



Portland WorkSkills Incorporated - The Organisation

Portland WorkSkills is a substantial and respected regional organisation, providing training, education and employment services. The organisation is guided by a representative and experienced community-based board of management.

WorkSkills operates primarily in Portland, Hamilton and their districts, supplying services to State and Commonwealth Governments, to business, industry and to learners and jobseekers.

Since its establishment in 1989, WorkSkills has met the diverse needs of district learners through its quality education and training courses. WorkSkills has also assisted many jobseekers upgrade their skills and gain sustainable employment.

As a Registered Training Organisation, WorkSkills supplies training services to government, business and industry. WorkSkills delivers the Victorian Government's Adult Community Education service, its Apprenticeship and Traineeship Training Program and the Priority Education Training Program.

The organisation currently coordinates delivery of the Commonwealth Government's Work for the Dole program throughout the South West. WorkSkills also currently facilitates and sponsors Work for the Dole projects across the region, building community capacity and providing quality work experience for unemployed jobseekers.

WorkSkills continues to operate a successful tour guiding business, an enterprise that effectively highlights Portland's many attractions to visitors.

Portland WorkSkills is located in Pioneer Plaza in the heart of Portland, close to substantial parking, Safeway, Target, the Post Office and Portland's central business district.

Our Hamilton establishment, situated at the Hamilton Institute of Rural Learning, enjoys a strategic location in a pleasant environment that enhances our delivery of Work for the Dole services and general training.

WorkSkills makes substantial contributions to the district economy by virtue of the external contracts it wins and by being a substantial employer in its own right. The organisation is very much a part of the community, employing and buying locally. As a community-based, not-for-profit organisation, WorkSkills contributes to building community capacity by supporting a range of initiatives and projects.

Portland WorkSkills also supports initiatives that enhance skills and learning, and initiatives with the potential to generate sustainable employment and economic development for Portland and its district.



Portland WorkSkills - Organisational Statement

Portland WorkSkills exists to provide high quality training, education and employment services to the community, particularly disadvantaged and unemployed jobseekers, in order to assist them find employment and enhance their quality of life.

Portland WorkSkills - Organisational Objectives

1. To attract and deliver Commonwealth and State employment, training and education services to Portland and its region.
2. To attract and deliver an appropriate range of employment, training and education services to Portland and its region.
3. To deliver quality employment, training and education services to the community.
4. To ensure that our service delivery is as inclusive as possible.
5. To further develop the organisation by undertaking appropriate general fee-for-service training and enterprise activities.
6. To support selected social and economic initiatives in our community that may create opportunities for our learners, participants, jobseekers and other stakeholders.
7. To use resources generated by the organisation to continually improve our services, procedures and infrastructure.
8. To operate in a manner that not only complies with all relevant legislation and contractual obligations but is also actively fair, honest and reasonable.

WorkSkills Board of Management 2008/2009

- Michael Hunter (Chairman)
- Barry Huppatz (Treasurer)
- Nicole Adams
- Jan Chilman
- Margaret Herbertson
- Wendy Rotumah
- Allan Saunders
- John Sealey OAM
- Carmen Scott
- Bernard Wallace (Secretary/Public Officer)



WorkSkills at work with the Community

In addition to delivering its core training and employment services during 2008/2009, WorkSkills continued to play a significant role in the life of its community.

Community capacity building involvements, memberships and linkages included:

- Glenelg & Southern Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network member and provide current secretary
- Member of South West Adult Community Education Network
- Provided staff time-release for Country Fire Authority duties
- Promoted community development and enhanced community infrastructure through successful Work for the Dole projects across the region
- Member of Western District Adult Community Education Managers' Network
- Portland Housing Program Committee member and provided chairperson
- Member Glenelg Youth Network
- Radio 3RPC sponsor
- Portland Tourist Association member
- Operate Participant Special Support Fund and Participant Course Fee Concession Fund for the benefit of disadvantaged participants or learners
- Fostered effective learning partnerships with organisations including ABC Learning Centre, Aspire, Glenelg Shire Council, Henry House, Heywood Rural Health, Jaycee Kindergarten, Kalbarri Kindergarten, Kyeema, Kurrajong, Lewis Court Home for the Aged, Portland District Health, Portland Secondary College, Portland Special Development School and Seaview House
- Victorian Fire Relief Appeal supporter in Portland, Hamilton, Coleraine and Casterton
- Member Glenelg Shire Council's Admella 150 Commemoration Advisory Committee and coordinator of several commemorative activities
- Promoted Portland through the operations of WorkSkills Tour Guides
- Business and Community Links (Baclinks) supporter
- Ruralnet member



Chairperson's Report

Michael Hunter

I am pleased to present our 20th Annual Report, for the year ending 30 June 2009.

