



**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE**

**2009-10 AND 2010-11 FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE  
OUTCOMES QUESTIONNAIRE — PART TWO**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD  
DEVELOPMENT**

### Question 1

The *Annual Report 2009-10* (p.85) indicates that a \$103.0 million carryover to 2009-10 for on-costs relating to Digital Education Revolution lapsed. Please provide explanations as to:

- (a) why the carryover occurred;
- (b) why the carryover lapsed; and

The Commonwealth Government announced the Digital Education Revolution (DER) initiative in 2008-09 through the Economic Stimulus Package. The Commonwealth provided an upfront payment of \$118.86 million representing four years of funding, from 2009-10 to 2012-13, to Victoria in late 2008-09. The whole payment of \$118.86 million was therefore carried over into 2009-10.

In 2009-10, \$15.86 million was expended. The balance of \$103.0 million could not be carried over again into 2010-11, as required under the *Financial Management Act 1994* (FMA). The funding subsequently lapsed in agreement with the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) in order for it to be accessed in 2010-11 under another funding mechanism.

- (c) what the effect on the outcomes of the program were.

There has been no impact on the outcomes of the DER program as the Department accessed the lapsed funding, in agreement with DTF, through other mechanisms under the FMA.

### Question 2

With respect to the *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (p.5) target of every child having access to a preschool program delivered by a four-year qualified early childhood teacher for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year:

- (a) What progress has been made towards this target in 2009-10 and 2010-11?

There has been a positive improvement by Victoria between 2009 and 2010 including an increase in the average hours of kindergarten attendance per week. In Victoria in 2010, 18.4 per cent of children were enrolled in programs offering at least 15 hours per week. In standalone kindergartens this figure was just under seven per cent.

The 2009 and 2010 Annual Reports on Achieving Universal Access in Victoria are available on the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) website and provide details of progress made towards targets:  
[http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Policy\\_Agenda/ECUA/Pages/annualreports.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Policy_Agenda/ECUA/Pages/annualreports.aspx).

- (b) What initiatives have been introduced to provide additional support for early childhood teachers to work in rural and regional Victoria?

There are financial incentives of up to \$12,000 for degree and \$6000 for diploma qualified staff to work in hard to staff licensed children's services which include most rural locations. To date, 67 services including 38 from non-metropolitan regions, have applied successfully to be able to advertise the availability of employment incentives for hard-to-staff positions.

The Early Childhood Qualifications Fund (ECQF) helps the Victorian early childhood education and care sector meet rising workforce demand by providing scholarships of up to \$12,000 for existing licensed children's services staff (and primary teachers) to upgrade or attain an early childhood qualification. Since April 2010 the Fund has awarded 655 scholarships to early childhood educators undertaking an early childhood qualification in VET or higher education. 159 scholarships have been

awarded to staff in rural areas.

- (c) Does the Department consider that Victoria will be able to reach this target by 2013? If not, when does the Department expect that Victoria will reach this target?

There are significant challenges in relation to having sufficient infrastructure and workforce in place to sustain the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NPECE) and meet the 2013 targets. These are identified in the Allen Consulting Group's report available on the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs website at: [http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/Early\\_Childhood\\_Partnership\\_Review.pdf](http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/_resources/Early_Childhood_Partnership_Review.pdf).

Work is continuing with the Commonwealth regarding the financial implications for implementing the NPECE in Victoria, particularly to encourage a substantial investment in necessary infrastructure and an extension to the timelines for implementation.

### Question 3

Regarding the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model (*Annual Report 2009-10*, p.8; *Annual Report 2010-11*, p.17):

- (a) How many school leaders and teachers have utilised the model?

The e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model provides a reference point for school leaders and teachers to develop a deeper understanding of what constitutes high quality teacher practice in the classroom. The use of the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model has not been mandated.

In 2009 the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model publication was distributed to all school principals by Regional Directors and Regional Network Leaders either through network meetings or in one-to-one meetings. In 2010 48,000 copies of the e<sup>5</sup> Teachers Journal were made available to all teachers through regional offices.

In 2009 teacher practice using e<sup>5</sup> became the focus of the professional learning undertaken by recipients of Teacher Professional Leave. Since then 1178 teachers have accessed Teacher Professional Leave examining their practice using the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model.

In 2009 ten schools were involved in the Public Art Teaching Excellence project. The project provided an extended professional learning opportunity for teachers to engage in substantive conversations about what constitutes high quality instruction in the visual arts. The e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model was one of the key components of this project.

The outcomes of this project have been documented in the Public Art Teaching Excellence publication which is available from:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/proflearning/e5/publicartteachingexcellence.htm>.

In 2010 two e<sup>5</sup> Master Classes were delivered to 100 participants, predominantly principals, through the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership. Workshops were also conducted for all new principals in 2011.

The 2011 Supporting New Teacher Practice program is underpinned by the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model. New teachers are supported to use the model to examine the challenges they face in their practice.

Regional offices have used a variety of methods to support schools to use the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model. For example Hume region ran e<sup>5</sup> introductory sessions in 2010 with principals drawn from almost every one of the 165 Hume schools. Barwon South Western region has encouraged the use of e<sup>5</sup> in exploring teacher practice through the existing structures of Regional Network Leaders and School Improvement Partners working with schools, cognisant that schools are best placed in determining how e<sup>5</sup> is built into the teachers' learning development plans. Eastern Metropolitan region supported schools to use e<sup>5</sup> by building practitioner knowledge base through planned professional learning

activities in every network.

The e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model website was created and launched in 2010. Most recent e<sup>5</sup> website activity reports over 3000 visits per month, mainly from within Australia.

