

## A-NEWS

### The Newsletter of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association September 2009

#### AVETRA News

##### From the President

Dear AVETRA member

Welcome to another informative issue of the A-News. You will see that in this edition we give details of OctoberVET 2009. Please try to come along to an event near you. If you wish to mount an event it's not too late as OctoberVET has been known to go into November! Just contact Bobby Harreveld on 07 4930 6836 and see the web site at <http://avetra.org.au/octobervet>

Don't forget your abstracts for the AVETRA conference 8-9 April 2010 at the Gold Coast. You will be able to request a short extension if the closing date of 25 September is a bit tricky for you. See the web site at <http://avetra.org.au/annual-conference/abstracts-submission> for details.

In this edition we also feature the initiative of teleconferences for new (or relatively inexperienced) researchers. These are taking place during October and November in a sort of telephonic OctoberVET. Just dial in for any of the topics that interest you; the teleconferences are only open to AVETRA members. Thanks to Peter Smith for arranging this initiative.

Best wishes



Erica Smith  
President of AVETRA, University of Ballarat, September 2009

#### AVETRA News

##### AVETRA 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. Below are this year's offerings.

Location	Date & Time	Topics & Presenters	Registration Details
<b>Newcastle</b> Hunter TAFE Arts and Media Building Gallery Hunter Street Newcastle City	Wednesday 28 October 4.00-6.30pm	<b>Making Connections: Young People, VET and Hope</b> Session Information forthcoming	<i>Convenors:</i> Stephen Crump <a href="mailto:Stephen.Crump@newcastle.edu.au">Stephen.Crump@newcastle.edu.au</a> With Maryann Hill & Mark Primer

<b>Location</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	<b>Topics &amp; Presenters</b>	<b>Registration Details</b>
<b>Adelaide</b> UniSA, Bradley Forum, City West Campus	Wednesday October 28 2-5pm	<b>History of VET: Reminiscences and looking forward</b> (working title) Session Information forthcoming	<i>Convenor:</i> Francesca Beddie  <i>Contact:</i> Sian HallidayWynes <a href="mailto:Sian.HallidayWynes@ncver.edu.au">Sian.HallidayWynes@ncver.edu.au</a>
<b>Ballarat</b> SMB campus, University of Ballarat  (Room no. to be confirmed)	Friday October 30 10am-3pm	<b>Western Victorian OctoberVET:</b> A joint event between University of Ballarat and Deakin University	<i>Convenors:</i> Erica Smith, Barry Golding, Sue Goodbourn & Lauri Grace  <i>Contact:</i> Jan Watson <a href="mailto:j.watson@ballarat.edu.au">j.watson@ballarat.edu.au</a> 03-5327 9702
<b>Rockhampton</b> CQU, Bng32 Harvard Theatre & Courtyard	Thursday November 5 [tentatively 1- 5pm]	<b>VET Research for Learning &amp; Teaching</b> Session Information forthcoming	<i>Convenors:</i> Bobby Harreveld, Prue Howard, Ros Cameron, Terry O'Hanlon-Rose  <i>Contact:</i> Mary Cranston and/or Chriss Lenz <a href="mailto:lterc@cqu.edu.au">lterc@cqu.edu.au</a> 07 49 232 398
<b>Perth WA</b> ECU Mt Lawley Campus	First week November 12.30-5.00pm	<b>Challenges of VET Research</b> Session Information forthcoming	<i>Convenor:</i> Llandis Barratt-Pugh <a href="mailto:l.barratt_pugh@ecu.edu.au">l.barratt_pugh@ecu.edu.au</a>
<b>Canberra</b> Canberra Institute of Technology	Friday October 30 TBA	<b>OctoberVET ACT 2009</b> Students of Advanced Diploma of Adult Vocational Education and other ACT VET researchers	<i>Convenors:</i> Andrew Shiells <a href="mailto:andrew.shiells@cit.act.edu.au">andrew.shiells@cit.act.edu.au</a> and Sarah Sutcliffe <a href="mailto:sarah.sutcliffe@cit.act.edu.au">sarah.sutcliffe@cit.act.edu.au</a>

### **Call for Expressions of Interest in running a pre-conference workshop at the AVETRA conference 2010**

Pre-conference workshops have often been arranged at the AVETRA conference and this is planned again for 2010. Workshops give the opportunity for people interested in a particular research-related VET-sector issue to enjoy in-depth discussions in a relatively small group.