Portland WorkSkills continued to be a significant provider of training, education and employment services within our region, successfully delivering a range of important programs.

In terms of training services, WorkSkills delivered a substantial and varied Adult Community Education program, provided training to Apprentices and Trainees, delivered the Priority Education Training Program and maintained our Registered Training Organisation operations.

The organisation also continued to play a role in the delivery of employment-related services by way of Work for the Dole and Job Search Training.

As usual, considerable organisational development took place over the year and is mentioned in detail elsewhere in this Annual Report.

WorkSkills maintained its involvement in its community by taking part in a range of community initiatives and by supporting or assisting community-based groups develop their infrastructure or capacity.

Portland WorkSkills Incorporated met all performance and budgetary targets in 2008/2009. The financial year saw our largest turnover to date, reflecting the increased activity undertaken by WorkSkills over the year. We achieved a very pleasing surplus and delivered value for money to service-purchasers and to our service-users.

The WorkSkills Board of Management and I strongly thank our staff for their continued commitment and productivity. As well, we thank our community stakeholders for continuing to support this organisation so strongly.

I also thank my fellow board members for their contributions to the effective operation of the organisation over another successful year.

There are major challenges in future, particularly managing the impact of the end of our involvement in Work for the Dole services—a consequence of the Commonwealth Government's decision to combine seven services into one large single service. This development will have a major impact on WorkSkills.

Be that as it may, the organisation is well positioned to manage the substantial challenges before us and to seek new opportunities. Portland WorkSkills Incorporated looks forward to continuing to meet the needs of our community's learners and jobseekers in the future.



Executive Officer's Report

Overview

Portland WorkSkills Incorporated has completed another successful and satisfying year of operations.

We again effectively delivered our suite of services and programs. Much was achieved for learners, jobseekers, service-purchasers, the community and the organisation. Financially, we achieved a very pleasing surplus that will enable us manage an extended period of change and to expand our training services.

Programs

Key programs such as Adult Community Education, the Community Work Coordinator function, Work for the Dole projects, Apprenticeship and Traineeship Training Program, Job Search Training and the Priority Education Training Program were successfully delivered and are reported upon in detail elsewhere in this Annual Report.

All key performance indicators for the programs we delivered were achieved and we maintained our reputation as an effective, value-for-money, low-risk service provider.

Organisational Development

Considerable organisational development was undertaken in 2008/2009 via an ambitious strategic plan which focused on a balanced mix of priorities in regard to fundamentals such as maintaining existing services, attracting business, developing the organisation and developing our human resources.

A range of works were performed at 135 Hurd Street, our outdoor projects base. Various organisational policies and standard operating procedures were fine-tuned to ensure we deliver the best services possible to clients and service-purchasers.

High-quality staff training was maintained and we again upgraded our website during the year to ensure it effectively promotes the organisation and successfully markets its services.

Staff

Who does what at WorkSkills is outlined in the organisational chart at the beginning of this Annual Report and is also noted at the end of individual program reports.

In the 2008/2009 Financial Year, WorkSkills employed some 23 full-time and casual staff. Core staff stability was maintained and our staff performed effectively and productively in an environment of ongoing change, increased program complexity and



ever-changing technology. Staff participated in a range of training and development activities in order to maintain organisational and program capacity.

Effective staff performance strongly contributed to WorkSkills meeting its diverse performance and budgetary targets. Regrettably, the end of the Community Work Coordinator/Work for the Dole program means that the services of several project supervisors will no longer be required.

Marketing and Promotion

We effectively marketed and promoted our services. Strong word-of-mouth referrals from satisfied learners, jobseekers and businesses underpinned our marketing and promotional activities.

Our website was upgraded to ensure it effectively promotes our organisational identity and our services. Sponsorship of a regular weekly show on Community Radio 3RPC was maintained, publicising WorkSkills services including Adult Community Education.

Effective use was made of inserts in the *Portland Observer* to distribute our term Adult Community Education programs throughout Portland and its district. Successful use was made of the windows in our three Pioneer Plaza properties and our A-Board to promote services and courses. Advertisements in the Yellow Pages and White Pages telephone directories also promoted our training and other services.

Events such as our short story and poetry competition and our annual Adult Community Education presentations attracted media coverage and helped maintain a high, positive profile for WorkSkills.