A needs analysis of 325 teachers (with an 87 per cent response rate), completed prior to their commencing Teacher Professional Leave in 2012, shows the degree to which teachers are familiar with and use the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model:

- 63 per cent of respondents believe they have a medium to high knowledge of the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model.
- 60 per cent use the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model to a medium to high degree as reflective tool in examining their practice.
- 56 per cent use the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model to a medium to high degree, in determining their classroom practice at an e<sup>5</sup> 'capability' level.

(b) What has been the feedback from school leaders and teachers on the usefulness and effectiveness of the model?

Feedback on the usefulness and effectiveness of the e<sup>5</sup> Instructional Model has been collected from a range of sources.

School leader feedback from the e<sup>5</sup> Master Classes highlighted the value of the model as a framework for coaching conversations and in identifying areas for improvement.

Teachers from 2011 TPL emphasise the value of the model as a reflective tool, in supporting conversations through a common language and in describing quality teaching in the following statements:

- *e<sup>5</sup> is best teaching practice, not just a new program.*
- *e<sup>5</sup> fits beautifully with what we are doing. In fact, e<sup>5</sup> scaffolds practice in a beautiful and exciting way. It sets everything out.*

A survey, of principals and other school leaders, conducted in Hume region in 2010 found that 50 per cent believe the e<sup>5</sup> framework is of some value as a tool for improving teacher practice and 35 per cent believe it is extremely valuable.

(c) Has the use of the model been evaluated and how has the model improved classroom practice?

The use of the model has been evaluated as part of programs such as Teacher Professional Leave.

Findings from the 2010 outsourced Teacher Professional Leave (TPL) evaluation showed that participant respondents shifted from low levels of familiarity with the Model when applying (for TPL), to over half of them reporting that they were now using it confidently. Around nine in ten respondents (89 per cent) reported that their TPL professional learning involved using e<sup>5</sup> to reflect on teaching practice. It was noted that:

*The e<sup>5</sup> is a powerful model to improve and reflect on practice. I really didn't believe this before embarking on TPL.'*

The ability to personally reflect on teaching practice was a new addition to outcomes measured by the 2010 survey and it rated as one of the highest outcomes for participants.

By the end of the TPL experience, the higher amount of use and confidence achieved by TPL teachers in regards to e<sup>5</sup> correlated with higher teacher and student outcomes reported.

The 2011 Interim report found that, overall, participants had reached the conclusion that e<sup>5</sup> was useful

due to a number of factors:

- confidence and understanding that it represents “best practice”, “what we already do”, and is not “something new”
- appreciation that it provides a common language which facilitates professional conversations
- agreement that it forms a useful framework for reflecting on practice, especially in regard to the *e*<sup>5</sup> domains and their specific capabilities.

#### **Question 4**

What have been the results of the trialled teacher performance pay model (*Annual Report 2009-10*, p.8; *Annual Report 2010-11*, p.18)?

Victoria is in the second year of a three-year trial to evaluate the impact of two reward payment models on improving the performance of teachers and improving outcomes for students. The Rewarding Teaching Excellence trial involves two models: Teacher Rewards and School Rewards, with two cohorts participating in each. Cohort One has completed their initial year for both models, with reward payments being received in June 2011.

An independent evaluation of the trials by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) has begun, with final results due mid-2013.

#### **Question 5**

Please provide details of the more significant programs/initiatives being undertaken in rural and regional Victoria in 2009-10 and 2010-11. Please identify any programs which were initiated after the change of government in November 2010.

##### **Early Childhood**

There are a number of state-wide programs and services in early childhood that have significant impact in rural and regional areas.

**Maternal and Child Health (MCH)** provides a universal service. In 2010-11 the contribution to Universal MCH funding was \$29.7 million, of which \$8 million was funded for rural and regional areas. Funding for the **Enhanced MCH**, a targeted service was \$8.9 million, with \$4 million provided to rural and regional areas.

**Kindergarten** program funding in 2010-11 was \$169 million, with approximately \$50 million of this going to rural and regional areas.

**Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS)** provides targeted programs for those with specific additional needs. Funding for ECIS in 2010-11, including ECIS places, Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) and Flexible Support Packages was just under \$67 million, with almost \$18 million directed to rural and regional communities.

The **MCH Nursery Equipment Program (NEP)** was introduced in February 2011. This state-wide program provides safe nursery equipment to vulnerable Victorian families where a safety concern has been identified by a maternal and child health nurse and the family are not able to purchase new equipment themselves. The program allows families who present with risk factors such as unemployment, low household income, disability, family violence, drug, alcohol or mental health issues to improve the health and wellbeing of their child through the provision of a safer physical environment. Since February, the NEP has provided \$285,000 worth of equipment to families living

in rural and regional Victoria.

The **MCH Scholarship Program** awarded four postgraduate scholarships at \$3,500 each in both 2009/10 and 2010-11 years to rural or regional recipients. An additional research scholarship of \$5000 was awarded to one regional/rural recipient in 2010-11.

**Early Learning Pilots** are trials of a new service model aimed at improving the engagement of vulnerable children in universal education and care programs. Four partnerships have been selected, of which one is in rural Victoria. Three commenced in June 2011, and one in October 2011. Each pilot site receives \$180,000.

The **In-Home Support Program** provides parenting support to Aboriginal families to improve their child's health, development, learning and wellbeing from birth to 3 years. Five of the 6 locations are in regional and rural Victoria.