In 2010 the workshops will be held on the afternoon of Wednesday April 7th, at the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE, Queensland. The tentative time is 2.00pm-5.00pm, although this may vary slightly. The cost will be around \$80 per delegate (2009 figure) and there will be a minimum of 15 attendees for each workshop to run, in order to break-even. The conference secretariat will receive registrations and make all arrangements.

Workshops will need to have some research focus and this could include (but is not confined to):

- Research methodology or methodologies
- Discussion of research evidence around a particular theme
- Research capacity building

For 2009, summaries of research workshop outcomes were written up by presenters for publication in AVETRA's researcher magazine *Research Today*, May edition.

You are invited to submit an Expression of Interest (of two pages or less) to run a workshop. Please submit this to the President, Erica Smith, at [e.smith@ballarat.edu.au](mailto:e.smith@ballarat.edu.au), by Wednesday 30 September 2009. Please include the following information:

- Title of the workshop.
- Description of the workshop as it would be sent out to potential registrants (up to 200 words).
- Name, affiliation and brief biography of the proposed workshop leader(s) that makes clear their expertise in the proposed topic area.
- Relationship of the workshop to VET research.
- Expected benefits for AVETRA, AVETRA members, other conference delegates from Australia and/or overseas, and/or VET research in general.
- Any unusual technology requirements for running the workshop, and expected budget for meeting those requirements (please contact the conference secretariat [avetra@conferenceaction.com.au](mailto:avetra@conferenceaction.com.au) if you need help with costings)
- An undertaking that you will not withdraw your workshop once it has been advertised.
- Any other information that may support your proposal.

You will be notified of the outcome of your EOI in early October 2009 following a selection and approval process involving members of the AVETRA Executive.

We would like to stress the importance of these workshops and our thanks to those offering to run them. However AVETRA is unfortunately not in a financial position to offer payment to those running workshops.

*Professor Erica Smith*  
*President, AVETRA*

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

It is with great pleasure that AVETRA welcomes back former President, Peter Kell, as the new Editor of the *International Journal of Training Research* from 2010. Peter has been involved with AVETRA since the very beginning in 1998 and has played a key role in its development. He is also a very well known researcher and commentator on the Australian VET sector, most recently undertaking a review of TAFE for the Australian Education Union. Peter is currently working for the Institute of Education in Hong Kong, on leave from his position as Associate Professor of Education at the University of Wollongong.

Peter's appointment coincides with a new look and new publisher for the IJTR. AVETRA is excited to announce that as from the next issue of the journal, the IJTR will be managed and produced by E-Content Management, a Queensland-based publisher of high quality scholarly journals. E-Content Management already successfully manages a number of journals including the *Journal of Management and Organisation* and *Rural Society*. We are confident that with new management and new Editor, the IJTR will be set fair to take off to even greater heights in the coming years.

This new phase in the journal's life must be attributed to the energetic efforts of Andy Smith, the outgoing and foundation editor of IJTR. AVETRA thanks Andy wholeheartedly for negotiating the new arrangement and for his dedication in carrying the journal through its first seven years.

### **Peak bodies Communiqué on Australian international education**

Australia's peak education bodies have released a Communiqué outlining steps to support and develop the Australian international education system. The group includes the Australian Council for Private Education and Training, English Australia, the International Education Association of Australia, the Independent Schools Council of Australia, TDA, and Universities Australia. It establishes a 10-point plan which includes a stronger commitment to ongoing and effective government-industry partnerships, a national student-safe campaign, and the establishment of a national advisory service. To view the full Communiqué [click here](#).