Networks and partnerships

Quality networks and strategic linkages were maintained at all levels.

Locally, we worked cooperatively with the Job Network, Centrelink, TAFE, the Glenelg Shire Council, Portland Aluminium, Portland Secondary College and an array of community organisations including Kyeema and Portland Neighborhood House to produce the best possible access, learning and employment outcomes for our learners, participants, clients and the community.

Regionally, WorkSkills played an active role in the South West Adult Community Education Network and the Western District Adult Community Education Managers' Network. Membership of these networks of regional Adult Education providers assists us maintain high standards of training delivery and administration, and gives us access to business opportunities. WorkSkills maintained its substantial involvement in the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN), working to improve employment and training outcomes for youth. The LLEN is made up of some hundred and fifty regional organisations and employers. We also worked



closely with organisations including Southern Grampians Adult Education, South West SEAL, Hamilton Community House, Hamilton Institute of Rural Learning, Casterton Community Centre and the Points Arboretum at Coleraine.

Beyond the region, we maintained our membership of Jobs Australia, the Australia-wide peak body for not-for-profit, community-based training and employment services providers. Jobs Australia represents us at all levels and provides us with Human Resources and Industrial Relations expertise and back up.

The upcoming year

We will be managing unexpected challenges in the upcoming year. Considerable effort will be required to refocus the organisation as a consequence of the end of the Community Work Coordinator/Work for the Dole function, two major programs.

The Australian Government's decision to combine seven employment services, including Work for the Dole, meant that we did not have the capacity to tender in our own right. We were invited to support the tender of Westvic Staffing Solutions as a sub-contractor providing the Work Experience/Work for the Dole component of the new service. WorkSkills provided valuable input into the tender and put our impressive 4 Star rating as a Community Work Coordinator behind the bid. The tender was successful and it seemed we would be able to maintain our existing business structure. This was not to be so. We were eventually informed that sub-contracting arrangements would not be implemented due to limited jobseeker numbers, limited funding and suchlike.

This was poor reward for our unequivocal support and has significant implications for WorkSkills. Experienced and successful Work for the Dole project supervisors will have to be put off as their projects end over the next six months. As well, the end of Work for the Dole will necessitate ending our very productive thirteen year involvement in Hamilton and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Rapid change has been imposed upon us and we will need to speedily re-position the organisation to ensure its long-term viability. However, we have the will, strategies, staff, reserves and potential business to enable us to make this transition.

The transitional process will be expedited by an Investing in Community Education and Training grant of \$131, 000 from the Australian Government's Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. This will be used to refurbish our administration and training premises. Likewise, an ACE Capacity Initiative Shared Services Project grant will enable us to more effectively manage and run all aspects of the organisation and its operations. This initiative is in partnership with a number of like-minded Adult Community Education providers. At the same time, expansion of our training services, already very much underway, will be accelerated.

WorkSkills will continue to contribute to the growth of our community by supporting positive initiatives in the fields of training, learning and community capacity building.



Program Reports

1. Adult Community Education

Adult Community Education (ACE) is funded by the State Government and administered through the Adult, Community and Further Education Barwon South Western Regional Council (ACFE).

WorkSkills is a substantial and proven provider of Adult Community Education. In 2008/2009, WorkSkills delivered some 41,000 Student Contact Hours across programs. Some 27,000 Student Contact Hours of Employment Skills, Adult Literacy and Numeracy, and Vocational Education and Training were delivered through Adult Community Education to learners in Portland and district. We also delivered seventy six fee-for-service training courses, representing a substantial increase on the number delivered in the previous year.

Training was also delivered in a range of community venues across the Glenelg Shire, enhancing access to quality training and accredited courses. Day and evening courses were run to ensure that learning opportunities were available to all.

Our quality ACE courses and their effective delivery attracted a diverse range of learners, ranging in age from 14 to 80 years old. Whilst older learners continued to strongly access our ACE offerings, particularly Introduction to Computers and Internet courses, the 16 to 24 and 45 to 54 year old age groups were most strongly represented. Of the 673 learners who undertook training in 2008/2009, 35% were male and 65% female. We have almost 3,000 learners on our database.

Computer-related courses were in demand, particularly introductory courses with an average of four introductory classes run per term. These courses of varying length introduced a range of computing skills including word processing, internet and email, spreadsheets, presentation packages, Quicken and QuickBooks, and digital imagery.