The **Home Based Learning Program**, based in Mildura, Bairnsdale and Swan Hill, supports Aboriginal families with children 3–5 years of age. The Program supports parents as the primary educators of their children by improving the home learning environment and complementing the kindergarten learning experience.

Total funding for the In-Home Support and Home Based Learning Programs in 2010-11 was \$2.45 million.

**Best Start** supports families, caregivers and communities to provide the best possible environment, experiences and care for young children in the important years from pregnancy to school. It aims to improve the health, development, learning and wellbeing of all Victorian children (0-8 years) and has a strong emphasis on prevention and early intervention. In 2010-11, each Best Start site received \$100,000. Fifteen of the 30 sites are located in rural and regional Victoria.

**Enhanced Best Start** sites in Mildura and Shepparton provide more detailed focus on breastfeeding and increasing participation in early year services by vulnerable children. Funding in 2010-11 for the 2 sites was \$400,000.

The **Supported Parent Groups and Playgroups Initiative (SPPI)** is targeted at disadvantaged children and families who might not normally attend a community playgroup. In 2010-11, 15 of 29 local government areas that received funding for SPPI were located in rural or regional Victoria. Total funding for SPPI in 2010-11 was \$1.6 million, of which 43 per cent was directed to rural and regional communities.

The **Smalltalk program** provides disadvantaged families of children 6 months to 3 years with facilitated MCH parent groups, supported playgroups and home coaching. The program develops children's social, language and literacy skills. In 2010-11, approximately \$290,000 was provided for program delivery in five rural and regional areas in Victoria.

**Early Childhood Intervention Workforce Initiatives** provide incentives and scholarships for ECIS professionals to undertake professional development, upgrade qualifications and relocate too hard to staff and rural locations. Total funding in 2010-11 was \$900,000.

Since November 2010, the following state wide programs were initiated:

- **Kindergarten Inclusion Support** received an additional \$10 million over four years to fund an extra 246 packages and broaden the group of children eligible for support. The KIS packages fund additional kindergarten staff, training, resources and/or specialised equipment. In 2011-12, 60 KIS packages have been provided to the Department's non-metropolitan regions.
- The **Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) Victorian Division** was provided with \$200,000 over 4 years to support ABA volunteers and expand current programs and supports to families in rural and regional Victoria.
- **Maternal and Child Health Scholarship** program was increased by \$180,000 to expand the

existing scholarship program for nurses to undertake Maternal and Child Health Studies and will provide an extra 50 post graduate scholarships over four years at \$3,500 each.

- The **Kindergarten small rural grants initiative** was allocated \$6 million over 4 years. In 2011, 65 kindergarten services classified as small rural for kindergarten per capita funding received grants of between \$6,000 and \$20,000, based on their number of enrolments. The grant is to assist with administrative and operational costs to improve access and affordability for families in rural areas. Small rural services are defined for funding purposes as those that have less than 15 enrolments and are the only service in a town in a rural region. Once enrolments reach 15, services are defined as rural.
- The Government has committed \$2 million over four years to support parents through the development of a **parenting strategy**. The parenting strategy encompasses both a new strategic framework and enhanced capacity for regional parenting services to provide a greater level of parenting support to parents of children with emerging emotional health and behavioural issues. It will build on and enhance existing service provision and be informed by findings from other Early Years' initiatives such as the Early Home Learning Study.
- The 2011-12 State Budget committed \$26 million to a **Children's Facilities Capital Program** which comprises:
  - \$15 million has been committed for a Children's Facilities Capital Program. Included in this commitment was \$3.5 million for the following three projects: \$2 million for the Grovedale Early Learning Hub, \$1 million for the Barwon Heads Kindergarten and \$500,000 for the Torquay Kindergarten.
  - A further \$10 million has been added from the National Partnership on Early Childhood Education and \$1 million from Departmental resources.
- The 2011-12 **Children's Facilities Capital Grants** round opened on 16 November 2011. The competitive grants process for Integrated Children's Centre and Early Learning Facility Upgrade grants in 2011-12 is open to both metropolitan and rural services.

## Schools

During 2010, DEECD undertook a series of consultation forums with over 300 rural and regional principals and other key stakeholders regarding challenges and opportunities for education in regional and rural Victoria. This led to the development of a **Rural Education Framework**, launched by the previous Minister for Education in October 2010. The Framework is no longer operational, with the Rural Education Reference Group announced by the Minister for Education in March 2011, advising on matters relating to rural education.

The Department has an ongoing partnership with the Country Education Project (CEP) with a number of initiatives including:

- The **eKids Science Program** (\$150,000, July 2010–Dec 2011) to develop online learning activities and programs in partnership with the rural primary schools' delivery of science curriculum and support teacher professional development.
- The **eKids VCE Biology Project** (\$30,000, Jan 2011–Dec 2011), to deliver VCE Biology in a blended learning environment that uses the Department's Virtual Conference Centre for synchronous web conference sessions with rural students.
- The **Rural School Governance Project** (2010) where CEP developed and conducted a state-wide survey of rural school council members and principals, held discussions with rural schools involved in alternative governance models, and conducted a web-based analysis of school governance research interstate and internationally.
- CEP is currently coordinating the \$200,000 **Rural Teachers for Teaching Excellence pilot** in

the Grampians Regions to facilitate the partnership between sixteen government schools and three universities, The University of Melbourne, La Trobe University and the University of Ballarat. This is part of the School Centres for Teaching Excellence (SCTE) is a \$1.8 million pilot initiative funded through the Australian Government's Smarter Schools National Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality.

