

## AVETRA News

### From the President

Thank you to all members who attended the 2009 conference at Coogee in Sydney in April. Your evaluations indicated that you enjoyed the conference and I would like to proffer heartfelt thanks to Ros Brennan Kemmis and Melinda Randall, the co-convenors, and all of the people in the NSW conference committee, for their hard work over many months to create such a splendid event.

The plans for AVETRA 2010 on the Gold Coast 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> April are already well underway. Many thanks to co-convenors Stephen Billett and Sarojni Choy and their excellent committee. The theme of the conference is 'VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times'. More details are on the AVETRA web site at [http://www.avetra.org.au/annual\\_conference/index.shtml](http://www.avetra.org.au/annual_conference/index.shtml). Members will be notified when the call for papers is issued. Conference Action will be acting as the conference Secretariat again and I know that everyone really appreciated Aurelie's hard work and patience in 2008 and 2009.

You can find the 2009 papers and presentations on the same web page; they'll be moved to the conference archives on the Publications page within a few weeks.

Before the conference we have, of course, our OctoberVET program. Please see the web site if you would like to offer OctoberVET in your city/region. Currently you can find the information through the 'Calendar' button on the site but we hope to have that button renamed 'OctoberVET' shortly. October can last for quite a long time - anytime between September and November would be OK! Bobby Harreveld is again co-ordinating the national effort and we thank her for being willing to repeat this huge task. Bobby has put together comprehensive information for those wishing to be involved.

AVETRA is continuing to support, with a mentoring service, the NCVET community of practice of new researchers. The program has now entered Phase 2, with Phase 1 participants having nearly all completed their research and writing work. Thank you to Llandis Barratt-Pugh, the AVETRA Project manager of this initiative. Llandis has put in an immense amount of work to set up systems for this three-year project.

I would like to say 'Bon Voyage' to Peter Kell, Immediate Past President of AVETRA, who is leaving Australia next month for two years to work at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Peter will be missed on the Executive and in particular I will miss his wise counsel, but I am sure he will keep in touch while he is away.

Thanks again to Francesca Beddie and Sarah Sutcliffe for their work on editing the newsletter. I know that the newsletter is much appreciated by members.

Best wishes



Erica Smith  
President of AVETRA, University of Ballarat, 12 June 2009

## AVETRA News

### Dr Joan McPhee Obituary

Dr Joan McPhee passed away on Tuesday 21 April at the age of 75 years, following a courageous and lengthy battle with cancer.

Joan was well known to many in the VET community and the VET research community. Some will be aware that she was recently awarded a Ph D. for her investigation into the impact of private providers in the Victorian training system. The doctorate culminated an extraordinary career. Joan dedicated a huge part of her life to vocational education and training and served with great distinction in a range of educational, management, quality assurance and leadership roles. She was an innovator and a leader, particularly for women, throughout her long career. Joan was cheerful, even in adversity; she was a critical thinker with a keen enquiring mind; she never stopped asking important questions. And she never stopped learning.

She will be sadly missed and joyfully remembered.

Peter Waterhouse

## Research and VET News

### OctoberVET 2009

Each year AVETRA members around Australia organise community research events to showcase VET research. These activities complement and extend the AVETRA annual conference. These locally convened events are often, but not always, held in October - hence OctoberVET! They aim to engage local VET researchers and practitioners in discussions about recent and topical research. The events are generally half or a full day duration.

AVETRA OctoberVET aims to:

- Broaden the activity of AVETRA beyond one annual event in one Australian location
- Provide State or Territory-based forums for discussion and presentation of national research approximately six months either side of the major annual conference
- Provide a forum for presentation of State/Territory-based research and discussion of emerging local and national research and research issues
- Provide opportunities for State and Territory-based VET research stakeholders and AVETRA members to network, including the possible development of special and local interest groups.

If you are thinking of organising an OctoberVET event for 2009, then please go to the AVETRA OctoberVET web page at: <http://www.aveutra.org.au/calendar/index.shtml>  
Please also contact Bobby Harreveld, telephone 07 49 232391; or email: [b.harreveld@cqu.edu.au](mailto:b.harreveld@cqu.edu.au)

### International

The VOCED website has a new international collection of VET-related research and policy documents from various regions of the world. This includes many older print-based copies, which have been digitised and are now available electronically for the first time. This resource gives you easy access to documents such as the 1938 Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education with special reference to grammar schools and technical high schools [Spens Report].