Creative Writing classes included Short Story Writing and Hone Your Writing Skills, a unit aimed at assisting participants prepare their writing for submission for publication. Other courses included Learner's Permit, Introduction to the Hospitality Industry and a new offering, Steppin' Out, which aimed to prepare participants for further study or to improve employment opportunities.

Certificate in General Education for Adults courses, strong in literacy and numeracy skills, were supplied to learners from Kyeema, Aspire, Job Network referrals and other learners. Accredited Vocational Education and Training included Certificate III in Children's Services, Certificate I in Information Technology, Certificate III in Aged Care Work and Certificate III in Home and Community Care. There has been considerable demand for Aged Care training and WorkSkills has been able to meet



this demand by running a course for twelve students in 2008, commencing a course for another twelve in February 2009 and a second course in June 2009. In these courses, WorkSkills has been able to offer a double qualification—Certificate III in Aged Care Work and Certificate III in Home and Community Care. Certificate II in Community Services Support Work was also delivered and was primarily funded through the Federal Government's Productivity Places Program.

Fee-for-Service delivery was greatly expanded and included eighteen Food Handlers courses, two Food Hygiene for Supervisors courses, seven Responsible Serving of Alcohol, two 'All Things Coffee' courses and forty-five First Aid courses (compared to six in 2007/2008). Certificate IV in Training and Assessment was also offered on a fee-for-service basis. These industry-focused courses were accessed by workers and jobseekers aiming to improve their skills and advancement prospects.

Over the year, we issued 505 accredited Certificates or Statements of Attainment, an increase of more than 300, with the majority of the increase being for First Aid or Food Handling Statements of Attainment. WorkSkills also issued almost 160 non-accredited certificates across our various training offerings.

In June 2008, Portland WorkSkills' second short story and poetry writing competition was launched. *Away With Words – As You Like It* was open to residents of the Glenelg Shire as well as WorkSkills learners and attracted strong support. Our Adult Learners' Week celebration in September 2008, attended by several entrants and community members, was used for the announcement of the winners in each category.

Community leisure and recreational courses and activities were strongly publicised in our four term brochures, which promoted over twenty organisations delivering some seventy activities in Portland and its district.

Four members of staff were supported to undertake Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Regular internal training was provided to all trainers and a number took part in regional professional development activities. Our ACE program was coordinated by Kathy Taylor. Courses were delivered by a team of sessional trainers whose names are listed at the front of the Annual Report.

2. Apprenticeship and Traineeship Training Program

The State Government funded Apprenticeship and Traineeship Training Program (ATTP) involves us in the delivery of accredited training to Trainees and Apprentices in the region.

We provided accredited training to trainees in Business, Hospitality and Retail at both Certificate II and III level. The trainees we delivered services to are primarily employed by businesses in Portland. Our 2008 allocation of trainees was achieved and progress is being made to achieving our 2009 targets.



This service was delivered by Kathy Taylor, Mischelle Star, Helen Breedon and Kylie Duncan.

3. Work for the Dole - Community Work Coordinator

WorkSkills is the Community Work Coordinator (CWC) for the Western District Employment Services Area, a service delivery region made up of the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires. The role of the CWC is to coordinate the delivery of the Australian Government's Work for the Dole (WFD) program throughout the region.

The CWC interviews prospective participants, establishes projects, involves local communities in projects, organises meaningful work experiences for participants, conducts extensive participant and project monitoring, and liaises with Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Job Network. The role also entails making payments to sponsors on behalf of DEEWR, managing participants' Training Credits and organising and paying for training on their behalf.

The 2008/2009 year was one of sustained activity in regard to Work for the Dole. Twenty nine Work for the Dole projects were set up across the region, strongly contributing to the development of local communities. We assisted community-based organisations sponsor and conduct eleven projects. Four Drought Force projects were facilitated and WorkSkills sponsored fourteen major projects.

In Hamilton and district, Hamilton Institute of Rural Learning (HIRL) sponsored three projects and Hamilton Community House and the Hamilton Cemetery Trust also sponsored projects. The Hamilton Community House sponsored Monuments, Medals and Memories projects, delivered in partnership with the Hamilton RSL. These projects produced publications dealing with personalities and events associated with Hamilton's military history, attracting considerable positive publicity, awards nominations, an invitation to Canberra and the publications presented to the Australian War Memorial.

Casterton's Old Courthouse Community Centre delivered three quality activities over the year. In Portland, the Lions Club sponsored a project that produced works of community benefit at the Husson Fauna Park.