- The **RACV Energy Breakthrough program** is a joint initiative between the CEP, Central Goldfields Shire Council and the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria. The program commenced in 1990 and is held annually in November, with a focus on encouraging hands-on learning, with a focus on science, energy efficiency, technology and the environment.

Since the change of government the following initiatives have been launched:

- **Local Solutions Year 12 Retention Fund** is supporting two rounds of two-year grants to government, Catholic and independent secondary and P-12 schools in rural and regional Victoria to design and deliver programs and initiatives that increase the number of rural students completing Year 12 and improve rural school retention rates. The Government has provided \$5 million over four years through the Regional Growth Fund.

Round 1 grants closed 28 October 2011. The grants for retention programs will be made available to recipient schools for implementation at the start of the 2012 school year.

- **City kids to Experience Country Life** will provide transport reimbursements for metropolitan Year 6 students to visit regional and rural Victoria, with an emphasis on visiting working farms and local and historical sites. The program also aims to increase the understanding of the role and importance of regional and rural Victoria and provide students an understanding of where their food comes from.

The Government has provided \$1 million over four years. These funds have been made available through the Regional Growth Fund.

- **Rural Education Reference Group (RERG)** is a cross sectoral body which is providing advice on rural education issues and the implementation of the Government's agenda for education within a regional and rural context. The RERG met first on 8 September 2011.
- **Video Conferencing Initiative** provides for the rollout of 350 videoconference units to regional and rural schools across Victoria. The initiative is designed to support:
  - Broader curriculum access, particularly for secondary students
  - Special needs students, including students who have hearing difficulties
  - Teachers' and Student Support Officers' professional development
  - Delivery of language education
  - Disengaged students.

### **Training and Higher Education**

**Future Farming Project** is being undertaken in close collaboration with the Department of Business and Innovation and the Department of Primary Industries to identify the skills and workforce needs of the farming sector. Funding of \$62,156 and \$68,932 was provided in 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively.

**Specialist Energy Training Network (SETN)** to address the training needs of the energy industry, with particular emphasis on companies engaged in the production of renewable energy (wind, solar, geo-thermal and bioenergy) and low emissions coal based power generation provides a range of activities.

The network was funded in 2009-10 and to continue till 2011-12, to a total of \$1 million. The funding will assist the SETN in:

- providing the skilled workforce necessary to implement the policy drivers to renewable energy,



assist Victorians into these 'green jobs' and facilitate the transition to a greener economy

- delivering new training packages and State accredited courses in the renewable energy and low emissions technology fields that will be implemented across the Victorian TAFE network and available to other training providers.

As part of a broader industry skills needs assessment, company based skills analyses have been undertaken for First Solar, Silex Solar Systems, and wind companies combined (Vestas, Suzlon, and Garrard Hassan). These companies have projects or potential large scale projects in rural Victoria.

Specific competencies have been identified within the wind and solar industries. Current work on specific rural projects are:

- Solar Systems – 154 MW Solar Facility in Mildura. Training to commence in line with project in early 2012
- Mildura Region Solar Hubs Program – Training via SuniTAFE to commence late 2011 / early 2012
- Gippsland Solar Hubs – Training being planned for early 2012
- Shepparton Region Solar Hubs - Training being planned for early 2012
- Ballarat Region Solar Hubs - Training being planned for early 2012
- Sustainability awareness and increasing general public knowledge with regard to courses and training available in Renewable Energy and Sustainability
- Wind Industry Apprenticeship program
- Brown Coal Innovations – The Energy Training Network (ETN) is assisting to identify and develop skills requirements within the Victorian Coal Industry to transition to a lower carbon economy and maintain jobs in the Latrobe Valley. The ETN findings are that the training already exists to accommodate the transitions into cleaner coal technologies and are focusing on upskilling and training to assist in utilizing skills for different applications.

**Skills Stores 2009-2010** were announced as part of the former government's skills statement *Maintaining the Advantage – Skilled Victorians* in 2007.

Skills Stores provided free services to eligible individuals and enterprises about how previous work skills and experience could count towards a new qualification and guidance on the vocational education and training (VET) system in Victoria. Where appropriate, individuals were then provided with a personal referral to an RTO for a recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessment.

The 13 Skills Stores received funding totalling \$28.13 million between 2007-2010. There were eight Skills Stores that operated fixed and mobile services in regional Victoria including: Sunraysia, Ballarat (Grampians), Central Gippsland, East Gippsland, Wodonga, Bendigo, Geelong and South West (Warrnambool).

The program was successfully completed in 2010.

The **Bushfire Scholarship program** commenced in November 2009 and was completed in June 2011. The program was valued at \$200,000, providing for 400 scholarships for bushfire impacted individuals valued at \$500 each. All individuals who applied received scholarships resulting in 168 awards.

The **Bushfire Skills Brokers program** was announced in November 2009 and is due for completion in December 2012. The Bushfire Skills Brokers program is valued at \$1.25 million, with broker services being delivered on the ground in Marysville, Kinglake and Gippsland.

New programs since November 2011 include:

- **Skilling the Valley** is a place based (regional) industry and economic transition strategy aimed at supporting the Latrobe Valley into a low carbon future. It was launched on 12 April 2011.

Funding is allocated of \$10 million over three years, 2011-2014.