### **NCVER announces new Chair, Peter Shergold**

Dr Peter Shergold AC, the former Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, has been named as the new Chair of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). Dr Shergold is currently the Macquarie Group Foundation Professor at the Centre for Social Impact UNSW.

### **New equity council gets underway**

The newly established National VET Equity Advisory Council ([NVEAC](#)) recently held its first meeting. The Taskforce was set up to provide advice to the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE) and to establish equity reform in the national training system. A communiqué from the first meeting is available [here](#). VET stakeholders can also subscribe to receive updates from NVEAC.

### **The AVETRA Mentoring Network**

AVETRA has developed a mentoring network that supports practitioner researchers, specifically those practitioners involved in the community of practice hosted by Victoria University. NCVER is supporting this scheme with funding for the mentors so they can support their protégés during their research.

The first stage of this initiative is already completed with 11 novice researchers having tackled a research project supported by their mentors and the community of practice. Their papers will be published by NCVER. The second phase is now underway, with another 11 new researchers beginning the same process. We have gathered a pool of over fifty diversely experienced and located mentors.

In May 2009, a successful two-day workshop involving all the current research protégés was held at Victoria University. The participants were able to review their initial proposals for their projects and begin tailoring them into more focused exercises through a variety of activities and discussion led by the Victoria University VET Community of Practice team. The aim of the sessions was to kick start the participants research process and form the face-to-face and virtual support structure of the community of practice. All participants left the workshop with a commitment to carrying out their research project and have engaged with the aim of producing and presenting a paper at a VET conference next year.

During the workshop they were able to explore what a mentoring relationship may add to their project, discuss their individual needs and to propose, from the current mentor register, a mentor with whom they would like to work. The participants were then matched to their chosen mentors so that these relationships and their projects can flourish as the year continues.

There will be a third group of new researchers. NCVER will call for applicants in November 2009. Applicants need the support of their employer, and a basic idea for a locally focused research project. NCVER provides a \$4k scholarship, workshops and mentors for the successful new researchers.

*Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh*

## **International - India's vision for skills**

With a population touching 1.2 billion, half of which is around 25 years of age, India is determined to cash in on its 'demographic dividend'. It has set itself the target of creating 500 million skilled workers to meet domestic and global demand for labour by 2022, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the republic. Today, the capacity of skill development in India is just 3 million people a year. The 11th Five Year Plan envisions an increase to 15 million annually, with the target groups those entering the labour market for the first time (12.8 million annually), those employed in the organised sector (26.0 million) and those working in the informal sector (433 million). It is a daunting task.

The central government's ambitions are set out in a National Skills Development Policy (March 2009, see <http://labour.nic.in>). This document is based on the philosophy of inclusive growth and strives for a demand-based system, using private and public delivery driven by user choice. It calls for better coordination between government authorities, at national and state level, and industry and envisages that strong public private partnerships will drive the training effort. The Indians are also seeking to introduce a national qualifications framework as well as strong quality assurance measures.

Sound familiar? That is not surprising as the people behind this policy, both in government and industry have been closely studying other systems, particularly those of the UK, Europe and Australia.

To achieve the 500 million target, the time for drafting policies is over. Implementation must begin in earnest. One initiative is the Modular Employability Skills (MES) program, aimed at addressing the needs of early school leavers (about 63% of students leave school before year 10). These young people find the educational entry requirements and long duration of courses of the formal training system impediments to acquiring skills. MES offers short courses decided in consultation with industry, which are aimed at equipping people with the minimum skills sets required to get a job. Trainees are assessed independently and are also given recognition for skills acquired informally. Certification is to be nationally recognised. See: <http://www.dget.nic.in/mes/index.htm>

Those tasked with achieving India's 21<sup>st</sup> century goal of becoming the skills capital of the world might heed Gandhi's advice: 'Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed...'