Participants improved their skills, knowledge and work ethic by participating in Work for the Dole. They gained valuable transferable skills and developed useful employment and social networks. A pleasing number of participants used the program as a springboard into employment. All projects strongly focused on Skills in Demand—skills sought by district employers. It was pleasing to note that many of our Work for the Dole participants were volunteers, motivated by access to Training Credits, the desire to improve skills, enhance their employability and to take part in projects of benefit to their community.

WorkSkills facilitated some 300 Work for the Dole commencements for the year and clearly met the demanding Key Performance Indicators for CWC2006/2009.



Staff involved in our Community Work Coordinator role included Work for the Dole Program Coordinator Angela Ryks, Helen Welsford, Kylie Duncan and Chris Marley. Executive Officer, Bernard Wallace was closely involved in delivery of the program. Changes in government strategy will see our very successful eleven-year involvement in Work for the Dole cease at the end of this year.

4. Work for the Dole – WorkSkills sponsored projects

As an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation, WorkSkills also sponsored and ran Work for the Dole activities in its own right. In 2008/2009, WorkSkills conducted fourteen major projects in Portland, Hamilton and at locations across the Western District Employment Services Area.

Our projects included a range of host-out activities in Portland, Hamilton, Coleraine and their districts, including Portland Placements, Hamilton and District Placements, Portland and District Community Placements and Portland WOP, Portland and District Placements and Hamilton Places. Our three twelve-seater vehicles gave us the mobility and capacity to deliver more diverse and effective projects across the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires.

Other projects delivered by WorkSkills included Functions and Memorials, TED, Walook Swamp, Cemeteries of the Western District, MIA, Work for the Dole Supports Heywood and Work for the Dole on Wheels. Mobile community-support projects run in Portland, Heywood and their districts assisted an array of community organisations.

Portland and district host-outs and mobile community support teams assisted Aspire, Mission to Seafarers, Loaves and Fishes, Portland YMCA, Portland Cable Trams, the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Lifeline, RSPCA, Salvation Army, Portland Library, Narrawong Cemetery Trust, Old Portland Cemetery, History House, Quamby House, Walook Swamp, Husson Fauna Park, Picnic Hill recreation area, Portland Neighbourhood House, Portland Basketball Association, the Arts Company, Radio 3RPC, Kyeema, Portland Dahlia Festival, Bundarra Primary School, Palmer Street Primary School, All Saints Outreach, Portland Callisthenics Club, Narrawong Foreshore Committee and Portland Scouts.

Heywood and district projects supported the operations of the Heywood Uniting Church Opportunity Shop and Church, Wood Wine and Roses, Heywood Regional Health, Heywood RSL, Heywood Presbyterian Church, Heywood Bowls Club, Heywood Anglican Church, Promoting Heywood and District, and Heywood Tennis Club. Support was also provided to the Dartmoor Progress Association.

In Hamilton and district, we assisted organisations including the Hamilton Special Development School, Hamilton Institute of Rural Learning, Hamilton Red Cross, Lifeline, St Vincent's, Hamilton RSL, North Hamilton Kindergarten, Hamilton 1st Scouts, Southern Grampians Shire Council, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management



Authority, Hamilton Cemeteries Trust, Hamilton Community House and Friends of the Grange Burn.

We also provided assistance to groups such as the Points Arboretum and the Eucalyptus Discovery Centre at Coleraine, Peshurst Hospital, Advance Peshurst, Peshurst Pony Club, Dunkeld Public Lands Committee, Casterton Historical Society, Casterton Museum, Casterton Garden Club, Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Project teams assisted processing and dispatching donations to the Victorian Fire Relief Appeal in Portland, Hamilton, Coleraine and Casterton. Project participants improved their skills, knowledge and work ethic by participating in Work for the Dole. Participants gained valuable transferable skills and developed useful employment and social networks. A number of participants used the program as a springboard into employment or accredited training.

Work for the Dole projects were variously supervised by Geoff Clark, Andrew Clark, Julian Cook, Graeme Cross, Margaret Dunsmuir, Wendy Flederis, Sharon Lockwood and Steve Rogers. Projects and supervisors were managed by Program Coordinator Angela Ryks, Helen Welsford and by Executive Officer Bernard Wallace.

The end of Work for the Dole in its current form at the end of 2009 will have a significant negative impact on our region. Many community-based organisations will greatly miss the assistance provided by WFD projects, host outs and assistance with special events and one-off support works.

5. Priority Education and Training Program

The Priority Education and Training Program (PETP), funded by the Victorian State Government, enables WorkSkills to deliver sought-after accredited training to a range of eligible jobseekers.