- **Skilling the Bay** is a place based (regional) industry and economic transition strategy aimed at supporting the Geelong region to move from being overly reliant on a traditional manufacturing base. There is funding allocated of \$1.8 million over three years, 2011-2014. The initiative was launched on 19 April 2011.
- **Workers in Transition Program** ensures that Victorians who face retrenchment are supported in gaining the skills they need to achieve redeployment or re-employment efficiently. This program maximises the use of the training entitlement to support industry and regional restructuring and ensure greater success of retrenched workers transitioning into future employment. Funding of \$5m is available in 2011-12 to resource this program in the form of Eligibility Exemption Places.
- **Flood training assistance package** was announced as part of a suite of programs in response to the 2011 floods. The program is valued at \$500,000 and will be completed in July 2012. The package provides for \$500 payments towards training related costs for Victorians who were impacted by the floods.
- The **Review of tertiary education in Gippsland was announced** in March 2011. This reflected concerns that Gippsland students have lower levels of participation in higher education than the Victorian average and are deferring higher education at higher levels than the Victorian average. An Expert Panel has been established comprising Professor Kwong Lee Dow, Dr Michele Allan and Mr John Mitchell. The Panel will provide its final report to the Minister in December 2011.

#### Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE)

**Learn Local** was launched in April 2011 as a network brand for not-for-profit community providers registered with the ACFE Board to deliver adult and further education. Regional training related to use of the brand, to the value of \$45,000, was funded in 2010-11 to enhance providers' capacity to market their services in the demand-driven training market.

The **Capacity and Innovation Fund** was announced in May 2011 with funding of \$1.875 million for regional and rural grants. The fund provides grants of up to \$50,000 per Learn Local organisation to undertake local initiatives across Victoria to enhance providers' business capacity and the support they provide to learners.

### Question 6

The *Annual Report 2010-11* (pp.24, 31, 78, 119) mentions that 13 schools have been delivered in two tranches as part of the Partnership Victoria in Schools (PViS) agreement, but Partnerships Victoria only lists 11 schools.<sup>1</sup>

- (a) Please provide a list of the 13 schools, specifying which of the two tranches each school was a part of and dates the schools were opened.

School	Tranche	When opened
Taylor's Hill Primary School	1	2010

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.partnerships.vic.gov.au/CA25708500035EB6/0/0D60CFFC063D0723CA2573CC0011D2AE>

Derrimut Primary School	1	2010
Cranbourne Carlisle Primary School	1	2010
Point Cook P-9 College	1	2010
Alkira Secondary College	1	2010
Kororoit Creek Primary School	2	2011
Lyndhurst Primary School	2	2011
Mernda Primary School	2	2011
Aitken Creek Primary School	2	2011
Truganina South Primary School	2	2011
Cranbourne East Primary School	2	2011
Cranbourne East Secondary College	2	2011

- (b) Can the Department explain the discrepancy between the number of schools listed on Partnerships Victoria's website and the number provided in the Department's annual report?

The figure of 13 included in the 2010-11 Annual Report was not correct. When announced in 2008, the project consisted of 11 schools, including Cranbourne East P-12 School. Following consultation with the local community, the P-12 school was separated into two entities – Cranbourne East Primary School and Cranbourne East Secondary College. While the *Partnerships Victoria* website still refers to 11 schools, 12 schools now form part of the PViS project. This is a change to the school governance arrangements only and does not affect the overall scope and cost of the project.

### Question 7

It is noted that Annual Leave Entitlements in Note 14 of the *Annual Report 2010-11* (p.106) were over 40 per cent higher than the previous year while Long Service Leave entitlements have not changed. Can the Department explain why this has occurred?

The increase in annual leave provision is a reflection of the timing of the 2011 mid-year vacation for schools was such that entire 2 weeks of the vacation fell into the 2011-2012 financial year. This resulted in reduction in the amount of annual leave taken and a corresponding increase in provision. LSL provisions remained unaffected by this occurrence.

### Question 8

Please explain why the number of appeals to the Merit Protection Boards has increased significantly, from a total of 114 for the year to 30 June 2010 to 185 for the year to 30 June 2011 (*Annual Report 2010-11*, p.164).

The number of appeals to the Merit Protection Board regularly varies from year to year. Whilst the annual variance in numbers appears significant, when viewed in the context of a workforce of 56,250 employees these annual movement in figures is not seen as a risk to the Department.

During the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 there has been an increase in appeals reflecting changes introduced into the *Equal Opportunity Act* in September 2009 via the *Equal Opportunity Amendment (Family Responsibilities) Act 2008*. Employees returning from family leave requested time fraction reductions under this change.

The impact of the Department policy allowing for the translation of fixed term teachers to ongoing employment, has seen a small increase in the number of grievances lodged in this matter.

There is an increasing confidence by employees to lodge a grievance in relation to decisions made regarding their employment which they feel to be unjust or unreasonable and to have these matters heard by an independent statutory body. This may also be reflected in an increase in appeals brought before the Board.

### Question 9

The Committee notes that the total base remuneration for executives increased by 20 per cent between 2009-10 and 2010-11, though the total number of executives increased by only 9 per cent (*Annual Report 2010-11*, p.117).

- (a) How many individuals were included in the executive remuneration disclosure for both years?

2009/10 – 54 executives (16 executives with a **base** remuneration under \$100K were excluded from the count)

2010-11 – 76 executives

- (b) Into which income bands did the remuneration fall of the 14 executives transferred following the machinery-of-government changes in 2010-11?

Skills Victoria staff were counted in the following remuneration bands with remuneration being counted from 1/1/2011 to 30/6/2011. (Please note this is half the financial year.)

\$60 – \$70K – 2

\$70 – \$80K – 3

\$80 – \$90K - 3

\$90 – \$100K - 3

\$100 – \$110K - 1

\$110 – \$120K – 1

\$140 – \$150K – 1

- (c) Please detail the number of executives who received increases in their remuneration between 1 July and 26 November 2010 and the number receiving increases between 27 November 2010 and 30 June 2011, breaking that information down according to what proportion of their salary the increase was.