Documents are catalogued under the following regions:

Africa and the Middle East  
Asia, China and Russia  
Asia-Pacific and Japan  
Europe  
General international  
Latin America and the Caribbean  
New Zealand  
North America  
USA

Canada  
United Kingdom  
Republic of Ireland

Visit the international resource collection at:  
<http://www.voced.edu.au/keyresources/international.html>

### **Inaugural issue - *Impact: Journal of Applied Research in Workplace E-learning***

*Impact: Journal of Applied Research in Workplace E-learning*, a publication of the E-learning Network of Australasia (EINet), has been established to address the paucity of research publication avenues with a particular emphasis on e-learning in organisational and workplace settings. It will be a fully online journal, publishing refereed and non-refereed contributions from both researchers and practitioners relating to the design, implementation, evaluation and management of workplace e-learning across a range of sectors and industries.

The theme of the inaugural issue is *Current issues and future directions in workplace e-learning: Mapping the research landscape*. Publication of inaugural issue (online): 1 September 2009

## **Jobs and Other Opportunities**

### **EDITOR – *International Journal of Training Research***

The AVETRA Executive is seeking a new Editor to replace Andy Smith, who is resigning as editor in December 2009. Applicants are invited to submit their curriculum vitae, together with a statement which outlines their suitability for the editorship, addressing the person specification and selection criteria in detail. The successful applicant will be involved in a handover in the second part of 2009.

Applications should be submitted as soon as possible to Erica Smith, President of AVETRA (e.smith@ballarat.edu.au) by email. They should be in PDF form as a single document. A sub-committee of the Executive will discuss applications and recommend an appointment. Anyone considering applying for the Editorship and wanting to discuss the role further should contact Erica Smith the President (03-5327 9665) and/or Andy Smith the current Editor (03-5327 9400).

Applicants may find more information about the journal and read papers from previous editions at <http://www.avetra.org.au/publications/journal.shtml>

Hard copies of the journal are issued to all AVETRA members and institutional subscribers, and a hard copy service is intended to be continued. Applicants should note that the Executive is currently in negotiations with a publisher to take over the publishing and printing of the journal on a more professional basis. If these negotiations are successfully concluded, the Editor will report to an advisory committee but will still have responsibilities to the Executive of AVETRA.

#### **Job Specification**

The Editorship of *The International Journal of Training Research* carries an honorarium of \$1000 per edition. The amount may be reduced or withheld if an edition is prepared for publication late. There are currently two editions a year. The role has a tenure of three years, renewable for three more years by mutual consent.

The responsibilities of the Editor include:

- Maintaining and developing the journal as a high-quality academic journal, in line with the journal's policy statement and in collaboration with the Editorial Board;
- Working with members of the Executive, the Editorial Board and others to promote the journal and encourage contributions from the diverse fields that constitute the VET discipline;
- Developing and maintaining an effective database of article referees;
- Administering the refereeing process for articles and other contributions, and liaising with authors;
- Attending advisory committee/Executive meetings, to consider journal policy and direction, and coordinating effective and appropriate action as agreed by the committee/Executive;
- Liaising with the publishing firm and/or printers to ensure on-time production of the journal;

- Promptly notifying the AVETRA President of any problems or risks.

#### Person Specification

The Editor of *The International Journal of Training Research* will:

- Have a broad understanding of vocational education and training and an established record of research and scholarship in the field;
- Subscribe to the policy and approach of the journal as listed in the 'Notes for contributors';
- Be able to work effectively and harmoniously with authors, advisory committee members, colleagues in the field and the publisher;
- Have good international contacts with the relevant research community;
- Be able to attend advisory committee meetings (normally by teleconference) and provide reports to the Executive as required;
- Have editing skills and, ideally, some publishing experience;
- Have an awareness or experience of online publishing;
- Be cognisant with recent academic publication developments in Australia and internationally, including *Excellence in Research for Australia*;
- Be able to work to deadlines;
- Be committed to the reputation of AVETRA.

#### Selection criteria

The Executive will take account of the 'fit' with the person specification and will, in addition, specifically look for the following:

- A recent record of publication in refereed journals and of reviewing publications for scholarly journals;
- Evidence of engagement with international scholarly communities;
- Knowledge of and engagement with ERA and other national research developments as they have affected and will affect publications;
- Evidence of consistent ability to meet deadlines in academic tasks;
- An understanding of the diverse nature of AVETRA membership;
- (desirable) Membership of editorial or advisory board of refereed journals;
- Provision of a letter of support from supervisor at the employing institution, attesting to the ability to undertake this task in conjunction with existing workload.

