

National VET Indigenous Advisory Taskforce

Final Report 2008

The NVIAT has determined that priority 5, **Links to Employment**, will be its central strategic objective until the end of 2008. The Taskforce was motivated in reaching this position by the intimate connection between the achievement of meaningful employment for Indigenous Australians and social, personal and community benefits and by the current economic climate where unemployment is at an historical low and there are widespread labour and skills shortages.

To further inform the Taskforce's thinking and help guide NVIAT priorities and directions for 2008, a National VET Indigenous Forum was held in November 2007 which heard from a range of VET stakeholders on key issues and priority areas. In particular the Taskforce heard about what is and what is not working, barriers to Indigenous VET and views on strategies to progress Indigenous training, education and employment outcomes into the future.

As a result of the National VET Indigenous Forum "The Way Forward," NVIAT has identified specific areas of focus including:

- Collaborative programs of work to generate greater participation by Indigenous Australians in the mining, construction and health industries;
- A comprehensive research project focussing on successful models for Indigenous training and employment in targeted industry sectors; and
- Building capacity of the Indigenous VET Workforce.

In this report, the NVIAT will outline progress on projects and report on a range of activities it has been engaged in to assist in improving the access, participation and outcomes of Indigenous people in vocational education, training and employment, includes:

Indigenous research project with NCVET –

'Brokering successful Indigenous employment outcomes – identifying common themes in best practice models' - *project in progress*

The NVIAT is currently working with the NCVET and has commissioned research on common themes in best practice models, with the aim of the research, being to examine factors of success operating within several identified organisations, whose activities have led to sustainable employment outcomes for their Indigenous clients.

Anticipated outcome: The creation of a "Blueprint of Success" best practice guide, outlining themes and methodologies that will be a useful resource for those working in the field of Indigenous training and employment. Research is due to be completed in September 2008, with the project completed in October 2008. The blueprint will be made available in November 2008 along with a comprehensive research report.

Other ongoing activities include:

1. Formulating a joint project between the National Industry Skills Council and the NVIAT relating to effective initiatives and practices currently being pursued by industry, in partnership with government, to support the workforce participation of, and improve employment and training outcomes for, Indigenous people. Outline of project still to be finalised.
2. Ongoing meetings with the board of the National Community Controlled Health Organisations (NACCHO) to discuss strategies for improving Indigenous access to training in the health industry;
3. Regular meetings with DEEWR to receive updates of work in relation to promoting Indigenous employment, training and retention in a range of industries, including mining, construction, oil & gas, transport and forestry.
4. Representing Indigenous equity issues on the National Quality Council;
5. Engaging in initial discussions as a member of the national working party on the formulation of a National Indigenous Early Childhood Training Network;
6. Engaging in discussions with the Senior Officers National Network on Indigenous Education (SONNIE) on creating greater strategic links between education and training.
7. Supporting research and advice on scholarships for Indigenous students in the VET system and into further study or sustainable employment, and provide advice on the need for National Indigenous Scholarship Scheme.
8. Growing partnerships and linkages with Higher Education through the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council.

Future Advisory Structures from 2009

The co-chairs of the taskforce have also worked through the Advisory Alliance on the structure of proposed future models for social inclusion in VET. The taskforce is of the view that any adopted model should involve formal structural arrangements for the engagement of Indigenous people in decision-making structures and the broader Indigenous community, including Indigenous VET stakeholders.

Summary

Final report of projects and activities undertaken by the Taskforce will be presented at the NSOC out of session early in 2009.

NVIAT Co-chairs: Darcel Russell and John Hassed.