Increase in base remuneration	Number of executives receiving increases in their base rate of remuneration of this amount between 1 July and 26 November 2010	Number of executives receiving increases in their base rate of remuneration of this amount between 27 November 2010 and 30 June 2011
0-3 per cent		

3-5 per cent		
5-10 per cent		
10-15 per cent	2 (promotions)	
greater than 15 per cent	1 (job change)	2 (1 promotion/1 work value)

(d) Please detail the reasons for the increases in the total of executives' base remuneration between 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Further investigation into the apparent discrepancy in cost escalation and executive numbers increase has revealed that base and total remuneration amounts were underestimated in 2010 due to a variation in the calculation method.

This occurred when DEECD moved to a revised remuneration band recording system whereby only those executives earning greater than \$100,000 were identified in the remuneration band table. In 2010 only those executives identified on the table were included in the total remuneration amounts effectively excluding executives identified as earning a base/total remuneration under \$100,000.

In 2011 a different interpretation was applied whereby all executives were included in the count of remuneration totals. This method included those additional executives not recorded on the table.

When the full amount including executives < \$100K is tallied for the previous 2009-10 financial year the base remuneration figure increases to \$10.7 million. The difference between 2010 and 2011 is therefore more commensurate with the increased staffing levels resulting from MOG changes.

### Question 10

Several performance indicators in the *Annual Report 2010-11* are given in terms of results plus or minus a confidence range. This indicates a survey, sample or model result. Can the Department identify all of its performance measures that have been derived using a survey rather than an analysis of all data points?

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy performance measures included confidence intervals for some results. Confidence intervals were applied due to a number of factors including small sample sizes (as is the case for indigenous students), measurement error, equating error and sampling error. The performance measures that are derived using surveys include:

- Years 5-6 students' opinion of their connectedness with the school
- Years 7-9 students' opinion of their connectedness with the school
- School satisfaction with student support services
- Parent satisfaction with primary schooling on a 100-point scale
- Parent satisfaction with secondary schooling on a 100-point scale
- Parent satisfaction with special education on a 100-point scale
- Percentage of VET graduates who rate quality of training as four or more out of five
- Student satisfaction with ACE courses meeting overall needs
- Families who are satisfied with the service provided (Early Childhood Intervention Services)
- Percentage of school leavers completing a VCE VET certificate program in a school progressing to further education, training or work

- Percentage of school leavers completing an Intermediate or Senior Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning certificate in a school progressing to further education, training or work.

### Question 11

The *Annual Report 2009-10* mentions (p.44) a four-year \$135.2 million program funded by the Commonwealth Government to increase participation in education and training, increase attainment levels and to improve successful transition from school.

- (a) How much of this has been expended for 2010-11 and what has the expenditure funded?

Commonwealth funding for the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions (NP YAT) expenditure for the financial year 2010-11 totalled \$34.3 million.

The expenditure supported several programs aimed at increasing participation of young people in education and training, increasing attainment levels and improving successful transitions from school, as listed below.

- **Youth Connections** (\$16.8 million): providing case management and support for at risk young people aged 13-19 to remain engaged in, or reconnect with, education and training. This program is managed by the Commonwealth.
- **School Business Community Partnership Brokers** program, delivered by Local Learning and Employment Networks (Commonwealth contribution was \$5.1 million; the Victorian Government contributed an additional \$7.6 million) to improve community and business engagement with education and training for the 10-19 cohort, through facilitation of partnerships which address identified needs in local communities.
- **Workplace Learning Coordinators** (\$5.3 million): developing streamlined arrangements for employers and education and training providers to expand workplace learning opportunities for young people.
- **Apprenticeship Support Officers** (\$3.5 million): providing young people with additional intensive support during the first 12 months of their apprenticeship to improve the number of successful completions.
- **Improving Career Development Services** (\$2.7 million): development of a careers curriculum for years 7-12; professional development for careers practitioners; a careers mentoring initiative to improve the long-term learning and employment prospects of current students from three targeted groups; and regional careers development officers to support education and training providers in all sectors to work towards continuous improvement in career development services.
- **Koorie Transitions Coordinators** (\$0.9 million): developing relationships with Koorie young people and their families to enhance the effectiveness of available services and supports.

- (b) What outcomes were expected to have been achieved by the 2010-11 expenditure for this program?

The NP YAT includes targets to be achieved by Victoria, as follows:

- A 2010 participation target comprising the number of 15-19 year olds enrolled in years 11 and 12, or, for those who have not completed a senior secondary qualification, enrolled in a Certificate II or above. For Victoria, the participation target for 2010 was 148,484 young people, an increase from 2008 of 8,353 young people
- A 2012 attainment target, of the percentage of young people aged 20-24 who have completed a

senior secondary qualification or Certificate II or above. The 2012 attainment target for Victoria is 89.35 per cent, with a 2015 target of 92.6 per cent

- A target to work towards halving the gap in attainment between indigenous and non-indigenous young people by 2020.

Assessment of Victoria's performance against the targets is undertaken by the COAG Reform Council, but no final performance reports are as yet available.

The specific outcomes expected for each of the suite of programs are outlined below. Most will be realised over the four year period of the agreement, with, where relevant, specific targets on a calendar-year basis to align with Commonwealth reporting requirements.