Please note that evidence is required for the above criteria, rather than simply statements.

## Conferences and other Events

### **18th National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference 'No Frills', University of Ballarat, Mt Helen, Victoria, 8-10 July**

Sponsored jointly by NCVET and the University of Ballarat, this annual conference is considered one of the best value events on the research calendar. It provides an excellent forum for those in vocational education and training research to network, present and discuss papers on current or recently completed work. The conference will focus on strategies, observations and proven practices that can influence an even better VET system in Australia.

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/newsevents/trconf/trconf18.html>

### **Industry Training Federation Conference 2009, Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, 28-29 July**

The Industry Training Federation's annual conference is a major event for those interested in developments in the world of industry training and vocational education and training. This year's theme - Skills That Add Value - goes to the heart of industry training and workplace learning. It will provide attendees with practical ideas and solutions to improve the relevance and effectiveness of workplace learning and vocational education and training, particularly in the current recession.

[www.itf.org.nz/conference-2009](http://www.itf.org.nz/conference-2009)

**2009 TAFE in Rural and Isolated Communities (TRIC) Conference, Port Lincoln, South Australia, 5-7 August**

The key theme of the conference is 'Navigating the Waves of Change' to be explored through the sub-themes of: The Big Picture: Global Schools of Thought; Sustainability: Balancing the Scales; and Being Regional: Hooking into Innovative Solutions. Contact Jenny McCormick, Conference Manager ph 0411 777 835

**2009 VELG National Conference Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Melbourne, Victoria 13-14 August**

Successfully maintaining training & assessment currency in vocational education. Convened by the Voc Ed Learning Group. Contact Melissa Upson, ph +61 7 3866 0801, email [natconference@velg.com.au](mailto:natconference@velg.com.au) <http://www.velg.com.au>

**2009 ACPET National Conference, National Convention Centre, Canberra, ACT, 27-29 August**

<http://www.acpetconference.info>

**TAFE Australian Summit 2009, Holiday Inn, Gold Coast, Queensland 3-4 September**

Convened by TAFE Directors Australia. <http://www.tda.edu.au>

**ALARA Australian Conference 2009, Melbourne, 18-19 September**

Living Differently: Action Researching our way through the Ecological and Economic Meltdown. The Conference is hosted by ALARA, the oases Graduate School and the Borderlands Cooperative, at the "Augustine Centre," Hawthorn, with the support of the Action Research Issues Association and the state-wide SPIRAL network. For more information, please email [info@oases.edu.au](mailto:info@oases.edu.au) or phone (03) 9819 3502 or see the ALARA website <http://www.alara.net.au/>

**Australian International Education Conference 2009, Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, NSW, 13-16 October**

Convened by International Education Association of Australia. <http://www.aiec.idp.com>

**Policy forum, Young people: Finding their way in a new era, Melbourne Park Function Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 10 November**

Convened by NCVER & DEEWR. The current economic climate provides the impetus to challenge our thinking on how young people traverse the path from school to further study or work. We know from past research that young people fare less well in economic downturns, so what will the next decade of the 21st century hold for young people? [events@ncver.edu.au](mailto:events@ncver.edu.au)

**IVETA Annual Conference, Nashville, Tennessee, USA, 18 November**

Using Information Technologies to Deliver TVET. For more information contact: Dr. Robert E. Norton, 2009 IVETA Annual Conference Chair [norton.1@osu.edu](mailto:norton.1@osu.edu), phone 614-292-8481, fax 614-292-1260 <https://www.acteonline.org/convention>

**2009 AARE International Education Research Conference, National Convention Centre, Canberra, ACT, 29 November-3 December**

Convened by Australian Association for Research in Education. <http://www.canberra.edu.au>

## Recent Publications

### ***Training in economic downturns, City & Guilds Centre for Skills Development, London, 2009.***

As the global economic downturn continues, businesses are coming under increasing pressure to cut costs in order to survive, with implications for their investment in training. Government budgets too have come under strain, exacerbated by pressure to stimulate the economy through public spending, including on education. Many individuals, meanwhile, face similar pressures to cut back on non-essentials - including self-funded education - while others look to training to help them contend in an increasingly competitive labour market. These factors create a complicated picture of what happens to the provision of learning opportunities during a recession. This paper examines the ways businesses, governments and individuals have responded to past economic downturns, looking specifically at the implications for investment in training, and at the role training can play in economic survival and recovery.