In June 2009, we commenced delivery of Certificate III in Aged Care Work to a second group of learners, using PETP funding. This funding was only available for programs aimed at the delivery of Priority Health qualifications. Certificate III in Aged Care Work is recognised throughout Australia and opens up an array of employment opportunities to those who successfully complete training.

Training involves a balanced mix of classroom-based theory work, site visits and a comprehensive work placement with district care providers. The quality practical work placement is an integral part of the course and provides learners with the hands-on experience necessary to develop skilled care workers.

This course will continue into 2010, with graduates well-placed to take up employment in a growth industry that provides considerable job satisfaction and strong career paths. The course is delivered by Judith Hillier.



6. Productivity Places Program

The Productivity Places Program (PPP) is an Australian Government initiative aimed at ensuring that certain categories of Australian workers develop the skills needed to address the skills shortage across the nation. Accredited training is focused on meeting the needs of both businesses and participants.

PPP is managed by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, however as of 30 June 2009, most funding will be handed over to State governments for the states to administer, with training being delivered via the Priority Education and Training Program. Australian Government funding remains for people who have become redundant due to business closures. Through this program, the Structural Adjustment Program, we are delivering training to people who were employed by Carter Holt Harvey (Dartmoor Mill). We also have the capacity to deliver training to PPP New Enterprise Incentive Scheme participants.

The Productivity Places Program is coordinated by Kathy Taylor.

7. Job Search Training

WorkSkills delivered structured Job Search Training (JST) to Job Network clients. Delivery of JST focused on equipping jobseekers with quality résumés, building confidence, overcoming or reducing obstacles to employment, developing an understanding of the labour market in which they seek employment, interview skills and linking jobseekers to potential employers.

Participants came from all walks of life and sought employment in a diverse array of occupations and fields. The training program was delivered in a range of formats to suit the needs of the Job Network provider's clients.

JST was delivered to 66 participants from Portland and its district. Some twenty eight participants undertook the standard 100-hour program, whilst some 38 jobseekers with existing skills took part in the 30-hour 'Refresher' program.

We continued to offer participants the opportunity to take part in mock interviews conducted in a realistic setting. Relevant guest speakers also contributed to the effectiveness of JST delivery.

A pleasing number of employment and training outcomes were achieved for our JST participants including part-time, casual and ongoing full-time work, access to further training, and education and recognition of prior learning through Skills Stores.

Job Search Training was delivered by Heather Mutch, with occasional delivery by Kathy Taylor. Our delivery of this program will conclude in July 2009, a consequence of the changes in the delivery of Australian Government Employment Services.



8. Skills Store

Skills Stores, a new service, are an initiative of the State Government. Clients are referred by a Skills Store to organisations such as WorkSkills for Recognition of Prior Learning. In this assessment-only pathway, clients provide evidence of their previous employment, training and life experiences. This is assessed with a view to receiving formal recognition of skills, and potentially obtaining a nationally recognised qualification. WorkSkills assessed a range of Skills Stores referrals for various qualifications.

9. Other services

We continue to hire premises for seminars, training sessions and suchlike. As well, space and buildings were rented to various organisations on an on-going basis. Consumer Affairs Victoria is a regular user of office and interview space. We also produced résumés for fee-for-service clients from time to time, a service sought by employed jobseekers wishing to change jobs or secure promotion.

10. Tour Guiding Services

Established in 1994, the WorkSkills Tour Guides Service enjoyed another successful year of guiding operations. Coach companies from Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales made use of our professional tour guide services. Guides escorted a range of coaches carrying over 633 visitors around Portland and district.

Our most popular tour continues to be the one-hour 'Introduction to Portland' tour, which serves to acquaint visitors with our settlement's history, heritage, economy and other diverse attractions. We also offered 'tours to order' to accommodate the interests of visitors. These included tours of the surrounding countryside and its many natural attractions, particularly our coastal landscape.

The work of our tour guides continues to publicise Portland and its region to visitors from Victoria, interstate and overseas. WorkSkills will continue to offer a comprehensive range of tours to visitors in the upcoming year.

WorkSkills is a member of the Portland Tourist Association and a member of the Glenelg Shire's Admella Commemoration Advisory Committee, a community-based committee working towards a major regional commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the wreck and rescue of the steamer Admella. Admella 150 will attract many visitors to Portland in August 2009.

Our Tour Guiding services were coordinated by Kylie Duncan and tours were conducted by Janice Cain and Mischelle Star.