### **Youth Connections**

In each of 31 delivery areas across Victoria, the Youth Connections service will:

- Assist young people at risk of disengaging from education or training to remain in the system (annual calendar year targets agreed in service plans).
- Support young people who have already disengaged to return to education, training and/or employment (annual calendar year targets agreed in service plans).
- Build capacity of education providers and other relevant organisations to work effectively with at risk young people (progressive improvement over the four years to 2013).

### **School Business Community Partnership Brokers program,**

This is delivered by the Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs). Each LLEN (of which there are 31 across Victoria) specifies and then reports against individual goals, strategies and targets in the following five areas:

- Engagement with education and training providers
- Engagement with business and industry
- Engagement with parents and families
- Engagement with community groups
- Activities on behalf of local disadvantaged groups

Goals and targets must be backed up by local environmental data, and achieved through targeted partnerships.

### **Workplace Learning Coordinators**

In each of 31 delivery areas across Victoria, the Workplace Learning Coordinator program will:

- Increase the numbers of students undertaking workplace learning placements in places of employment, especially in industries that provide strong vocational outcomes for students (annual calendar year targets agreed in service plans)
- Increase the number of Koorie students undertaking workplace learning placements (annual calendar year targets agreed in service plans)
- Increase the alignment between VET provision in schools and local industry needs

### **Apprenticeship Support Officers**

- Increase the rates of apprenticeship completion in Victoria, as assessed by:
  - an increase in the percentage of apprentices who qualify for the 6-month Apprentice Trade Bonus
  - an increase in the percentage of apprentices who qualify for the 12-month Apprentice Trade Bonus.

### **Career Development programs**

- Develop a Y7-12 careers curriculum for implementation at the start of the 2011 school year
- Provide training places for 96 Victorian careers practitioners in schools, TAFE and ACE to access training in either a graduate certificate or vocational graduate certificate in career development each calendar year from 2010 – 2013
- Establish and maintain 30 careers mentoring matches in each of three programs each year
- Undertake action to support continuous improvement in careers services, supported by an audit of schools, TAFE and ACE providers within regions to benchmark careers development services provided (target number of annual audits developed after the first year)

### **Koorie Transitions Coordinators**

- Increase the number of Koorie young people attaining a Year 12 or equivalent qualification (based on annual calendar year DEECD figures)
- Increase the retention rates of Koorie students for Years 8, 9 and 10 (based on annual calendar year DEECD figures).

(c) What outcomes were actually achieved?

As noted earlier, the Commonwealth does not require jurisdictions to report activity on a financial year basis. The following outcomes reflect Victoria's annual report completed in May 2011, which related primarily to activities from 1 January 2010 to end February 2011.

### **Overall progress**

Data indicates growing numbers of completions of Victorian senior secondary certificates, and growing enrolments in VET at Certificate II level or above for both 15-19 and 20-24 year-old groups between 2008 and 2010.

### **Youth Connections**

In the first 14 months of operation, Youth Connections provided individual support services to 5,691 young people. 2,577 young people achieved a final outcome in the program, which represents re-engagement or a sustained improvement in a young person's engagement with education, training or employment. A further 1,167 were assessed as making significant progress in addressing their barriers to full engagement in education. In addition, 659 activities were held to find and connect with severely disconnected young people, with providers linking with 8,211 young people through these activities. In this period, providers undertook a range of initiatives to strengthen services in the region, with 751 activities being held.

### **School Business Community Partnership Brokers program**

The LLENs had brokered 906 active ongoing partnerships across the five key areas of prescribed activity: education and training (268 partnerships); business and industry (200 partnerships); parents and families (81 partnerships); communities (197 partnerships); disadvantaged groups (160 partnerships).

5365 stakeholder groups were represented in these partnerships in the following proportions: education and training (39 per cent); business and industry (24 per cent); parents and families (9 per cent); community (28 per cent).

### **Workplace Learning Coordinators (WLC)**

Workplace Learning Coordinators were not contracted until Term 3 2010 and have been fully operational since Term 1 2011, with current service plans specifying targets applying to the 2011 calendar year. Milestone mid-year progress reports and site visits have been undertaken to determine



satisfactory progress.

A formative evaluation covering the period from inception to mid-2011 has affirmed the value of continuing the current WLC model until the end of 2013.

### **Apprenticeship Support Officers**

The Apprenticeship Support Officer program was not fully established until January 2011.

### **Career Development programs**

The Year 7-12 careers curriculum was made available from Term 1 2011, with training offered to education and training providers during Terms 1 and 2.

As at July 2011, 189 careers practitioners had either commenced or completed studies to attain a professional qualification supported by study grants. 74 Study Grants were offered in mid-2011 with 72 places accepted across a range of sectors: 40 Government schools, 11 Catholic schools, 4 Independent schools, 7 ACE providers, 6 TAFE providers, 1 Youth Connections provider, and 3 LLENs.

Three mentoring programs have been established, managed by private not-for-profit providers, with a commitment to engage a total of 90 students each for the funded period (to 2013).

Regional Careers Development Officers have identified schools and organisations to target for benchmarking.

### **Koorie Transitions Coordinators**

The majority of Koorie Transitions Coordinators were appointed early in 2011. The first full year outcome figures for Indigenous students will become available in February 2012.

## **Question 12**

The *Annual Report 2010-11* mentions (p.50) a \$14.4 million Apprenticeship Support Officer program. Can the Department provide figures, evidence or survey results showing how many people completed apprenticeships using support from this program who otherwise would not have completed the apprenticeship?

As the Apprenticeship Support Officer program is in its first year of operation, apprentices that form part of the program have not yet completed their apprenticeships. Consequently, the Department is unable to provide evidence on the program's effect on completion rates.

