

*This issue highlights papers and findings from CEET's recent annual conference and work program.*

*The CEET SHEET is part of the dissemination supported by ANTA's funding of CEET as a Key VET Research Centre. We welcome feedback on our work and suggestions about future research priorities.*

**Gerald Burke**  
*Executive Director*

## PAPERS FROM CEET'S CONFERENCE

The 2001 CEET Annual National Conference was held in Melbourne on 29 October. The conference theme *Linking Economics and Learning: VET for Innovation* brought together researchers, policy makers and practitioners from around Australia. The following papers can be downloaded from the CEET Website.

*Early recognition system for skill trends and qualification needs.* Jochen Reuling, BIBB, Germany  
*Up the creek without a paddle? The misadventures of new industries in the VET system.* Fran Ferrier, CEET.

*Linking learning and work.* Helen Praetz, Victorian Qualifications Authority

*Organisations for learning: structures for innovation.* Rob Sadler, CEET

*Job growth and replacement needs in nursing occupations.* Chandra Shah & Gerald Burke, CEET

*The education of enrolled nurses.* Lisa McKenna, Monash University

*VET capacity to deliver leading edge and innovative work skills.* Andre Lewis, ANTA

*Funding to support learning in the knowledge economy.* Gerald Burke, CEET.

*What is happening to training? A story of two surveys.* Michael Long, CEET.

*Australians working in a global economy.* Leo Maglen, APEET & CEET

*Vale Ross Harrold 1939-2001.* Phil McKenzie ACER & CEET

## DOES TRAINING LIFT EARNINGS?

**Job-based training should be a 'win-win' situation. Training should help workers to be more productive, and it should generate higher profits and earnings. However, research has struggled to find a clear relationship between participation in training and increased productivity and earnings.**

Training is typically provided to some employees (eg the already well educated) more than others. Those

who receive training are not a random group. They are presumably selected (or select themselves) because they are more likely to benefit from the training. Thus the benefit (earnings) and the selection (training or not training) influence each other simultaneously.

Failure to take account of selection bias can lead to unreliable estimates of the wage effects of training. Mike Long has used techniques that attempt to overcome these problems in his analysis of Australian data on firm-based training.

Compared to other OECD countries, there is less variation in Australia in participation in training among different categories of workers according to age and education. Australian results also show a positive effect of structured training on earnings, but the effects of unstructured training are mixed. Unlike the results reported for some OECD countries, the Australian data do not show that the wage benefits from firm-based training are greater for workers who receive less training.

*The Effect of Firm-Based Training on Earnings.* Mike Long. CEET Working Paper No 37. August 2001.

**AUSTRALIAN VET RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (AVETRA) CONFERENCE**  
*Making a world of difference? Innovation, internationalisation, new technologies and VET*  
**Melbourne**  
**21-22 March 2002**  
Fran Ferrier (CEET) is the conference convener  
See [www.aveutra.org.au](http://www.aveutra.org.au) for details

## TRAINING FOR VOLUNTARY WORK

**The voluntary sector is of major importance in Australia and training for voluntary work is a significant concern for voluntary organisations.** However, volunteer training is not overtly recognised in national VET policy. The inference is that training for paid work has priority.

To improve understanding of how VET could play a stronger role in volunteer training, CEET surveyed students in two TAFE institutes, and conducted focus group discussions. Findings included the following.

- Interest in volunteer activities was higher among TAFE students living in regional areas, female students, full-time students, and those enrolled in fields such as Natural Resource Management, and Social and Community Services.
- While the major motivation for TAFE study was preparation for paid employment, some students enrol to prepare for voluntary work.

- A number of students believe that combining voluntary work with TAFE studies will increase their chances in the job market.

The study concluded that TAFE contributes to the training of volunteers, and assists them to gain paid employment where they want that. Yet volunteer training gains little attention and there are no clear guidelines to its effective implementation.

*Learning Through TAFE for Voluntary and Paid Work: A Survey of TAFE Students.* Chris Selby Smith & Sonnie Hopkins. CEET Working Paper No 38. 2001.

**Seminar: VET and Volunteering, Chris Selby Smith  
Thursday 22 November, 12.30 – 1.45 pm  
Monash Centre, 30 Collins St, Melbourne**

## INNOVATION AND VET

**New industries often lack the ties with the VET system that other industries have built up over many years. Problems can arise when new industries like *Photonics* or *Renewable Energy* experience or predict substantial needs for VET-trained technicians.**

In conjunction with the NSW TAFE Industry Partnership Centre, CEET has been examining the skill needs of new industries and if, and how, the VET system should respond to them.

The situation is complex. The formal role for VET is likely to be strongest in the mature stage of industries when their products and services are available on the market. But the time taken to develop training programs means that planning should ideally start well before this stage begins.

However, such forward planning may appear risky when the future of a new industry is uncertain. This caution helps perpetuate a vicious circle, for the success of a new industry may depend on its access to appropriate skills. The report canvasses ways for innovative industries and VET to work together more effectively than at present.

*Going Boldly into the Future: A VET Journey into the National Innovation System.* Fran Ferrier, Clifford Trood & Karen Whittingham. For a summary see Fran Ferrier's 2001 conference paper on the CEET Website.

## UNIVERSITY STUDENT FINANCES

CEET has recently conducted a major survey for the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee. The survey examined students' sources of financial support for their university study, and the impact of costs on progress through their courses.

*Paying their Way: A Survey of Australian Undergraduate University Student Finances 2000.* Michael Long & Martin Hayden. Canberra: AVCC. The report can be downloaded from [www.avcc.edu.au](http://www.avcc.edu.au)

## AUSTRALIANS AND GLOBALISATION

**Nearly 5 million persons or over 55 per cent of the Australian workforce could be said to be employed in global labour markets. Some are in a position to profit from the opportunities of greater international competition, but a larger number are vulnerable, especially those affected by low cost imports.**

The remaining 45 per cent of the workforce are largely insulated from the direct impact of global competition by the nature of their jobs, their location and technology. However, the continued employment of these workers depends on the incomes and preferences of those who are more directly engaged in global labour markets. These are some of the findings from a detailed analysis by Leo Maglen.

If Australians are to gain and retain employment in globally related occupations they will require high levels of specific skills and knowledge, but also flexibility, innovativeness, creativity, enterprise, adaptability and the willingness to take risks. High levels of IT literacy are essential in occupations that can benefit from global labour market forces, not just those directly related to IT and telecommunications.

*Australians Working in a Global Economy and What This Means for Education and Training.* Leo Maglen. CEET Working Paper No.39. October 2001.

## STAFF NEWS

*Sandra Bosmans* has retired from her part-time position in the CEET office.

*Sally Donovan* has joined the CEET office.

*Leo Maglen* has commenced a 3-month project in Vietnam on technical and vocational education, sponsored by the Asian Development Bank.

*Rob Sadler* has completed his research at CEET on the off-the-job training component of apprenticeships. Rob has resumed his practice as a barrister.

If you would like to be put on CEET's mailing list, contact Sally Donovan, Fax (03) 9905 9184, Email [sally.donovan@education.monash.edu.au](mailto:sally.donovan@education.monash.edu.au) Phone (03) 9905 9157, or write to CEET, Faculty of Education, PO Box 6, Monash University, Victoria 3800, Australia. Information and papers are available on <http://www.education.monash.edu.au/centres/CEET>

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