<http://www.skillsdevelopment.org/PDF/Training%20in%20Economic%20Downturns%20March%2009%201.pdf>

### ***Using tax incentives to promote education and training, Cedefop, Thessaloniki, 2009.***

This report examines tax incentives for education and training across Europe.

[http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information\\_resources/Bookshop/536/5180\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information_resources/Bookshop/536/5180_en.pdf)

### ***Bevan A, Hendrick G, Leeson J, E-portfolios in Australia. Managing learner information: important considerations for implementing e-portfolios in VET Brisbane: Australian Flexible Learning Framework, 2009.***

The purpose of the study was to identify the privacy and security requirements for learner information in relation to e-portfolios. The study considers the types of content that may be found in an e-portfolio, the security and privacy considerations which may apply to these types of content, user definition and identification, authentication and access issues, and the verification of content.

[http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/flx/webdav/site/flxsite/shared/E-Portfolios/Managing\\_Learner-Information\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/flx/webdav/site/flxsite/shared/E-Portfolios/Managing_Learner-Information_FINAL.pdf)

### ***Smith A, Oczkowski E, Hill M, Reasons for training: Why Australian employers train their workers, NCVER 2009***

Analysing data from the 2005 NCVER Survey of Employer Use and Views of the VET System, this report looks at the reasons why employers train their workers. Four different types of training are focused on: vocational qualifications; the employment of apprentices and trainees; nationally recognised training; and unaccredited training. The report highlights that there is no simple fix to increasing employer investment in training which has generally not been a core component of long-term business planning. <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr06018.pdf>

### ***Moodie G, Wheelahan L, Billett S, Kelly A, Higher education in TAFE, NCVER, 2009***

Growth in mixed-sector institutions offering both vocational and higher education qualifications is expected to increase given recent and predicted policy changes. This issues paper focuses on the provision and management of higher education in TAFE institutes. Issues raised for discussion include the governance of mixed-sector institutions as well as ensuring access and maintaining progression to higher education without sectoral division in the institution. Implications arising from the Bradley review of higher education are canvassed and the authors are inviting discussion on a range of questions related to the nature of policies and practices influencing the provision of higher education in TAFE. <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2139.html>

**Figgis J, *Regenerating the Australian landscape of professional VET practice: Practitioner-driven changes to teaching and learning*, NCVET, 2009**

This publication explores both the characteristics and examples of innovative teaching and learning practice in Australia. It is based on discussions with practitioners and vocational education and training (VET) managers responsible for teaching and learning. It examines why and how people are changing their pedagogy, and with what results. It found that improvements in teaching and learning practice arise from a perceived need to change. The imperatives to change are usually locally based and dependent for their success on a commitment by all those supporting the learner. Practice is best shared through effective mentoring and by using networks effectively.  
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2136.html>

**Hillier Y, *Innovation in teaching and learning in vocational education and training: International perspectives*, NCVET, 2009**

This publication explores both the characteristics and examples of innovative teaching and learning practice internationally. It found that technologies can be used to support networks of practitioners and resource banks to foster better professional practice and help practitioners exchange ideas and resources. In addition, it is important for practitioners to be able to step back from their 'daily grind' to think about what they can do differently and how. They need to be supported to test out new resources and pedagogies in a culture of active experimentation.  
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2137.html>

**Simons M, Harris R, Pudney V, Clayton B, *Careers in vocational education and training: What are they really like?* NCVET 2009**

As part of a program of research examining the capability of vocational education and training (VET) providers, this study examines the career pathways of a wide range of VET employees. It found that careers in VET are characterised by high levels of mobility and self-directed career behaviour aimed at achieving two outcomes: job satisfaction and security of employment.  
<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2114.html>

## About AVETRA

AVETRA is the peak professional association for VET researchers. Its ability to be a sustainable and viable association depends on its membership. Members are urged to continue their membership and to encourage their colleagues to join AVETRA. AVETRA services include:

- An annual VET international research conference
- Two editions of *International Journal of Training Research per annum*
- The bi-monthly AVETRA e-newsletter with the latest news in the VET sector as well as VET research.
- The new *Research Today* publication twice a year.
- OctoberVET workshops organized by AVETRA members in centres as widely spread as Perth, Darwin, Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.
- The AVETRA website with VET research links and information
- Awards for VET researchers including the joint award with TAFE Directors Australia, the Berwyn Clayton Award, The Ray Barker Award, and the AVETRA Best paper Award.

HELP AVETRA help VET research and join now if you are not a member. Full **\$145** (GST inclusive) and Student memberships **\$71.50** including GST are available to join AVETRA.

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