The Department can, however, provide evidence to show that the attrition rates for apprentices in the program have declined since the Apprenticeship Support Officer program commenced in January 2011. Figure 1 below shows the percentage of apprentices that commenced during that month and are still active six months after commencement. The apprentices included in this data are those that form part of the Apprenticeship Support Officer cohort, being first year apprentices under the age of 25 and not employed by a Group Training Organisation. Data for the months from May 2011 onwards is not yet available as the six month period has not yet elapsed.

As shown in Figure 1 below, the percentage of apprentices that commenced in the months from January to April 2011 and are still active six months later is higher than the equivalent percentage reported for these months in each of the years from 2005 to 2010. For the month of January, the 2011 percentage is 1.5 per cent higher than the average for this month for the period 2005 to 2010. By April 2011, the percentage had increased to more than 6 per cent higher than the average for April for the period 2005 to 2010.

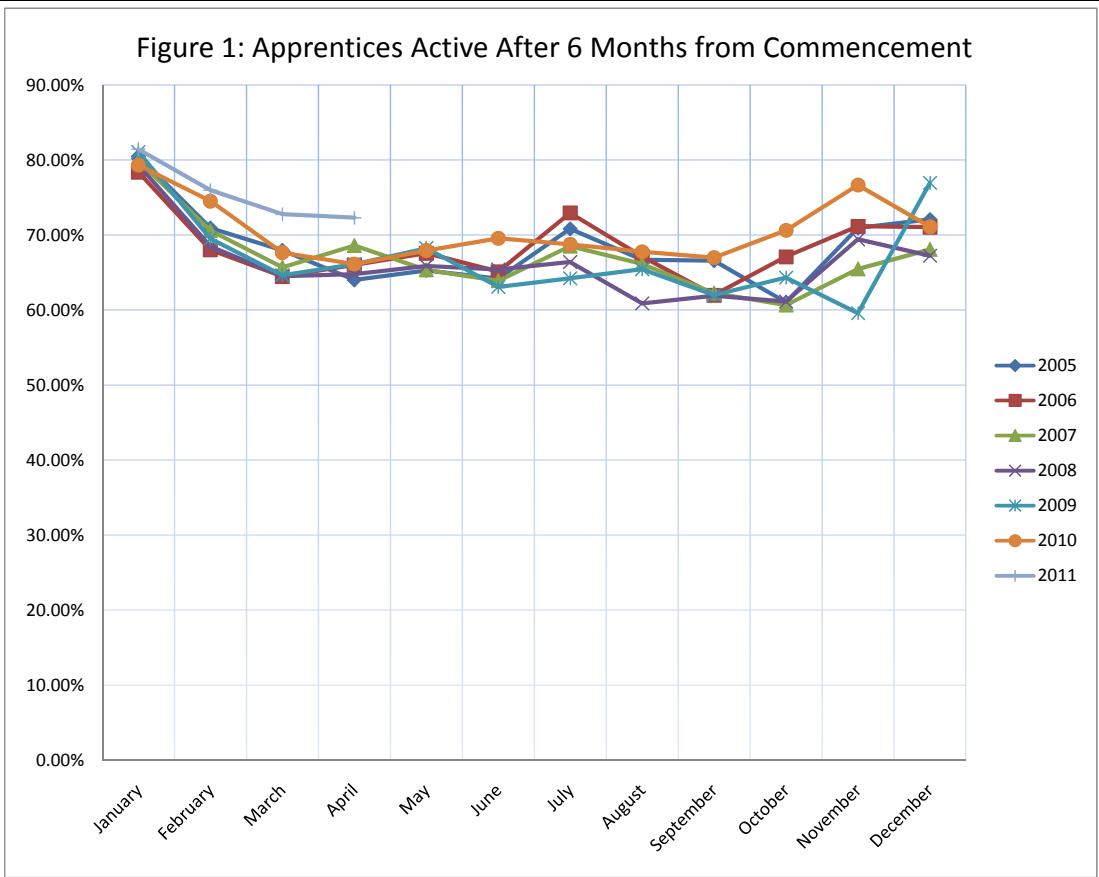


Figure 1 also confirms that the percentage of active apprentices is higher than previous years since the introduction of the program in January 2011. This would indicate that the Apprenticeship Support Officer program is having an effect on apprentice attrition rates. If this trend continues, the implementation of the program is likely lead to an increase in apprentice completion rates.

The Department is confident that when more data becomes available these trends will continue and a greater proportion of apprentices will progress towards completion.

**Question 13**

Please supply completion rates for apprenticeships since the introduction of the bonus scheme in 2003 (for each cohort for which data are available) and for the two years prior to the scheme’s introduction.

Completion rates for apprenticeships by commencing year

Cohort's commencing year	Completion Rate	Share (Still in training)
2001	66.0%	0.3%
2002	65.5%	0.5%
2003	65.2%	0.7%
2004	66.2%	1.3%

2005	66.3%	2.5%
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Source: DELTA administrative database as at 7 July 2011

Notes:

Apprentices have been tracked for 6 years for recommencements within the same occupation based on ANZSCO unit group (Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations).

Completion rates include estimates for expired contracts and persons still in training after the tracking period.

For cohorts commencing after 2005, it is not possible yet to estimate the completion rates reliably due to a high proportion of apprentices being still in training.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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**The completed questionnaire must be returned by no later than COB, Tuesday, 13 December 2011.**

Please return the response (including an electronic version) of the questionnaire to:

Valerie Cheong  
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Public Accounts and Estimates Committee  
Level 3, 55 St Andrews Place  
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Telephone: 03 8682 2867  
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