*Francesca Beddie*

Francesca Beddie was in India as a guest of the Australia-India Council  
<http://www.dfat.gov.au/aic/index.html>

## **Jobs and Other Opportunities**

### **For new VET researchers - AVETRA Research Development Teleconferences**

The AVETRA Executive is providing a professional development opportunity for new researchers. These will take the form of four teleconferences, each focussing on a different part of the research process.

The topics, together with their convenor and the scheduled time/date are:

Wednesday 7 October, 3-4pm AE Daylight Saving Time - *Developing and framing a research question; and sizing a project* – Dr Ian Robertson, RMIT University

Thursday 29 October, 3-4pm AE Daylight Saving Time - *Research methodologies and data analysis - qualitative and quantitative, mixed methods* – Dr Ros Cameron, Southern Cross University

Wednesday 18 November, 3-4pm AE Daylight Saving Time - *Research ethics – why do we need it, how do we get approval, and how does it help everybody?* – Professor Erica Smith, University of Ballarat.

Wednesday 25 November, 3-4pm AE Daylight Saving Time - *Research reporting and dissemination for different purposes and audiences* – Francesca Beddie, NCVET

You do not need to book in or register for these teleconferences. You do need to be a member of AVETRA though. If you wish to participate, you simply phone Enterprise Care Teleconferencing on one of the following numbers – for a local call cost if you select your local number.

Melbourne	03 8414 5110	Adelaide	08 8220 0695
Sydney	02 9696 0695	Perth	08 9460 0695
Canberra	02 6210 0695	Hobart	03 6240 0695
Brisbane	07 3811 0695	Darwin	08 8989 0695

Outside a metro area phone 1800 333 803

At the prompt you enter the code 2646 followed by #.

Note that daylight saving starts in the south-eastern states on 4 October, and all the time quoted above are eastern States daylight saving times. If you are in a different time zone you will need to work out at what time you call into the teleconference.

## Conferences and other Events

### **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>

### **BHERT Workforce Australia Forum, Victoria University, 22 October**

The Forum, titled '*Workforce Australia: A Degree of Vision in the Global Financial Crisis*', will offer business, industry and tertiary education stakeholders the opportunity to discuss the future development and requirements of Australia's workforce.

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

Convened by NCVET & 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

### ***Higher education in TAFE* by Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly, NCVET 2009**

This is the first report to come out of NCVET's monograph series. Research accepted for publication in the NCVET Monograph Series will assist university-based researchers make use of their NCVET published work in the Research Publications Return of the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) and in Excellence in Research for Australia evaluations.

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2167.html>

**Pathways to higher education: apprenticeships Bristol, U.K.: Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) 2009**

This issues paper describes the attributes and progression to higher education (HE) of those who have undertaken apprenticeships at further education level.

[http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09\\_17/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_17/)

**New directions in European vocational education and training policy and practice: Lessons for Australia by Roger Harris, Michele Simons, Katie Maher, NCVET, 2009**

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2141.html>

**Some ideas from England: A practitioner's perspective by Robin Shreeve, NCVET, 2009**

This paper was presented by Robin Shreeve at the NCVET Research on Toast seminar in March 2009. It briefly compares the vocational education and training (VET) sector in Australia with its equivalent in England, which is known as the skills or further education sector.

Robin Shreeve is the newly appointed CEO of Skills Australia.

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2161.html>

**Assessing the impact of NCVET's research John Stanwick, Jo Hargreaves, Francesca Beddie NCVET 2009**

This research project developed a model for assessing research impact and undertook four case studies to identify examples of where research has made a difference across the four categories of knowledge production, capacity building, informing policy and informing practice. Subsequently, a simple tool for recording impact is being trialled with recipients of recent NVETRE funding.

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2152.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 organised 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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