling) is being delivered to employees of the firm by TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute, Randwick College. The Tiling Section at the Institute is an industry leader in this area, and has worked with the Master Builders Association to produce a Best Practice Guide for waterproofing internal wet areas in residential dwellings.

Two groups from Kell&Rigby are currently undertaking the program in order to retain the quality and structural integrity of the projects they are managing.

Hank Riedstra, Waterproofing Training Coordinator, Sydney Institute said the course is beneficial for supervisors and for the building industry in general. It will enhance awareness of the necessity to perform the correct waterproofing membrane applications.

'After completing the course the supervisors will be able to ascertain if any repairs are needed to the waterproofing membrane and that the correct procedures have been followed,' he said.



**The Certificate III in Waterproofing has benefits for the building industry**

This course is for people who need the knowledge and skills to install waterproofing in general construction contexts. Elective units allow for a flexible approach to course content to suit individual learner and industry needs.

WorkCover regulations also require learners to have completed an approved program in Occupational Health & Safety General Construction Induction before carrying out construction work.

Mark Reynolds, Kell&Rigby, said the participants who have been through the course have been 'very impressed with the content' and are keen to continue training. The company is negotiating with Sydney Institute for further training for supervisors.

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*This course is for people who need the knowledge and skills to install waterproofing in general construction contexts. Elective units allow for a flexible approach to content for specific industry or business needs.*

**Q: Does your company require industry-specific gap training?**

**A: A customised solution could be the answer.**